NHQ

The New Hungarian Quarterly

51

VOL. XIV ■ No. 51 ■ AUTUMN 1973 ■ 80p ■ $2.00

The New Hungarian Quarterly

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Annual subscription: $ 8.00 or the equivalent in another currency
post free to any address

Orders may be placed with
KULTURA HUNGARIAN TRADING COMPANY FOR BOOKS AND NEWSPAPERS
Budapest 1376, P.O.B. 149
See also the distributors listed on the back page

Published by Lapkiadó Publishing House, Budapest

Printed in Hungary by Kossuth Printing House, Budapest

The New Hungarian Quarterly

VOLUME XIV * No. 51

AUTUMN 1973

SURVEYS

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

ARTS

THEATRE AND FILM

MUSICAL LIFE

ECONOMIC LIFE

This issue went to press on July 3rd, 1973

FIFTY PLUS ONE

After a jubilee issue an editor's desk is always cluttered with manuscripts for which no space could be found. Such a quantity of worthwhile and everlasting material has been held over from our 50th issue that another jubilee issue, the 75th could safely be the next. Fortunately, however, we are now facing merely the 51st, and none of the jubilee material found its way into that. Numerous congratulatory messages from readers in Hungary and other parts of the world reached this journal following the publication of our Number 50. The Editor and staff take this opportunity to express their thanks.

We specially wish to thank Hungarian dailies, weeklies and other periodicals for their friendly and appreciative notices. The 50th issue of *The N.H.Q.* was treated by the Hungarian press as a special event, *Népszabadság* devoted an editorial comment to it, *Magyar Nemzet* summarized the major articles of Number 50, *Magyarország*, a news-weekly, printed the article which János Kádár wrote for *The N.H.Q.*, *Élet és Irodalom* published an interview with members of the staff on the methods used to make the English as good as possible, and a Hungarian version of C. P. Snow's article "N.H.Q." which he wrote for our fiftieth issue appeared in *Nagyvilág*, a magazine publishing the literature of other countries.

This 51st issue endeavours to be as timely as is humanly possible for a quarterly. Being timely can also mean playing one's part in the answers given to the questions of our time, and to report on the great ideas and ideals that move our age. The very months and weeks in which this issue was put together, and proofs were corrected, saw a turning point in the history of our times. The international *détente*, which this paper has always desired, and to which it has made its own modest contribution, has now reached a stage where one can justifiably talk about an end to the Cold War. The idea of peaceful coexistence can now be put into practice.

That is why György Aczél's article in which he discusses the relationship between peaceful coexistence and ideological differences is timely in the wider sense of the term. This is the first part of an address, and sections of it deal with the hegemony of Marxism-Leninism and the popular front policy, György Lukács, as well as petty-bourgeois attitudes. A section dealing with the social sciences deserves special attention. It also discusses a controversy concerning a number of those engaged in social research in Hungary which has had an echo abroad.

The age of *détente* also means increased international interest in the economic affairs of particular countries, as well as the growing importance of foreign trade. Rezső Nyers, who is responsible for economic questions in the highest level Party leadership, is the author of "Balancing Aims and Objectives", the title of which is self-explanatory. The New Economic Mechanism in Hungary is five years old now, and no one calls it new any longer, it is now accepted as the form of socialist guidance and management of the economy in Hungary. Melinda Szabó discusses connections between foreign trade and economic growth.

This issue also devotes considerable space to Europe and America. As these lines are being written, on July 3rd 1973, the foreign ministers of thirty three European and two American countries are meeting in Helsinki. Their deliberations concern European unity. The Editor writes on European unity from another point of view, that of the spirit, culture, literature and art; and he evokes the picture of an intellectual Europe, which has always existed in both halves of the continent in the minds of intellectuals and also of the larger part of the public. The Editor points out that Europe, in Hungarian usage, is not merely a geographical term but a human one as well.

America is there in the foreground of the 51st issue. There is perhaps no need to explain why: the Vietnam war has come to an end, and so the major obstacle in the way of economic, cultural and political cooperation between East and West has been removed; a difficulty which, for a long time, made an approach very difficult. We have arrived at the stage where the principle of peaceful coexistence is being implemented and that is why Deputy Prime Minister Péter Vályi paid a visit to the United States this spring. He is the highest ranking Hungarian politician to travel to the U.S. within the past twenty-five years. He gives an account of his negotiations and of his impressions.

Hungarian scientists, scholars and artists who, fleeing from Nazi violence, found a new home and work in America, are a constant contact between the United States and Hungary. One of the fathers of the atom bomb, Eugene

Wigner, the Nobel Prize laureate professor at Princeton, is perhaps the most prominent of them. Some months ago he had a long conversation with a Hungarian television reporter. The interview was videotaped and shown by Hungarian Television in full, filling two ninety-minute programmes. The most important parts of the conversation are here printed, Professor Wigner having agreed to the selection. The impression the Hungarian–American scientist made on Hungarian intellectual life can be measured by an article written by György Hámos, the TV-critic of the weekly *Élet és Irodalom*, on the occasion of the TV-interview. Hámos writes about Eugene Wigner's youth.

A daily book is almost as important in Hungary as daily bread. Béla Köpeczi, Secretary General of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, writes on Hungarian publishing and on Hungarian Book Week. He is a recognised expert on the subject having been in charge of the Publishing Directorate for many years. His essay on book publishing and printing is complemented by another: in 1471 László Karai, Vice-Chancellor of King Matthias Corvinus invited the Rome trained printer Andreas Hess to the Royal Palace in Buda. The first Hungarian printing office did not last very long, but the square where it stood now bears the printer's name. Gedeon Borsa's article extends from the first incunabula up to the end of the 18th century.

In this number literature is once again represented mainly by Sándor Petőfi. The 150th anniversary of his birth was celebrated this year in Hungary and other countries, Unesco having included it in the list of great international anniversaries. This time the poet is shown from a less well known angle as a writer of prose. Petőfi's prose is certainly not inferior to his poems: it is sharp, sarcastic, hard, full of self-irony and modern.

Modern Hungarian literature is represented both by poems and prose. Gábor Görgey's poem is translated by Jascha Kessler, an American poet who was a recent visitor to Hungary. "Baron Szendre's Daughter" is the latest in a series of Hungarian songs and folk ballads W. D. Snodgrass has been working on for some years. Iván Mándy's story "The Kitchen Wall" is close to surrealism in style, but the stuff of which it is made is all the more real in 1945 terms: a young couple find themselves before a no longer standing house in bombed Budapest. They dream of their future with the poetic ease only the young are capable of.

Of the rest we should like to emphasize those articles that are illustrated. Csaba Sík presents three Hungarian artists from Paris: Czóbel, Csáky and Vörös. Miklós Borsos's "Contemplating Mona Lisa" shows that the sculptor handles the pen as well as the chisel. His monotype bears witness to what Mona Lisa means to him. Zoltán Nagy writes on the memorial exhibition

of the painter Jenő Medveczky who died a few years ago. Lajos Németh's "Paintings, Mosaics, Textiles" surveys current Budapest exhibitions. Ferenc Fülep, the Director of the Hungarian National Museum, has excavated the remnants of an early Christian chapel in the catacombs of the Romanesque cathedral of Pécs.

Greetings to the reader and a small request: having read this short summary, please read the articles, short stories and poems as well.

THE EDITOR

BALANCING AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

by

REZSŐ NYERS

An outline of Hungary's present situation reflects, as usual, a many-hued picture. If the facts of real life are assembled, a brighter overall picture emerges for optimists while pessimists will see the darker side of matters for there is no denying that, in spite of much that has been achieved, our life is full of worries. Ideology and the fundamental political position play a decisive role in a comprehensive evaluation of the situation, and views on short term matters are also a question of temperament. Differing views may exist as regards nuances, however, in respect to essentials, meaning that the trend of Hungary's development is the right one, and will continue to be so in the economy, in culture, social democratism and policy as a whole, there is only one possible attitude. It is indisputable that the decisive majority of working people are in favour of the building of socialism, that they support the policy of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party and that the great majority of non-political minded people also sympathize with the endeavours of the leadership.

The leadership gives considerable attention to various anxieties and thoroughly discusses how problems can be solved; doing so in a far from sterile way since a consensus is reached within both the movement and the nation. Manual workers and professional men and women join hands in the struggle for a better life which can only be won after tremendous effort; and we all progress together towards socialism.

Wage Rise for Industrial Workers

It is indisputable that Hungary develops at a dynamic rate, at the same time, however, it is difficult to deny that the country has to face anxieties and problems. The latter are due to the fact that a number of social objectives

must be pursued and many interests brought to a common denominator. This, however, cannot always be done if a single measure is adopted in order to further a number of aims, hence parallel arrangements must be made. It has happened more than once that an important social objective could only be efficiently furthered if progress towards another aim was impeded or temporarily thwarted. In such cases it is not easy to follow and understand the dialectics of central action, all those steps that frequently involve compromises. One can only arrive at the right understanding if one becomes aware that a number of aims, each of which is based on social objectives, have to be reached by central decision. The neglect of one of the aims might sooner or later jeopardize the achievement of another one. Three measures adopted by the Central Committee of the Party on November 14th and 15th 1972 show well the complexity of the problem. The three were: a rise in wages for workers of state owned industries, a central price increase of certain products, and decisions on how to deal with difficulties in production and economic management of certain large-scale enterprises.

The general rise in wages put into effect recently aims at allocating to workers of the state industries and in the building sector—who represent the fundamentally important two-thirds of the Hungarian labour force—a share in the national income proportionate to their efforts so that they should obtain a higher share of earnings and incomes than hitherto, as compared to other sectors and occupations. This additional increase is independent of the profitability of enterprises; it has to be granted from time to time, and has become timely just now in order to consistently realize the basic principle that the increase and improved efficiency of social production should be accompanied by a regular and proportionate rise in the standard of living. Does this also refer to enterprises the efficiency of which has not improved at all, or at a slower rate? It does indeed, for it was thought preferable to grant higher wages in the case of these enterprises as well, to impart a new impulse to work and ensure that the consequences of lower efficiency should not burden the collectivity of workers beyond a certain level. There is no doubt that by so doing the interestedness of working collectives in the prosperity of the enterprise they are working for has been stressed to a greater degree since this as well has been one of our aims. The future importance of the profitability of enterprises has not become reduced in this way; this cannot be done, for the total profit of the economy is an essential resource of the economy's expanded reproduction and of the increased earnings of workers, and its income depends on the profitable activity of enterprises.

It is obviously absurd, and cannot be said in good faith, that the Central Committee considers the work of those whose wages have not gone up on

this occasion to be of secondary importance. The fact is that, if the sphere of those who have now received a rise in wages would have been expanded, the wage-rises for workers of state industries would have been nullified, since only goods produced can be distributed. If the principle "a pittance to everybody" had been adopted the degree of the interestedness of industrial workers would not have been increased and we would not have come any nearer to correct proportions in respect to earned incomes. It has of course to be taken into account that in other occupations tensions will arise as a result of the present wage policy. Thus, by pursuing one of our aims, progress towards other aims has once again been frustrated to a certain degree. Would it be better to avoid the coming into being of new problems which inevitably originate from the course taken? In our view it is better to face new problems for the other alternative can only be passivity.

The Economic Background of the Rise in Prices of Certain Commodities

I want to elaborate the reasons for the decision to raise the prices of certain products, and the way in which this rise in prices was carried out. If social objectives in connection with living standards only were taken into consideration, a central rise in the price of milk and other dairy-products would hardly have been decided on. However, the growth of production is also a social objective and from this point of view it became necessary to show appreciation for the work of 200,000 agricultural and industrial workers employed in the dairy industry by raising prices right through vertically integrated dairy farming so that, in the case of growing production, not the deficit but the income of this considerable number of workers should increase. A further social objective was to produce equilibrium between the rate of growth of milk production and consumption. However important milk might be from the point of view of health, consumption cannot increase at a faster rate than production unless we are willing to face a shortage on the dairy market as a result of surplus demand, or to undertake to import dairy products permanently. It would not be right to do either. The harmonious development of production and consumer demand continues to be a social aim and this could only be ensured if consumer prices were raised approximately to the level of higher producer's prices, for not even a future reduction of prime costs, however effective this might be, could have brought about an approach to each other of the two price levels.

Although two social objectives—the increase of production and the rise

of incomes in proportion to production—were correctly borne in mind by raising the price of milk, this alone would have gone counter to the aim of a balanced standard of life. In order to eliminate the frustrating effect for the decisive majority of workers—unfortunately it was impossible to include all workers—the Party and the government decided to grant social policy compensations over a wide range. It is our firm belief that in this way social requirements in connection with living standards have been met.

The rise in the price of cigarettes and alcoholic beverages was quite another matter; in this case the purpose was to ensure revenue in order to avoid reductions in the financing of important productive and social building activites. From the point of view of public health it would be beneficial anyway if a brake could be put on increasing consumption of these commodities.

Could we expect general approval from public opinion in connection with these price increases? Approval was not only expected but outright demanded of the active section who have a clearer understanding of the given situation as well as of the political and economico-political conditions. One must ask the indulgence of the average citizen, expecting him to understand that the central bodies which are responsible for the future could not have decided otherwise, and that it is right to take unavoidable decisions at the proper time.

Modernization of the Production Pattern

Why is it so problematic to deal with certain complex questions in the field of production and management in the case of a number of large-scale industrial enterprises? Difficulties are due less to the weakness and faulty notions of those who are at present in charge of enterprises, and are more likely ascribable to objective causes and sometimes to economic history. There is no doubt that it is a permanent and at some places even urgent task to improve the work of the managerial group and it is also a fact that one or another element of the system of directing the economy got "worn-out", needing speedy changes that cannot be delayed. On the other hand, it is certain that when the direction of the economy prescribes what appear to be too exacting standards for enterprises, mistakes are generally not to be looked for in the given directives but in the enterprises. Economic regulators as a whole in this case play the role of an "economic midwife" helping to bring to the surface seemingly "new-born" problems which in fact have existed long since, such as relative technological obsolescence, outmoded

production patterns, and low efficiency according to international standards. Could the negative effects, as compared to international progress, have been avoided? Partly yes, though not completely, for changes on world markets and competition due to new technologies are questions beyond the control of Hungary. We would set out on a wrong path as regards future development if we were simply to preserve the present production pattern and help enterprises to prosper by means of state regulation without making changes. This indeed would be a convenient solution which however would bring grave repercussions in its train. The only solution is "to take the bull by the horns", that is, to step up the modernization of the production pattern.

One might ask why enterprises showing a deficit do not become bankrupt under socialism? This question shows a misapprehension of the facts for socialist enterprises belong to the people while the country belongs to every working man or woman and it would therefore be inadmissible to let enterprises go bankrupt in a capitalist sense, nor can one be indifferent towards Hungarian workers in the way capitalists are. On the other hand, one must allow obsolete products, techniques and technology to disappear, urging at the same time the improvement of the production pattern in accordance with the given possibilities. A product is obsolete if it is behind the times from a technical point of view, however, a product of a high technical standard cannot be considered up-to-date either if the prime costs are above those prevailing elsewhere and the price is not competitive. A solution must be found, though not in a capitalist sense, by going bankrupt or bringing an enterprise under the hammer, and allowing working conditions to deteriorate, but decisions must be taken with resolution in a socialist way; certain enterprises must be radically reorganized and the working force as a whole of certain enterprises redirected to other employment and all this must be done purposefully and with socialist fairness. This will happen in the case of eight or ten enterprises the production pattern of which is considered obsolete, while reorganization may open up new vistas to these old-standing plants.

The path we have chosen is, from the point of view of technological development, probably not the most expedient one, and the object could be reached sooner if we were ready to do away with what has become obsolete by more "radical" means; however, outdated plants cannot be liquidated without cost and complicated technical-technological chains cannot be replaced without a loss in production; at the same time we also have to follow special political aims; taking all this into consideration we are compelled to go ahead step by step. Purely methodological "radicalism", radicalism for its own sake, or pure energy, that is joining a good cause to bad methods, cannot promote matters either in this or in other cases.

Many facts show that we are in the current of dynamic development and do not fight a losing battle against difficulties. Every week one or even more new establishments begin to function: in Leninváros the building of chemical works of vast capacity is in process, as a result of which Hungary will produce far more man made fibres and synthetics; the huge Beremend cement works will soon go into service, permitting the building of large housing estates as well as new and modern stock raising plants; old textile mills are being equipped with new machinery and are renewed on the basis of new technologies; on the five hundredth anniversary of Andreas Hess's printing press, which functioned in Buda in 1473, the Hungarian printing industry will obtain up-to-date equipment enabling it to make up the lee-way.

We are over the hump as regards some of the economic difficulties. The qualitative restriction on investments proved successful without decreasing the momentum of industry, and industry's efficiency is on the increase, though at a slow rate. The building material industry, which was a weak link in the industrial chain for three years, is recovering in 1973. Production goes on at a steady pace in the vertically integrated vehicle industry. The balance of foreign trade was favourable in 1972 and the export-import ratio is balanced. Agriculture makes good progress and both state and cooperative farms can look back on a fruitful year. We have always been—and are going to be—honest in admitting our difficulties. This, however, does not mean that we are overwhelmed by anxieties.

The present difficulties can be solved by consciously looking into the future; this holds good for both small matters and problems of vital importance. Everybody must see clearly how to fight in his or her field for a better life and for the future. The clue to better work is not to be sought for in the never-ending reorganization of duties, but in everybody doing efficient work in his own particular sphere.

HUNGARIAN–AMERICAN ECONOMIC RELATIONS

by

PÉTER VÁLYI

I

The early seventies of our century are marked by a turning point in the general process of international *détente*. New and fruitful connections between East and West and between the developed and the developing countries are about to take shape. The economy has an outstanding role in laying down the bases of such relations and in stabilizing them. The period of normalization, as regards those between Hungary and the United States, has so far suffered delays, and it has fallen behind the general rate of improvement. This is due to a number of causes. One reason is that, in Hungary, trade with the United States, let alone economic cooperation with that country, was never broadly established, either before or after the Liberation. Hungary's western trade relations were generally established and extended with countries in western Europe. As a result little of the knowledge, practice and know-how needed for trading with the United States is available in Hungary. Another important reason is to be found in the fact that even existing bare contacts sank to rock bottom between 1956 and 1958 following on the political difficulties connected with the Counter-Revolution and the period that followed it, when the United States applied a policy of isolation to Hungary which was even severer than the one it employed against other socialist countries. What proved decisive was a view which is out of date now, and which was repeatedly refuted by events, namely that normal trade relations provide unilateral advantages to the socialist countries, and that an economic boycott of them on the part of the western world could prove a useful instrument in the political confrontation with them. This theory presumed that a sclerosis of the trade arteries, a narrowing of the connecting channels that is, could prove economically damaging in the East only. Remnants of such noxious and dogmatic views survived longer in the United States than anywhere else.

Official Hungarian–United States economic relations go back to the 1925 Friendship, Trade and Consular Agreement. This ensured most favoured nation treatment for both parties in the fields of tariffs, shipping and tax. The validity of this Treaty was put an end to by the Second World War, it was then revived again, in 1947, by the Paris Peace Treaties. It might not be without interest to note at this stage that, even between 1938 and 1940, the United States increased trade with Horthy Hungary, which was closely allied to Nazi Germany, year by year. The Trade Agreements Extension Act of 1951, a signpost in the early years of the Cold War, led to notice of termination of the treaty being given, and the most favoured nation treatment was withdrawn from Hungary. From that time on maximum tariffs became applicable to goods imported from Hungary, which led to the practical exclusion of Hungarian commodities from the United States market, certain kinds being particularly affected.

Before the Second World War the United States' share of Hungarian foreign trade fluctuated between 3 and 5 per cent. Trade livened up for a short and transitory period after the Second World War, chiefly as a result of the purchase of American surplus stocks in Europe. In 1947 18 per cent of all goods imported by Hungary were of U.S.A. origin. Trade with the United States was considerably reduced, starting with 1953, stagnating for years on end. Here and there, and exceptionally, there were major deals, principally relating to the importation of agricultural products in years when the harvest was poor, but this did not affect the essence. In practice Hungary was no longer a market for the United States, and Hungary as well largely limited trade originating in the United States.

2

One might justifiedly enquire into the results of this extreme form of economic warfare. It barely affected Hungarian economic growth, and this is shown by the relevant figures. Hungarian foreign-trade always applied itself with great intensity to the nursing of markets in the countries of western Europe, naturally always in a measure determined by the prevailing political situation, and as a result of work and investments extending over a great many years connections growing in firmness were established precisely with the allies of the United States, such as France, Great Britain, the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy, as well as with neutral countries such as Austria, Finland and Sweden. The socialist countries joined together under the auspices of the Council of Mutual Economic Aid answered

the challenge by implementing increasingly determined steps that helped to strengthen the international division of labour and international co-operation. Hungarian economic development was also given a major impetus and a firm background by the foundation of CMEA and the extension of its operations. The great isolation policy did not therefore achieve its objective, true enough it produced deals that were profitable indeed for a number of specialized brokers. Firms in western Europe, some of them subsidiaries of United States firms, attracted by the profits of brokerage, frequently undertook to export Hungarian commodities to the United States, and American export embargos, as is generally known, frequently found themselves in the soup thanks to the smartness of such "brokers".

Trade started to develop in a noticeable way in 1965, but in spite of the increased turnover the American share of Hungarian foreign trade still remains small, 0.4 per cent of Hungarian exports, that is the average of the past three years, imports fluctuating between 0.5 and 1 per cent in the same period. Imports generally amount to twice the value of exported goods. Consumer goods of agricultural and industrial origin make up 40 per cent each of Hungarian exports, the rest are raw materials and semi-finished goods. The export of machines and installations is insignificant. Ham, textiles and glassware occupy pride of place. The export of bicycles and pharmaceutical bulk goods also deserves a mention. The composition of Hungarian imports varies from year to year, generally three quarters are made up of agricultural products, 10–15 per cent of machines, the rest being raw materials and semi-finished goods.

At present growth in trade is hindered by numerous discriminatory regulations and laws. Recent years provided an ample harvest of them, bearing witness to a fantastic inventiveness in ways of protecting the market against the intrusion of commodities produced by socialist countries by a complex system of ditches and dams. I shall not even try to produce a complete list, allow me to mention nevertheless, other than the absence of the most favoured nation clause, the Johnson Act, the act controlling exports, the Battle Act, the 1961 law governing aid, and Public Law 480. One here meets the classical notions of economic history in a topsy-turvy state, against all the laws of logic, it is the stronger and wealthier economy that equips itself for defence.

Customs tariffs effective in Hungary on the other hand put imported American goods at a serious disadvantage, since they are 15 per cent higher on average than those applied to goods from countries the trade with which is governed by the most favoured nation principle. This, in practice, means every other trading partner of the country.

3

In recent months certain meaningful events occurred in relations between Hungary and the United States which allow one to hope that, over and above a general improvement in relations, the foundations of a noticeable and significant improvement in the economic field are being laid down as well. This was prepared by an interchange of visits and high-level political negotiations, but mutual visits on the part of businessmen and trade executives also proved extremely useful at this stage, as well as a number of concrete agreements. These include a joint venture relating to a highly mechanized system of maize-growing, agreements governing the operation of the Intercontinental and Hilton hotels, the Coca-Cola and Pepsi-Cola contracts, and cooperation in the production of plastic lenses for optical glasses. Mr William Rogers, the Secretary of State's, visit to Hungary last July was a particularly important step in the normalization of Hungarian–United States relations. This was followed by the visit to Washington in March this year of a Hungarian governmental delegation headed by me, and by the visit to Hungary in April of a number of members of the Trade Committee of the United States Senate. All this indicates that the dialogue between the two countries is getting under way, and undoubtedly points to the fact that both parties are interested in blazing a new, freer, more modern and more favourable trail for relations in the years to come, and in getting away from the rooted, paralyzing practice of the period of discrimination.

To do this, however, an agreement had to be reached with the United States Government over property rights, a matter that had been dragging for a long time. Hungary has major debts, some of which derive from the pre-Second World War period, and others which arose since, connected with Treasury Notes, war damage claims, nationalization and expropriation. At the same time Hungary has claims on the United States as well, which the United States Government froze at the time. Hungary regulated similar debt problems with other capitalist countries by agreements. This particularly complex case has now been closed with the United States as well. Hungary will pay compensation amounting to $ (U.S.) 18.9 million in twenty equal annual instalments. The amount is not a major one from the Hungarian point of view, let alone from that of the United States, its importance in principle is very large nevertheless, since Hungary concluded the agreement in the awareness of the United States putting an end to damaging discrimination, applying the most favoured nation clause to Hungary as well in the future.

In April this year President Nixon submitted a bill to Congress (the 1973 Trade Reform Act) which also includes clauses empowering the President to apply the most favoured nation treatment to countries that have suffered adverse discrimination heretofore.

The bill enumerates three conditions which the President must apply to commercial agreements designed to govern the operation of the most favoured nation clause:

—the agreement cannot have an initial validity of longer than three years,
—the agreement can be suspended, or notice of termination can be given, at any time for national security reasons,
—the agreement must provide facilities for consultation permitting a continuous examination of its operation.

Agreements, in terms of the bill, can be extended for further periods, but only every three years, and an extension can only take place if, in the President's view, what the United States offers, and receives, are in equilibrium.

I think this is sufficient to show that the bill allows for great flexibility in interpretation. In its original form, and interpreted literally, it can certainly not be called liberal, since it places considerable emphasis on the use of restrictions.

4

What then are the prospects for the immediate future?

It would be hard to predict at this stage what Congress is likely to decide. There is nevertheless every hope that the essence of the bill will be accepted within a reasonable time, in the not too distant future. Hungary is confident that time will not bear out the views of the supporters of extreme protectionism. In that event negotiations will undoubtedly take place between the responsible United States and Hungarian government agencies leading to a new trade agreement, as well as to discussions on a number of important related questions.

The latter may well include the following:

—a reduction in tariffs,
—the ending of other discriminatory regulations,
—the regulation of the procedures for economic arbitration,
—facilities for consultation over matters subject to dispute deriving from the agreement,

—prescriptions governing the representation and operation of the firms and enterprises involved.

It is only after all these preconditions have been fulfilled that the basis for an increase in trade-turnover can be considered as being present. It would therefore be most useful to establish a Mixed Commission directing trade and cooperation matters, particularly at the initial stage, but possibly over a longer period. Such a commission would on the one hand, make up for the pretty spare and unspecific official economic contacts, on the other it would contribute to the bridging of initial difficulties allowing for the conditions for major cooperative business to be established. Major progress in the development of economic relations will therefore have to be preceded by a great deal of work demanding mutual good-will. The only thing that will prove even more difficult than this complex task is the stepping up of concrete trade and business activity.

Hungary aims to begin the preparation and planning of a commercial policy without delay, without waiting for the passing of the bill and the necessary trade negotiations. What has to be cleared up in the first place is which import and export sectors can reasonably be expected to show considerable growth, which forms of economic cooperation can be applied, what kind of a market organization increasing turnover will demand, what kind of special qualitative and technological conditions as well as conditions of delivery differing from those of other markets, Hungary will have to be prepared for.

The preconditions for a significant increase in turnover, can be produced in a few years of sustained work. If this is done the present turnover ($ [U.S.] 45–50 million) might well grow three or four-fold in the four years following the introduction of the most favoured nation treatment. The value of Hungarian imports will very likely remain in excess of that of exports in the future as well, but Hungarian exporters will do their best to ensure at least that the rate of growth of exports will be greater than that of imports. Even a four-fold growth would not yet give United States-Hungarian trade the importance and extent of that between Hungary and the country's major western European trading partners, but the United States would at least become a major market for Hungary, and the basis for future well-founded expansion would be laid. A four-fold growth would certainly be most important for the industries and firms directly affected.

It is important, when expanding exports, to concentrate strength on a number of territories that offer hopeful prospects. The following may well be amongst them: a few products of the food processing industry (canned

meats and spirituous liquors), pharmaceutical articles, vacuum technology goods, clothing, precision instruments, mass produced goods etc. Following repeated devaluation United States exporting firms can now compete favourably on the Hungarian market. Once the same tariffs apply to them as to Western-European goods, they will become powerful competitors of Hungary's present suppliers. It can be expected that major imports will include agricultural machinery, chemicals for agrotechnical use, stud animals, electronic equipment, computers, precision instruments, and a number of complete factories. For this to happen United States firms will of course have to show themselves more active in this country.

Commercial contacts have a certain form which goes beyond simple buying and selling. This is cooperation in production and distribution, that is different variants of joint ventures. Hungary is always glad to employ these forms, and considers ventures of this sort that have already been established with the participation of United States and Hungarian firms to be most useful. Hungary is primarily interested in the continuous acquisition of technological and marketing know-how in this field, particularily in industries showing a fast growth rate, and not in importing capital, since simpler and easier facilities are available for this purpose. The co-operation agreements with the Food Machine Corporation and the Corn Production System are good examples. A growth of economic links will obviously be accompanied by an improvement in scientific contacts, which can look back to a ten year old past. It is important for Hungary that scientific contacts should be established in certain important areas of Hungarian research programmes and that those carrying out study should be able to apply what they learnt as quickly as possible. A Hungarian proposal handed over to the responsible United States instrumentality in March this year in the form of a Draft Agreement on Cooperation in Science and Technology is designed to arrange the legal and organizational forms of further cooperation.

There is progress in foreign travel, and further progress is expected. This is given considerable Hungarian support, in awareness of the political and cultural advantages of getting to know each other better, not to mention the obvious financial advantages. Following the taking of a number of essential measures, and parallel with the quantitative and qualitative improvement of facilities offered to visitors from abroad, as against an earlier average of thirty thousand American arrivals a year, the figure for the last couple of years was over fifty thousand, many of those who came from United States being of Hungarian origin.

What was the response which Hungarians met with when discussing

these far from easy subjects with United States officials and businessmen? Hungarian endeavours to put as early an end as possible to the present position in mutual foreign trade which certainly cannot be considered a normal one, met with considerable sympathy in the United States. American negotiators proved to be straight and constructive, they did their best to cooperate with the Hungarians in finding solutions to the various problems which occurred. They were unfortunately not particularly familiar with the Hungarian situation and a great deal of explaining had to be done. There is a certain reluctance regarding a further liberalization of trade, and that explains some of the excessively cautious formulations to be found in the bill as well. The basis of the reluctance is that the present major trading partners of the United States have had significant successes on United States markets, American exports to those, countries, however, proved far from easy. Some presume that giving more scope to trade with so ialist countries will produce the same result. Businessmen generally welcome new opportunities. They are well aware that Hungary cannot offer as great a scope for major deals as the Soviet Union can, but they do not despise smaller, but encouraging opportunities either. Particularly medium-sized enterprises showed considerable interest, needless to say these are pretty big by Hungarian standards. Banking circles, it appears, will not only be ready to provide the appropriate financial facilities, but will also help to arrange contact between Hungarian firms and their trading partners. Most noteworthy proposals were submitted in this respect from various directions. It was generally emphasised that an increase in turnover was a question of trust, Hungarian negotiators on the other hand pointed out that trust could only grow out of a greater knowledge of each other which would result from increased turnover.

Lively and active firms in Hungary are already preparing their plans, they are putting forward new ideas in readiness for the time when the gates leading to the United States will be opened in fact. Industrial and agricultural enterprises are showing a most lively interest in technological novelties, in research results which may become accessible through the mediation of American firms. Foreign trade officials are also on the side of the more forward-looking. Those inclined to be conservative argue that they have problems enough on their present markets, that it would be a pity to undertake new risks and investments. The view that Hungary can sell everything in closer markets that are less demanding of extra work, and less demanding regarding quality, belongs to the same category.

I feel confident that the future will justify the author and the optimists.

PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE AND IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE

by

GYÖRGY ACZÉL

In January 1973 a national conference on information and culture was held in Budapest. It was attended by representatives of Hungarian cultural life, the leaders and members of literary, artistic, scientific and other cultural institutions, organizations and associations. Two reports were given, one by György Aczél, Secretary of the Central Committee and member of the Political Committee, of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, and the other by Miklós Óvári, Secretary of the Central Committee. We are publishing here the first part of György Aczél's report, dealing primarily with ideological and sociological issues. This report was issued in Hungarian by the Kossuth Publishing House. The second part of the study, which discusses the question of nationalism, patriotism and internationalism, and the development of Hungarian cultural and science policy, will appear in the next issue (No 52) of The New Hungarian Quarterly.

It should be noted that we have incorporated in small print those parts of György Aczél's closing speech which supplement the study. (Ed.)

Our work has been carried out under the complex conditions of the international class struggle. Two world systems, capitalism and socialism, the working class and the bourgeoisie, social progress and reaction, the forces of peace and the forces of aggression are locked in battle in every sphere of life. We are passionately and unequivocally committed in this struggle: we are an unshakeable part of the great international battle front for peace, socialism and the workers' movement. Proletarian internationalism is our inexhaustible source of strength. We are following with the closest attention in our ideological-cultural work as well the activities of our brother parties leading the building of socialism, first of all the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and we are developing ideological, social, scientific and cultural cooperation with the socialist countries as well as studying the experience of the ideological activities of the communist parties fighting under capitalist conditions.

The goal of the class struggle, which is being waged on an international scale, has not changed, nor has the aggressive nature of imperialism. Imperialism, however, is increasingly unsuccessful in its efforts to hold or

regain its positions by armed force. The historic victory of the international workers' movement, of socialism, and within it primarily of the Soviet Union, achieved and still achieves peaceful coexistence overcoming the resistance of aggressive imperialist forces. We are speaking of compulsion, that is, the compulsive force of realities, of the development of socialism.

The historic proof for this is the cease-fire that has been achieved in the Vietnam war. The world's strongest imperialist state, the United States of America, was forced to sign the cease-fire agreement. In all, the United States deployed over two and a half million soldiers in this war, and dropped several times more explosives on Vietnam than the total used in the Second World War: it spent altogether a hundred and forty thousand million dollars on the war in Indochina and yet suffered a heavy defeat.

The signing of the cease-fire agreement has been a victory for the Vietnamese people in their struggle for freedom and basic national rights. Now, when after three decades of heavy fighting that caused immeasurable suffering for the Vietnamese people the guns are at last falling silent, we again pay our respect to our Vietnamese brother party, the Vietnamese people: their heroism broke the force of the imperialist armies and the devastating means of modern military technology. The failure of the Americans in Vietnam cannot be divorced from the unshakeable intellectual and moral-ideological unity which has been expressed in the heroism of the Vietnamese people and which also demonstrates the significance of intellectual and moral firmness in the struggle between the forces of socialism and imperialism.

The victory of the Vietnamese people reflects the tremendous strength of proletarian internationalism. The help of the international workers' movement, primarily of the Soviet Union and of the socialist community provided inexhaustible, firm support for the Vietnamese people in their struggle.

The failure of the aggression was in no small measure due to the solidarity and support of the anti-imperialist forces. It became manifest once again that the solidarity of the progressive, peace-loving forces of the world can compel the forces of imperialist aggression to retreat.

An important part of the victory was played by the impact of the heroism, the moral and ideological force of the Vietnamese people on the public opinion of the world. The United States of America, which in Korea still attacked under the banner of the United Nations, was gradually left on its own on the Vietnamese battle fields. The United States was deserted by many of its allies when it started on the road of widening and continually increasing escalation.

We know that the end of the war did not bring an end to the struggle for the realisation of the just goals of the Vietnamese people; the struggle is continuing, even if under different circumstances and with different means. Nonetheless, we believe that the announcement of the cease-fire will one day be regarded as one of the great dates in history, a significant victory for the forces fighting for peace, freedom and socialism.

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Imperialism must continue to be forced to respect the conditions of peaceful coexistence. The smaller the chance imperialism has of achieving its goals on the basis of the strategy of the cold war or armed aggression, the greater the ideological struggle will become and the more complex its conditions and the more differentiated its methods will be.

The so-called convergence theories come from the ideological armoury of imperialism. These suggest that capitalism and socialism are developing in the same direction, that their perspectives are becoming identical. These theories serve just as much for misleading and disarming public opinion in the socialist countries as for pushing the communist parties in the capitalist countries to the sidelines. If the two systems converge—argue the prophets of this theory—then there is no need for a revolutionary struggle.

The bourgeoisie shows great zeal in spreading the various right wing versions of this theory. But, in full harmony with that fact, it tolerates and often even helps the Maoist and other so-called New Left forces which propagate—though with a negative sign—the same theory, i.e. the convergence of the two social systems, and thereby, contrary to their name, they often help the right wing. At times—irrespective of the subjective intentions of some of the people who take part in these movements—they signal to the left but move to the right.

It is highly characteristic of the present ideological tactics of imperialism that it simultaneousy aids the old, traditional—extreme right wing or even fascist type—anti-communism, and also the extreme left, because it supports everything that is against socialism, everything that it finds suitable for undermining the unity of the Soviet Union, the socialist countries and the international communist and workers' movement.

There is also false play with what Western propaganda nowadays calls "the free flow of ideas". Everyone who follows the activity of the large Western organs of mass communication knows that in bourgeois propaganda the demanding of peace and the wildest warmongering, shouting about democracy and the legitimising of fascism, the slogan of

humanity and racial hatred and the programme of social progress and extreme reaction exist happily side by side, so much so that their meanings are often identical. The information they provide about the socialist countries is a conglomerate of falsehoods, inventions and libels and when these are shown to be lies, they invent new ones without "going to the trouble" of refuting their earlier "information". These are not ideas, not even mistaken ideas, but conscious libels aiming to mislead and confuse. Ensuring free flow for such "ideas", for manipulating, misleading and falsely informing public opinion, would act precisely against the principle in the name of which they demand it: peace and peaceful coexistence.

We support the expansion of economic, scientific, cultural and travel relations, but only where they serve the mutual improvement of the intellectual and material development of the peoples, the growth of trust between them and the atmosphere of neighbourliness.

We are aware that the further widening of relations consequent on the thaw in the international climate will have certain ideological consequences even with normal forms of contact. These processes cannot be avoided, nor would we wish to avoid them. This fact has to be faced and this requires us to be better prepared for it than at present.

Miklós Horthy called himself a counter-revolutionary even in his memoirs. He was accurate but undeniably somewhat behind the times. Today the counter-revolutionary view rarely appears under its own name. The openly anti-communist propaganda has lost its efficacy because of our achievements. Loosening up is looking for new methods. One of its major manifestations is "contributing" to the discussion of the workers' movement, of socialism and Marxism. We have lived to see the day when Radio Free Europe plays the role of "commenting on" theoretical questions of Marxism–Leninism and "calling on us to account for" the building of socialism.

Even the least restrained hostile organs of publicity are obliged to accept that increasingly it is only by talking about socialism that they have any chance at all of "selling" their ideas. I repeat, this does not lessen their danger. The loosening up work of the imperialists—and also bourgeois propaganda in general—today counts primarily on the contradictions inside the workers' movement, which on the one hand they try to make appear greater than in reality and on the other hand they attempt to sharpen. For example, imperialist attempts to bring the socialist countries into conflict with each other by the policy of so-called selective coexistence. It overemphasises, even absolutises the different national features in the building of socialism; it propagates "national communism" and it enlarges out of

all proportion the problems of the inner development of the socialist countries. It encourages openly or potentially anti-socialist trends, various extreme groups, and supports and popularizes for its own propaganda purposes every type of pluralisation of Marxism.

There are those who deny the fact of loosening up, others underestimate its danger. There are also those who over-estimate it and instead of acting merely complain. They do not perceive that the most effective countermeasure against loosening up is the realisation of our positive programme, the successful building of socialism. This is the real basis for the ideological struggle.

All those questions must be answered, with the help of practice, theory, science and art which capitalist society is incapable of answering. There is every possibility for this. We have no need for illusions. We rely on the strict reality of "from where—to where", which includes an account of our achievements, the answering of our problems, and also includes the unmasking of imperialism.

As regards the latter, more advantage must be taken of the opportunities offered by the insoluble contradictions of imperialism. In other words, also building on a wider international alliance, the conditions of imperialism must be analysed more concretely and at greater depth and thereby unmasked more effectively than hitherto.

THE POLICY OF ALLIANCE AND THE STRENGTHENING OF THE HEGEMONY OF MARXISM-LENINISM

The ideological struggle on an international scale is the precondition for the policy of peaceful coexistence. In domestic politics the ideological debate is the means and condition for convincing people. The differences are obvious and fundamental: it is one thing to fight against the ideology of the enemy and something else to argue with our friends and political allies in order to overcome their anti-Marxist or non-Marxist views, to bring them closer to our work, thereby strengthening not only the political alliance and the hegemony of Marxism but also socialist national unity.

The Central Committee affirmed that in Hungary the socialist unity of the nation is strengthening. The policy of alliance is continuing to be one of the foundations of the Party's home policy. I might add that as it was yesterday and it is today, it will be in an historic sense tomorrow, too. The ideological struggle, the work of convincing people, the further development of the

alliance of the working class, the peasantry, the intelligentsia and the bourgeoisie, cooperation between communists and non party members, on an ideological basis, is imperative for the further development of our achievements.

The leading force of this alliance is the working class and its goal—which must be served by debate and the work of convincing people—is the full implementation of socialism. The policy of alliance and the strengthening of the hegemony of Marxism–Leninism cannot be divorced from each other and the two can only be realised together.

One might quote as an example of winning allies on the basis of principles János Kádár's words about the eminent peasant writer and politician Péter Veres: "In the course of time there were disagreements and collisions on three important questions between Péter Veres and the Communist Party. In two he was mistaken and as regards one he was right. One of the sources of argument was the views which Péter Veres held at one time, which were burdened with illusions and nostalgias regarding small peasant production. The other source of conflict, in which Péter Veres was right from the beginning against the official point of view at that time, was provided by those distortions which at the end of the forties and in the first half of the fifties seriously harmed the building of socialism. Our third great debate concerned the ways and means of eliminating these faults." Péter Veres, "seeing the correctness of the Party's policy and its increasing achievements, seeing the growing welfare of his class, his people and the flowering of the country, turned with all his heart and soul away from the conception of a peasantry producing commodities on a small scale and became an active advocate of collectivist, large-scale farming and not only a titular advisor but a significant supporter of the socialist system."[1]

What made this relationship possible? First of all the Party's firm principled policy. It is impossible to "select bits" of this policy, it is impossible to be just patient without arguing, or to argue without trust. The policy of alliance requires that the voice of our allies should be listened to, their opinions should be taken seriously, especially if they are moved by such a feeling of public responsibility, such a genuine desire for the happiness of the people as Péter Veres was.

The political alliance, however, does not mean and can never mean the glossing over of ideological differences. It cannot mean concessions on principles to anti-Marxist and non-Marxist views. "In connection with the Party's policy of alliance, it must be stated even more clearly and un-

[1] János Kádár: A szocialista Magyarországért (For a Socialist Hungary) Kossuth Publishing House, 1972, pp. 510–511

mistakably: we can have a political alliance with strata, people and groups representing different ideologies, but there will be no synthesis in ideology. We insist on Marxism–Leninism and on its basis realize and increase our critical activity, even in connection with our allies, while encouraging and strengthening the political alliance. Every ideological confusion must be uncovered and Marxism must be represented. The purpose of the political alliance is to bring our allies nearer to us also in the field of ideology and there is only one type of convergence that can be envisaged in this field, namely, that our allies should accept or acquire as far as possible the system of ideas of Marxism–Leninism," said János Kádár during the November 1972 session of the Central Committee.[1]

There have always been and always will be political preconditions for the realisation and strengthening of ideological unity. After the defeat of the Counter-Revolution, it was the political consolidation of the socialist system and the widening of political agreement that created the foundations for the ideological winning over of the allies. The development of political agreement could be characterised—even if in a somewhat oversimplified manner—by saying that then, after 1956, around 1957–1958, the majority of the people did not want capitalism and for that reason accepted socialism, while today an increasing and overwhelming majority of the people consciously want socialism, more consciously than ever before.

Some people think with nostalgia of the days when, at the beginning of the fifties, the then party leadership declared—at the price of completely ignoring reality—the monopoly of Marxism–Leninism. For the last decade and a half, the Party has recognised the fact that our society is not yet ideologically united. It is only the appearance of an undifferentiated, contradiction-free ideological unity that has disappeared. We do not cherish illusions and do not assume unity where it does not yet exist; we do not speak in the past tense of views which are still alive and make their effect felt.

These things have to be stated not for a passive acknowledgement of facts but for us to see our greater tasks more clearly and to realise that today, besides ensuring the political conditions for the political alliance, the ideological debate against every bourgeois and petty bourgeois view is an active, dynamic element of strengthening socialist national unity. Open ideological debate strengthens the genuine hegemony of Marxism and thereby the political alliance and the socialist unity of the nation.

[1] *A Központi Bizottság 1972. novemberi, az Országgyűlés 1972. decemberi ülésszakának főbb dokumentumai* (The major documents of the November 1972 session of the Central Committee and of the December 1972 session of Parliament) Kossuth Publishing House, 1973, pp. 19–20

As regards the discussion, both its good and its less fortunate examples remind us: we all still have much to learn in this field. Béla Fogarasi, the philosopher remarked some time ago, after 1956, concerning a very unfortunate contribution: "What a pity that there are not fifty such speeches." We looked at him in surprise, so he added: "Because there are five thousand of them." Seriously though: it still frequently happens that we do not argue accurately and not always well. We do not always consider that today several different fronts and venues exist for debates, for the confronting of views and, accordingly, the goals, means and methods of the debate also vary. In connection with today's discussion, I wish to pick out a few of the aspects which determine the nature of a debate, without aiming at completeness.

Let us start with the clearly hostile, of which there are many not only abroad, but there are some at home, too. There is nothing to link us with the views of these people. Their method is to attack socialism, the people building socialism and the leading force of socialism, the Party, at their foundations. They use for this purpose all the means and variations of reactionary ideologies, lies and libels.

What is the requirement of the debate against them? It is not to convince them but, while they employ ideological weapons, to defeat them, with the force of our ideas.

Where this sort of "ideology" emerges, the main requirement of the adherents of socialism is to reveal, the reactionary nature of these ideas and isolate their representatives and their views.

In general what characterizes them is that the agressiveness of their views cannot be regarded as some sort of mistake, an unwittingly committed error. In their case intention and idea are one and if their views turn into actions, we cannot differentiate between their persons and their views. In that case the confrontation does not take place according to the rules of ideological debate but—since they transgress our laws—in keeping with the laws of the Hungarian People's Republic, through the administration of justice.

Those who are politically not enemies of socialist society, who observe the laws of the Hungarian People's Republic, belong to a different category. Some of these people do not accept Marxism–Leninism and ideologically oppose the scientific world-view, dialectical and historical materialism and the socialist concept of society. Thus they have a radically different view of the past, present and future of society and our people than the adherents of Marxism.

Marxist publications cannot provide a forum for these entirely opposing views. This has always been our position and will remain so in the future. Where, occasionally, such views were nonetheless published, the fault lay in the practical execution of our principles governing publication. In such cases the people involved are not those committing hostile political actions and perhaps not even people of hostile political intentions. Thus in this instance the administrative restriction applies to views whose dissemination is against the people and socialism, since they raise for debate fundamental questions which are historically already answered and decided. What is involved here is not revealing the bad intentions of the individuals but the restriction of the publicness of the views and thus of the debate against them. The debate against these views must be carried out—very consistently and with principled rigour—in those forums, within professional circles, scholarly institutions and creative workshops, which are suitable for this, and irrespective of whether these views appear in a worthless form or under the cloak of art or science.

Once again, we debate and must debate quite differently with our political allies who stand with us on fundamental questions and who are moving nearer to the Marxist–Leninist position. The content and goal of our relationship with them requires that we should debate with them differently, even if we are opponents on several questions. This "differently", however, cannot mean concessions regarding principles, but often does not even mean making the debate less sharp. What makes this debate possible and meaningful is the political alliance, the agreement regarding the fundamental political questions and the most fundamental political goals. This, naturally, goes hand in hand with the coinciding of a large part of the views. In these cases it is precisely the political alliance linking us, the existing common ideological elements and ties and the emphasis and expression given to them that provides the basis for a definite and open debate. The fact is connected that (in the overwhelming majority of cases) not even the very sharp debates conducted with our allies on certain questions lead to a break, but rather to a coming closer of the views on the basis of Marxism. This is especially so because in such debates we confront each other not as lecturers and pupils needing lecturing. In this case our debating partners are people who even if they as yet do not hold the same ideological views as we do, love their people and country and wish to improve its conditions together with us. Thus in this case mutual confidence is needed and there is no shame in mutually learning from each other. The two false extremes that we occasionally manifest in the debates with our allies must be stopped: on the one hand the attitude which identifies debate with mere lecturing and on the other hand the attitude which, fearing for the "good relations", fails in an unprincipled compromise to speak up even against mistaken or erroneous views. Ex cathedra superiority and a tactics oriented lack of principles can only harm the political alliance. Frankness and openness going with mutual respect—what we can also rightly expect—can only develop and strengthen the alliance and friendship based on principles. In cultural and artistic life the policy of alliance is necessarily and often represented by our contacts with significant creative personalities. In this

connection I once heard someone say: "The leaders often appear in public with poets, writers, artists and scholars. But how is it possible to criticize them—that is, the cultural creators and scholars—under such conditions?" We can safely answer this point of view by saying: it is possible to argue even better and more openly with them and to criticize the manifestations of those of their views that are alien to us. This is because in such cases the warm, friendly relationship justifies and expresses the agreement on fundamental questions and common goals; the relative agreement which is the basis for the debate and which is generally strengthened through the debate.

As regards the outstanding creative personalities, we must never forget that in general they have not stood only for themselves, their own person. Their person, precisely through their works, represents different strata of Hungarian society, of the Hungarian people, their ideological state of mind and general mood. Their views and attitudes—those which agree with ours just as much as those which differ—are linked not only to their person, they are not only features of their individual characters. When we have debated and are debating with them without ever having demanded that they should take up a position against their convictions and when (although we may have restricted the publication of one or other of their works) they have fought side by side with us and are fighting with us in many areas for the common cause of socialism, then it is not only they who are involved. Through them and by them we have debated with wide strata, many village teachers, peasants and intellectuals. By listening to their opinions, we learned not only from them, but also from a part of the people. Through these debates we have learned of the views of various strata of the people and we convince them of their mistakes and at the same time we have strengthened in wide strata our political alliance, the conditions of our ideological agreement.

The policy of alliance will last a historically long time. The Party has not changed its principles in the past either, among other reasons because it has always employed them in line with changing reality. If we look at the past period it is obvious that the alliance, including the gradual elimination of ideological differences, has strengthened. On the basis of experience it appears justified to conclude that in ten or twenty years our allies will come even closer to our ideas, and socialist national unity, the ideological unity of our people will be even stronger.

It is, naturally, not only our allies that we debate with. As Marxism gains ground, it is becoming increasingly natural that Marxists and Communists also debate among themselves. There can be many reasons for this. Marxists are also differentiated from each other by the various life patterns and divergent experiences that form their identities. Occasionally this can be a cause for debate. Nor is it a rare occurrence that, besides making identical Marxist evaluations on society, politics and the most fundamental ideological questions, the opinions of communists differ on such questions as, let us say, artistic taste, morality in private life and similar issues. This can also be a cause of arguments.

The socially significant and important divergences in views, however, are today most often caused by the fact that the unavoidable contradictions and new tasks in the development of socialism pose questions which require urgent solutions. Dogmatism and revisionism have a permanent tendency not to recognize this type of inner contradiction or, by dramatizing them, to make them appear antagonistic and to treat the debates whose task is to analyse and answer these questions accordingly. This interpretation of debates was rather prevalent before 1956 and it unavoidably led to the weakening of party unity and the loosening of the constructive forces. For that reason the responsibility of communists in this sort of internal debate is extremely great. We must see quite clearly that the internal contradictions, the new questions posed by life can only be answered and be brought nearer to a solution by principled debates. Debating, therefore, is not only desirable but also necessary. In the course of debates between Marxists, however, it must always be remembered that the confronting of views is in this case between comrades fighting for the same goal, sharing the same ideological convictions and principles The responsibility of the debate within Marxism obliges us to take note of each other's ideas and arguments, to endeavour to achieve truth together, not by unprincipled compromise, nor by "defeating" one another; so that the debate should not loosen unity but make it firmer and more profound. The truly fertile debate is not only the separation and confrontation of the divergent views on a given question but also the bringing nearer and creative synthesis of the partial truths on the opposing sides We must remember this, so that in convincing each other, learning from each other, accepting each other's partial truths and building on them we should not look at whether this or that person is right but rather for Marxist truth, the truth of reality to be outlined in the course of the debate.

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The Central Committee stated: "The resolutions of the Tenth Congress are being successfully carried out also in the field of ideological work, propaganda and in the spheres of science and culture. The identification of

our society with our socialist goals has further increased. In ideological life the influence of the Marxist–Leninist ideas has strengthened."[1]

Hungary's economic, social and political life has made further advances since the Congress and on this basis—and not automatically—public opinion and the people's culture, way of life and system of evaluations have also advanced.

On the basis of a system of distribution that accords better with Hungary's present stage of development and her socialist goals, the distribution and interest relations have become clearer and more unequivocal and this has contributed to a more open and democratic atmosphere. The main achievement is that more and more people have come to realise that it is not enough to make demands on the socialist state, it is also necessary to create the material-economic preconditions for satisfying them. The consciousness of "we" and "ours" is also developing more favourably. As a result of all these factors the self-knowledge of Hungarian socialist society has also become more profound and realistic. An ever increasing proportion of the people have a realistic idea of the level of the country's economic development, as well as its possibilities for further development, and on the whole public opinion and the consciousness of the people have become more mature.

The community morale of the working class has been enriched with new aspects as a result of the greater independence accorded to enterprises, more effective factory democracy and the increasing role played by the work-place communities. The socialist brigades are increasingly communities actively acquiring and shaping the socialist way of life and culture. The occupational skills, demand for knowledge and interest in new solutions of the working classes, as well as their spirit of initiative, have grown in line with increasing technical requirements.

The peasantry, which even a decade and a half ago was regarded on the basis of some mythically primordial characteristics as individualistic and averse to anything communal, has transformed before our very eyes into a class building socialism, a class building a better life on the basis of common property, and a class increasingly tied even in its way of thinking to the forms of collective production. Big words are alien to the whole style of our Party but in this instance it is right to speak of a transformation of historic significance.

The activity of the working people has in general become more con-

[1] *Közlemények a Magyar Szocialista Munkáspárt Központi Bizottságának 1972. november 14–15-i üléséről* (Communiqué on the November 14–15 1972 session of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party) p. 29.

scious and there has been an increase in their acceptance of responsibility. The wider masses, precisely because they are more actively shaping the life and the ideological-moral features of the country, feel an increasing responsibility towards it. That is why—as the statement issued at the November 1972 session of the Central Committee also pointed out—"the condemnation of ideological and political deformities and phenomena that are alien to the norms of socialism is ever more definite and backed by greater numbers."[1]

Petty bourgeois mentality

Even prior to the November 1972 session of the Central Committee, and in essence even before the Tenth Congress, the Party membership and the wider public heatedly debated negative phenomena in social consciousness and public morality. The debate was not on the question of what those phenomena that are alien to socialism are. It was beyond any argument that egoism, selfishness and money orientation in general are manifestations of the "petty bourgeois mentality". The debate was all the sharper, however, on the causes of these phenomena. In these debates it was primarily the fate of our socialist ideals and values that concerned that part of public opinion, first of all public opinion within the Party, which is interested in and feels responsible for our social development.

Concern for our values and for the future of socialism is in itself a positive phenomenon, though in these polemics no small part has been played by certain illusions and by a lack of understanding of the real trends of development, and at times by abstract, moralising criticism and even demagogy.

Some people attribute the symptoms of a petty bourgeois mentality to the new system of economic management and attempt to link negative phenomena in public thinking with the principle of financial incentives.

Others attempt to defend the system of economic management by emphasising that those ideological and moral deformities which are alien to socialism also existed earlier in the public's thinking. They were merely hidden and what is happening is that they have now come to the surface and are being recognised. These views undoubtedly contain certain partial truths that should not be underestimated, but precisely because they are one-sided and partial truths, they do not provide a real answer to the question of what causes bring about, keep alive and strengthen the symptoms

[1] Ibid.

of the petty bourgeois mentality. Thus they cannot help in discovering how to fight these phenomena, or in restricting them, what is more—their false solutions could—independently of their intentions—carry this struggle in the wrong direction.

The question is: can certain characteristics of the petty bourgeois mentality be preserved or recreated under present Hungarian conditions? Yes, but how and why? It is necessary to give a specific and historically valid answer to this question.

One of the contradictions in Hungary's development is that a petty bourgeois mentality survived the demise of its direct social base. As a result of the abolition of private ownership of the means of production the socialist reorganisation of agriculture and the development of socialist property relations, the proportion of the petty bourgeoisie has declined very markedly. According to the 1970 census, only one and a half per cent of the population belongs to this category. The petty bourgeois mentality, however, as a way of thinking, a view of life and a form of conduct is not limited to this narrow stratum of the population. Certain of its aspects have survived in a wider sphere: kept alive, among other things, by habits and conditioning.

The historic social transformation and restructuring, took place in the recent past. A significant part of the population now forming the fundamental classes of our society, and especially today's socialist cooperative peasantry, emerged from the petty bourgeoisie.

The habits and conditioned reflexes of millions—as Lenin warned—are a tremendous force that can be overcome only through a lengthy and tenacious struggle. Not even the worker—Lenin said—was separated by a Chinese wall from the old society. A great deal survived in him of the traditional thinking of the capitalist society of old.

It is natural that the petty bourgeois mentality is present to a much greater extent in those strata of our present society, such as the white-collar workers and professionals which, because of their intermediate position, were the traditional bearers of the petty bourgeois ideology in the past as well.

One has to draw attention to this fact so that we should not be uncomprehending as regards petty bourgeois manifestations which appear—with some people and at times—even in our own ranks. It should be recognised that even among those who regard socialism as their own, there are necessarily at times traces of the moral legacy of the past, certain elements of which coexist in the same person, at the same time, with socialist consciousness.

That is why we reject those views which suggest that the petty bourgeois mentality is an entirely new phenomenon in our public life, that it is a peculiarity that has its roots entirely in the present phase of our development.

The negative aspects in our public opinion can be traced back not only to such causes as the recent conditions of private ownership and other characteristic features of Hungary's development. The contradictions in our development are also connected with the specific features of socialism itself. One of the fundamental contradictions of socialism is that in the interests of our long-term social goals, such as, for example, social equality, it is necessary to realise the principle of differentiation in incomes. The same contradiction is also manifest in the fact that while our goal is the deepening of collectivism, of the feeling of community, precisely in order to achieve this goal we must also build on individual incentives.

One of the sources of the ascetic and levelling tendencies is the assumption that after the victory of the socialist revolution goods and money relationships can be abolished in a relatively short time and that revolutionary enthusiasm is enough to motivate members of society to work hard. These ideas have failed to withstand the test of practice and they are also incorrect from the theoretical point of view. Indeed, a heavy price had to be paid for these illusions.

What conclusions should follow from this? Should an opposite extreme be chosen which ignores the revolutionary enthusiasm and the devotion of the people and which could prove harmful to a no lesser degree? It must be seen quite clearly that neither revolutionary enthusiasm nor financial incentives can in themselves offer a solution. It is mistaken and false to divorce the two in the building of socialism. An exclusive reliance on moral incentives—while goods and money relations exist—would cause, among other things, a decline in production and productivity. To treat material incentives separately from the moral ones would lead to a weakening of the influence of socialist values and therefore to the spread of the system of values seeping through from the petty bourgeois mentality or from "modern consumer society". Where the system of financial incentives is operating well, it provides a recurring—also moral—testimony which evaluates the workers' contribution to society. It would be a mistake, however, to think that this is sufficient to solve the question of moral incentives, or that financial and moral incentives are completely overlapping. It would also be a mistake to fail to search for other forms and possibilities of moral incentives which could help in bringing out the creative energy of the masses to the fullest extent. No system of financial incentives can in itself com-

pletely substitute for, but can merely aid the workers' conscious activity and devoted work for the sake of socialism.

Neither distribution, nor consumption, which is regulated by it, nor the incentive to work can be regarded as purely economic issues. They have the closest links with the political and ideological processes of society, with the value system that rules public thinking, the value judgments of public opinion and the endeavours, life ideals and moral features which develop on this basis. That is why these inter-relationships must be taken into consideration in discussing the constant perfecting of our system of incentives or the modifying of some of its features.

Moral incentive certainly does not mean the handshake that goes with the pay envelope and is still less a substitute for it. The real moral incentive is the development and deepening of work-place democracy, the openness and sharing of the making of decisions, the availability of information and collective control, the socialist relationship between leaders and subordinates and also the proper work-place atmosphere. If these and many other necessary conditions are absent, the moral incentive is ineffective.

Further, in order to avoid the recreation of the manifestations of the petty bourgeois mentality, not only the Party's ideological educational work must be made more uniform and successful—naturally, this also has to be done—but the forms and possibilities for social-political activity in the work-place and the sense and responsibility of ownership must also be increasingly developed and strengthened. The goal is to increase productivity and develop the right relationship to work and at the same time strengthen and spread socialist values. After all, socialist consciousness can only become reality and the shaper of every-day life, socialist morals can only become the natural, habitual way of life, through everyday practice, primarily at the place of work.

The socialist transformation of the way of life and of public thinking is inconceivable without spreading, and constantly enriching on a much wider scale, the new socialist forms of community activity. There are especially great tasks for the Party organisations, for every communist and every leader in this sphere.

In emphasising the role of the work-place community in the development of socialist consciousness, in mediating between the individual interest and the interest of society, we are aware that the community interest in the place of work can also have a negative effect. Socialist society is not simply the coordinated cooperation of small communities. Socialist consciousness, the community morality, is not simply an identification with the interests of the small community. We must not forget either in the theoretical sphere

or in our practical decision-making that the work-place communities are also the carriers of the interests of the whole society and therefore their particular interests must be in harmony with the general interests of society. In other words, any work-place or other community can only function in a socialist way if in its morals and conduct it bears in mind the interests of the wider society, if it fulfils the mediating role between the individual and the partial community, between the community and the whole of society, and between momentary and long-term interests. Unless this is understood, there is a danger that group interests might come into conflict with the interests of the wider society and that the interests of today might come into conflict with the interests of tomorrow.

The negative phenomena that can be perceived in public thinking are connected with the contradictions in our development, but also with those errors and inconsistencies which were pointed out by the Central Committee in its Statement of November 1972.* A more consistent carrying out of the fundamental principles of our system of economic management, in every sphere and in every respect is required here.

One of the fundamental goals of socialism is increasing welfare. A necessary condition for this is improving economic efficiency, which cannot be divorced from the consistent realisation of the principle of distribution according to work. It is not this principle itself, but its wrong, incorrect application and practice that provides scope for petty bourgeois endeavour. It must be ensured that the differentiated incomes should proportionately accord to differentiated performances. The petty bourgeois concept of "everybody for himself and the devil take the hindmost" which often manifests itself and is even voiced in our public life at times, must be eliminated.

The criticism voiced by the workers is not directed against the principle of distribution according to work, nor against differentiated incomes, but against those cases where differentiated incomes are not backed by the appropriate performance. It is especially destructive when the workers notice undeserved and unworked for incomes in the case of those in managerial positions and Party members.

Those dedicated to a society building socialism are ever more critical and morally demanding. We wanted them and want them to be like that. Let us not be surprised therefore, when public opinion reacts far more critically to phenomena that are alien indeed to socialism. Let us endeavour to meet the moral requirements posed by socialist values, which act as bases for

* Communiqué on the November 14–15 1972, Session of the Central Committee of the HSWP (In Hungarian)

comparison, forming and determining public opinion, and let us voice our convictions. Just as we agree with these criticisms, associate ourselves with the critics and increasingly guard the socialist character of the relations of distribution, we reject the "left wing concern" about the "danger of refrigerator-socialism" which occasionally arises in certain—primarily intellectual—circles. Some people are concerned for the socialist system of values and the socialist way of life because of the growing demand for higher consumption, for more material goods. (Even if this appears a cheap argument: it has always been the owners of refrigerators who wanted to protect the people from owning refrigerators.) For us the goal remains, in accordance with the principles of socialism, the raising of the standard of living of the working class and of all working people.

It is not a manifestation of the petty bourgeois mentality when people enjoy life, enjoy their greater financial opportunities and wish to increase them even further. The danger comes when consumption becomes an end in itself, a scramble for material goods, to the detriment of community activity and a full life. This is indeed a manifestation of the bourgeois mentality and alien to socialism.

The contradictory character of development

We would all like progress to be smoother and straighter. Many people find it hard to accept that progress is accompanied by contradictions. Yet, while it is possible to take a step forward in history, it is impossible to step out of it, in other words to eliminate the contradictory character of social dynamics. Contradictions cannot be regarded as entirely negative phenomena, their existence, solution and recreation at a higher level is the condition and foundation of social development.

The difference between socialism and the class societies is not that socialism eliminates contradictions but "only" that socialism has no antagonistic, insoluble contraditions.

Antagonism and contradiction—as Lenin said—are far from identical. The former disappears in socialism, the latter continues to exist.

In socialism there are contradictions which follow from its essence and whose solution, re-creation and solution at a higher level is the source of socialist progress. In the sphere of interest relations, for example, pointed out the Report of the Central Committee to the Tenth Congress—such contradictions exist between the long-term interests of development and the daily interests of the population, and between group interests and the

interests of individuals. Differences in interests are manifest in the development of national income, in price, rent and market relations, in the determination of a faster or slower rate for eliminating the difference between towns and villages and in other questions."[1]

The acknowledgement of the existence of contradictions, however, must not mean the acceptance and justification of the necessary nature of every contradiction.

There are contradictions which arise as a result of our subjective errors, or at least which are accentuated by the shortcomings in our work.

Let us stay with the question of contradictory interests; for example, the contradictions between group interests and the social interest can be magnified by weaknesses in the system of incentives. Thus not every contradiction is a condition and moving force of progress. Contradictions, therefore, must always be analysed concretely. To forego this concrete analysis holds many dangers: the denial or unnecessary justification, or even overdramatisation, of contradictions.

At the beginning of the fifties, for example, the denying of existing contradictions manifested itself in the form of attributing every trouble or problem, when such things appeared—since contradictions officially "did not exist"—to the subversive activities of the enemy, and if there was no enemy at hand, the leadership manufactured one. The consequences—from the law-infringing trials through agrarian policy to cultural policy—are well known.

It is also a mistaken, non-Marxist evaluation of contradictions to believe that the great social problems and contradictions can be solved by a single decision. Another mistake is to confuse reality with one's own wishes, to believe that what one wants to see in society are already facts or that their lack is a disenchanting negative aspect of reality.

A denial of the existence of contradictions also contains other dangers: it is conducive to self-satisfaction and can create an atmosphere which hinders a realistic consideration of the actual situation. This is exemplified by the view which does not acknowledge the real contradictions and differences in interests that also exist in socialism and which thus does not see its political role as the task of regulating and coordinating partial interests by the realisation of the interests of society.

One of the manifestations of this view is the naive faith mentioned earlier that every problem and difficulty can be, at one stroke, eliminated by a single order or decision.

[1] *A Magyar Szocialista Munkáspárt X. kongresszusának jegyzőkönyve* (The minutes of the Tenth Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party) Kossuth Publishing House, 1971, p. 94

There are, however, also serious dangers in dramatising contradictions. We have historical experiences of that, too. After 1953, revisionism generalised the faults and negative features caused by the personality cult and dramatised our problems and difficulties to such an extent that it made our regime appear identical with the personality cult. It thus increased the contradictions, which played a great part in the fact that temporarily many people wavered or turned against the Party and our socialist regime. The dogmatic and revisionist answers given to the contradictions of the early period of socialist construction—reinforcing each other—played a major part in the fact that in 1956 the enemy was able to bring about a counter-revolution.

The dramatisation of contradictions still occurs, both on the right and on the "left". Its most characteristic manifestation is to ignore the achievements of socialist construction and even question the socialist character of the achievements. Some people magnify the genuinely existing contradictions that occur during the building of socialism, thus, for example, they make the existing differences in interests appear as insoluble. They react to the manifestations of the petty bourgeois mentality in a petty bourgeois manner, in the form of anarchist "radicalism", identifying these phenomena with socialism itself.

The over-dramatisation of contradictions has become almost a fashion. It is the meeting point for the right and "left" in their mutual endeavour to collect and enumerate the greatest number of negative features.

That is why the achievements of our development must be properly appreciated. We should not be shy in speaking about our genuine achievements because we might be accused of schematism or because in the fifties we talked about achievements even when there were not any. Well, we paid a heavy penalty for that.

The achievements of this country are a credit to the strength, talent and work of the people. Laying emphasis on our results gives self-respect to the working people.

It is necessary to have the courage to face up to the accusation of conformism especially fashionable among some intellectuals, to face up to the trendy attitude which criticises and belittles everything. In some intellectual circles, and occasionally even among people in leading positions, a cynical attitude has become fashionable. Let us have the courage—if courage is needed for that—to defend with absolute faith and conviction the achievements of the people building socialism.

One of the favourite methods of both right wing and "left wing" demagogy is to deny or ignore the steps taken to discover and overcome

contradictions. It is an almost everyday phenomenon that some people avail themselves of the publicity of the media to speak and write about various problems as if they were the only ones to have discovered them, completely ignoring what the Party and the state administration is doing by way of published analyses, measures, the creation and enforcement of laws, etc. for the solution of those problems. And if the Party's measures are not realised at the rate that we all would wish for, this is partly because many people do not like to exchange the role of comfortable outside critics for actual, creative action. The Party's activity and the support of the masses behind it are an achievement of which we communists can be proud.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

The Tenth Congress of the Party emphasized the fact that there are many important questions of principle which will have to be analysed and worked out in the course of the ideological work of the coming years and that our theory and propaganda must answer the old but still open, as well as the topical, new questions.

One of the fundamental manifestations of the strength and of the spreading of the Marxist–Leninist theory and method is that it plays an ever increasing role in the development of science. If there is an area of learning where the fertilising effect of Marxism–Leninism can be especially well measured, this is the social sciences, whose every branch has greatly developed, despite the delaying effect of the years of dogmatism. In the last decade and a half a whole score of basic summarizing works have appeared. At the same time our scholars have helped in the solution of the practical tasks of our society, among others in the working out of decisions connected with our economic policy as well as decisions regarding our socialist state organisation, socialist democracy, science policy and the educational system.

The sphere of research which directly or indirectly serves the work of guiding society and the development of the consciousness of the masses has further extended. In line with the resolutions of the Tenth Congress, our social science research institutes and university departments are working on such topical themes as the development of the working class, the changes in its structure and in its occupational, political and ideological features; the transformation of the social structure of today's villages and of the way of life and consciousness of the peasantry; the changes in the social role of the intelligentsia; the ways and means for further developing public

administration and socialist democracy; the developmental processes of social consciousness, morals and culture.

The social sciences have not only become more exact in their methods, they have also moved nearer to life and reality. Their most significant achievements came about where the creative, debating spirit of Marxism was manifested. It is a measure of the recognition accorded to our social scientists that they have been allowed to take part, and have taken part, not only in research but also in the practical realisation of their research results.

Our task is not, however, to congratulate ourselves but to discuss, as well as the achievements, the worries, the unfavourable phenomena and primarily our tasks.

What Lenin once remarked still applies, even under our present conditions: in every situation when the revolutionary movement is confronted by changing conditions, new questions and tasks, there emerges the classic type of the intellectual renegade and a certain group "breaks off". The classic feature of the intellectual renegade is that he declares his break with Marxism and the workers' movement by "ideologising" this break.

Naturally, we are pleased when we gain adherents, when our ranks expand, and not when we lose anyone. Our fundamental policy demands, however, that we should defend the principles of Marxism–Leninism which have been tested in practice, and that we should not let the cause of socialism be damaged in the ideological sphere either.

Even if only in isolated cases, there are certain theoreticians in Hungary who question the leading role—and almost the very existence—of the working class and search for the "radical" revolutionary forces of our age largely on the basis of imported ideas. According to them, the working class and the workers' movement is not a truly revolutionary force. The socialist revolutions of world historical significance in our century were not genuine revolutions, as they have not led to a truly revolutionary transformation. They reject every existing form of socialist practice, thus denying the socialist nature of existing socialism. They look for the true revolutionary forces of our age in the youth and intellectual groups in the developed capitalist countries, in "islands" outside society, in "communes" and in some sort of "counter-culture" movement. As regards Marxist theory, they stand on the basis of the pluralisation of Marxism.

These views emerged in the recent writings of András Hegedüs, Mária Márkus, Ágnes Heller and Mihály Vajda.

According to András Hegedüs and Mária Márkus, for example, one group of the Eastern European socialist countries has realised the so-called

"bureaucratic model" while another group, which they claim has recognised the role of market mechanisms, follows the "main road" which was once travelled by the advanced capitalist countries. They make it appear that the developmental perspective of this latter "model" is the standard of living and the way of life of the developed capitalist countries. In line with the terminology of bourgeois theories, they characterize the difference between the developed capitalist countries and the socialist countries of Eastern Europe as a difference between developed and less developed societies. In harmony with this, they assert that the socialist countries are not really engaged in the building of the socialist society but instead concentrate on the tasks of "modernization" and that the following of the above mentioned "main road"—even if it does not re-establish the private ownership of the means of production—is bringing about an essentially profit-oriented, acquisitive society. The Eastern European countries—according to this view—have to go through a "serious structural transformation" in order to realise the "socialist alternative" vaguely outlined by the authors mentioned above. Their ideas depend on conditions such as the masses turning away from the programme for the building of socialism which has been accepted in these countries and the effect of the "various economic reforms" in strengthening "the development of bureaucracy in a pluralistic direction".

It could be argued whether these "theories" are manifestations of right wing or "left wing" revisionism. One thing that is certain, however, is that all this has nothing to do with Marxism and the cause of socialism.

The questioning of the fundamental theses of Marxism is beyond those boundaries, both in the ideological and in the scientific sense, within which we regard debating possible and fruitful.

One might quote György Lukács in connection with these revisionist tendencies. According to his telling comparison, certain questions cannot be regarded as debatable in the social sciences since Marx, just as since Copernicus, Galileo and Kepler it has ceased to be a question of the freedom of science to debate whether the Earth moves round the Sun or vice versa.

Lukács also maintained that while a neopositivist intellectual manipulation can have a pluralistic foundation, Marxism knows only one correct answer to any question: the one which accords with objective reality. Lukács also made clear that to cast doubt on the objectively socialist character of existing socialism belongs to the sphere of bourgeois libels and shows a lack of comprehension.

György Lukács—unlike those theoreticians who deny the leading role of the working class—regarded the workers' movement as Marxism's home-

land and was one of its soldiers for more than fifty years, from the time when he joined the communist movement. He never regarded himself as infallible and always sought debate. During this half century his political and philosophical ideas were on several occasions sources for debate within the movement and also within the Party. It happened more than once that in these debates he represented a mistaken view on political—and sometimes not only political—questions, but even on these occasions he made every effort to keep the argument in line with the principles and practice of the Party. "Right or wrong, my Party", he said in 1957, in one of the most critical periods of his political life.

We regard the work of György Lukács—especially his work in the field of aesthetics—as an outstanding Marxist achievement. His life-work had, and still has, an effect on almost all our intellectual life, including those who now oppose, from the right or the "left", the Marxist essence of his work.

György Lukács—with all his mistakes—belonged and belongs to us, therefore we are the heirs of his life-work. Not uncritical, but responsible heirs; responsible for its values.

His readmission into the Party was a critical readmission. Let us remember the debate at the Political Academy, in 1968, initiated in his presence, regarding the question of continuity and discontinuity. We are still opposing his view that the main task for socialist realism today is the work of so-called "exposing". We did not and still do not agree with his term "Stalinism". Many critics and literary historians argued against his narrowing down of Hungarian literary traditions, his evaluation of Imre Madách*, for example. One could enumerate several more issues of even greater importance. Still, it is our well considered opinion that only the critical analysis of his work—which is still a task for Marxist social scientists—can lead us to the clearer recognition of his values, too.

A narrow group of his erstwhile students has tried in vain to appropriate his life-work, which they have in essence turned away from. But the dogmatic small-mindedness is also harmful which rejects his entire life-work as non-Marxist. In judging such large-scale and contradictory life-works as Lukács's, Lenin's evaluation of Rosa Luxemburg is illuminating as well as exemplary. It was given in 1922, when, Lenin said, Paul Levi was trying to acquire merit by eagerly re-publishing exactly those works of Rosa Luxemburg in which her errors appear. This had to be answered, said Lenin, by two lines from a good old Russian fable "the eagle, it is true, occasionally descends to the ground, but the chicken never rises to the clouds". Rosa Luxemburg

* 1823–1864, the author of *The Tragedy of Man* (1861)

—continued Lenin—was mistaken on the question of Poland's independence, she was mistaken in her evaluation of Menshevism in 1903, she was mistaken on the theory of the accumulation of capital, she was mistaken when in July 1914, in company with Plekhanov, Vandervelde, Kautsky and others she urged the fusion of the Bolsheviks with the Mensheviks, she was mistaken again in her works written in prison in 1918 (on her release, however, she largely corrected her mistakes). But despite her mistakes, she was an Eagle and will always remain one and not only will her memory always be dear to the Communists of the world but also her biography and the complete edition of her works will be a very useful lesson for many generations of Communists all over the world.

The reason why it was important to go into all this is to make it clear that György Lukács's life-work and the present views of some of his erstwhile students have little to do with each other.

Several speakers touched on—partly in connection with the opening speech—questions pertaining to the evaluation of the life-work of György Lukács. One can only agree with the view that we need an evaluation free from all "legends" and prejudices. It is also true that it is not the evaluation of the life-work of György Lukács that is the watershed of our ideological life. The watershed is in all cases Marxism–Leninism, its creative employment and further development free of dogmatism and revisionism.

There are two comments that I should like to add to what has been said. Firstly, the debate is not "irreverence" but, on the contrary: it is the honour due to the living work. Comrade Lukács himself said in the interview given to *Népszabadság:* "I am an ideologue, I expect people to argue with me." Indeed: the true respecting of a work is always analysing it and if necessary arguing with it, and never keeping silent about it. We have chosen the road of giving respect by debate that is worthy of the work. This was also the case at the time of the well known debate on continuity—discontinuity. The way in which Comrade Lukács reacted was characteristic of him. We sent him the material of the debate and his answer was: I do not agree with what you say but I will certainly be at the talk because I am convinced that the debate is needed. I think—he said—this is how Marxists must debate between each other and it is this debating moral which must be made to take root in the widest sphere.

My other comment is connected with a question of detail. Contrary views were voiced regarding the interviews by György Lukács that appeared in the West. I repeat what Comrade Dezső Nemes has already stated: György Lukács himself publicly dissociated himself from the bourgeois falsifying of his interviews. I quote from his statement sent to the journal *Nemzetközi Szemle* (International Review): "The majority of the alleged interviews that appear abroad come about by my guests not keeping the agreement and most often they publish texts that are quite alien to me, as my opinion. For me personally it would, of course, be the most convenient not to receive visitors of this nature at all. Unfortunately I cannot do this because they would certainly spread the view abroad that I was forbidden to converse with foreigners. Such rumours would harm the good reputation of our people's democracy abroad. Thus —despite all the unpleasantness that goes with it—I am forced to keep up the present state—which is not at all congenial to me because of the abuse of certain foreigners." He dissociated himself even with the last act of his life: he left his library and manuscripts to socialist Hungary.

This legacy obliges—primarily Marxist philosophy, Marxist social scientists—to debate and evaluate this Marxist life-work, which is of great significance even with its mistakes.

I think that even those who in the course of the debate approached Lukács's life-work from the aspect of the problems and the debatable aspects will discover more that is of value in it than what Comrade Lukács—with rather excessive modesty—attributed to his work. He said once: if 30 years after my death 5 per cent and 50 years after my death 3 per cent of my works will still serve to enrich Marxism, I have not lived in vain.

As regards their objective role, the pseudo-revolutionary views, the right wing and "left wing" revisionist theories and movements primarily act even in the developed capitalist countries to obstruct the unity and cooperation of the truly revolutionary forces. The anarchist, petty bourgeois-radical, "New Left" criticism of capitalism, the entire ideology of the petty bourgeois romantic revolt against capitalism in the West, is undoubtedly a crisis product. It expresses the fact that ever wider petty bourgeois, intellectual and student strata, and even the bourgeoisie's own children, have a feeling of malaise in the increasingly alienated and dehumanised world of the capitalist system. But these strata can only fulfil a genuine revolutionary role if they find their way to the working class, to the revolutionary workers' movement and its revolutionary party.

The "New Left" theories which advertise the student and intellectual movements as an independent revolutionary force have declared in vain, in 1968 and since, the "integration" of the working class and the organisations of the workers' movement into the capitalist system. The capitalist system has integrated not the working class, not the Communist parties, not even the trade unions which fight the class war, but these groups, together with their theories. Capitalist manipulation makes a fashion of this sort of "revolution".

Ever since society split into antagonistic classes, history has always posed its great questions of destiny from a class aspect, and it still does so today. Accordingly, the front lines of the world stretch between capitalism and socialism, the imperialist bourgeoisie and the working class. Anyone who does not recognise this fundamental fact and tries to find and follow some sort of road in isolation from the revolutionary forces which determine the development of today's world, breaking with them or even opposing them, not only starts a venture which is historically condemned to failure but —irrespective of his intentions—sooner or later becomes a tool of the forces of imperialism.

In Hungary, under socialist conditions, too, these right wing and "New Left" wing bogus revolutionary theories play an objectively reactionary role. It is no accident that in the campaign which imperialist propaganda wages against us there is increasing emphasis laid on these views and on the advertising of all seceding groups and every renegade of whatever rank who left the international workers' movement.

The circle of adherents of the "New Left" and right wing revisionism, using romantic anti-capitalist and bogus revolutionary slogans and at times even Marxist phraseology, is a small one in this country. But these views, together with other ideologically false and politically harmful ideas, might

represent a danger especially for certain smaller or larger groups of young people. I stress: this is not only a youth problem. But young people have less experience of life and of society and it is often precisely the politically most active young people who might become the adherents and propagators of bogus revolutionary and other hostile ideologies. It is difficult to make young people understand that the revolution cannot always progress by sudden transitions and open struggles, that consolidation and construction, the period of fundamentally changing the life of society by way of tiring everyday work over a long time is also a part of revolution.

The reason why young people, who face the realities of our society today with revolutionary ideals but without much experience, often find it difficult to understand clearly the various phenomena and problems of our society is that they have not received enough guidance about the revolutionary perspectives and the difficulties of the road leading to our eventual goals.

Lack of discipline, petty bourgeois mentality, and a money orientation are repugnant even to the adult generation. It is understandable that the best part of youth turns even more strongly against these. But this reaction becomes socially harmful if young people—and not only the young—do not learn the intelligent, right way of acting against these phenomena. A further danger of the false "New Left" revolutionary theories is that their necessary failure is followed by a turning away from politics, from ideology, by a loss of faith, and cynicism. A turning away from ideology and politics is acceptable and even comfortable for the capitalist system. For socialist society, however, which, because of its very essence needs consciously acting citizens, this attitude is especially dangerous.

Young people, when they fail with the false ideas, might easily say: "If there are no barricades, let's cultivate our gardens. If we can't tear up the paving stones (ignoring that it is the result of hard work, a road built by and for the people), then let's find the meaning of life in privatisation rather than in the community." If someone today in Hungary turns away from public life, from politics and ideology because of such a disappointment, then this—especially in the case of a young person—is a grave loss even if he is "no trouble" and carries out the work that he must do to earn a living. Potentially, these people may become in these difficult times if not opposers, at least outsiders who do not accept any solidarity with society and who look on what "they" are doing as from a theatre box. In order to avoid this, more systematic, planned, socially coordinated activity is needed. Youth must be prepared for the revolutionary activity in everyday life and—in collaboration with them—intelligent, active spheres for action must be sought and found. Patience is also needed, and that we should not

prefer problem-free, unquestioning people to those who genuinely seek to work for the community, and often only make mistakes because of their lack of experience.

The young and the not so young must equally take heed of Lenin's warning delivered in 1921: "If we sing in our marching song 'And the last fight let us face', there is unfortunately a little inaccuracy in this."

The socialist revolution is not limited to a single great act, its goals are also being realised today. The building of socialism is actually the carrying out of today's tasks in this revolution. To recognise this, to take an active and conscious part in the building of socialist society and to accept it together with its contradictions and difficulties, is the contemporary and genuine meaning of being a revolutionary. This, however, can only be recognised by those who clearly see the meaning and perspective of the "last fight" and also the road leading to it.

We must also be more careful lest we should ourselves contribute to making the word "revolution" hackneyed. We will not let anyone expropriate such terms as "the cultural revolution" or even "revolution in the way of life", but we must put a stop to the constant use in the press of such terms as "sex revolution", "fashion revolution", "light music revolution", or the advertising of a face cream as a "revolution in cosmetics".

If we make a close connection between the petty bourgeois mentality and egoism, then it can also be said that nationalism is an extended egoism on a larger scale and we have to use all our strength to fight against it. Naturally, not on the basis of community nihilism, cosmopolitain principles and nostalgias, but on the basis of Marxist, socialist patriotism.

Not long ago Gyula Illyés and Péter Rényi wrote independently of each other that the slogan "Proletarians of the world unite!" became adopted in Hungary in an inexact translation. The correct translation of the original German text is "Proletarians of all countries unite!" Naturally, there is no question of anyone wanting to change the phrase which has become part of our minds and hearts, nor could it be changed, it has merged so closely with the struggles and life of our working class and our people. By mentioning the precise formulation I merely wish to illustrate the indivisibility of the national and the international: "Proletarians of all countries unite!" makes it perceptible what the revolutionary working class movement took account of from the beginning: that the proletariat lives within national frameworks yet at the same time it has to cooperate in an internationalist community.

I hardly think that the individual and the widest community could be linked directly; that anyone says: "I am one with the proletariat of the world" without at the same time identifying with the genuine interests and good endeavours of his own people, without accepting the struggles of his own working class and people.

On the other hand, it is impossible today for one to love his own people without linking its interests to the class interests of the proletariat, to the international interests of the working class and, through it, the respecting of all peoples.

This unity of national and international must be manifested in our everyday consciousness, art and culture alike. If there is nationalism that offends us, we can never and under no circumstances answer it by nationalism because thereby we would harm the cause of the international workers's movement and socialism and the Hungarian people—inside and outside our frontiers.

We take a firm principled stand against all types of nationalism.

The form of fighting against nationalism chosen by a journalist on one of our dailies is, however, less than fortunate to use a mild phrase: his "principled" thesis was approximately that we should watch

the extent of patriotism because too much patriotism can easily turn into nationalism. Genuine, socialist patriotism can never become nationalism, there is an insurpassable barrier of principle between them.

Nor can we give scope to the manifestations of cosmopolitanism and national nihilism. Especially not because today the value of the nation is also a socialist value.

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The elucidation and propagation of the contemporary content and perspectives of revolution and revolutionariness is also an important condition for convincingly unmasking those theories which endeavour to provide false perspectives. Within this, the criticism of the various convergency theories is of primary importance.

The various theories of the industrial society, the convergency theories, do not appear in Hungary primarily in a direct form. But occasionally one does meet in social science journals the words "modern industrial society", an expression which obliterates all differences, and at times the message fits the term. This terminology suggests that the basic differences between socialism and capitalism can be put inside brackets, even ignored and that it follows from the identical industrial-technological conditions that the two societies have identical natures.

These unscientific and misleading theories and terminology have no place in Marxist social science.

These views, however, have an influence in areas which are relatively removed from the social sciences. The fact that we study the methods of factory organisation in the developed capitalist countries and employ them them in Hungary obliterates in the mind of some technical experts, lacking an ideological armour, the differences between the two systems. Similar causes can evoke technocratic views which, though they are not identical with the convergency theories, can result in an underestimation of the social aspects of technological progress and of social science and ideology in general.

Such views are also reinforced when our science occasionally borrows and uncritically applies to Hungarian conditions a conceptual framework that is widely used in the bourgeois social sciences. Some of these terms then become part of the common consciousness and for some people their use even becomes a snobbish measure of up-to-dateness. Another manifestation of this tendency is the sensation-seeking imitation of every fashion product of the capitalist ideological-cultural world market. These phenomena are a warning that under the conditions of peaceful co-existence much more attention must be given to the overcoming of these undesirable ideological fashions.

It must be ensured immediately that in the mass media which play a

key role in the stimulation and satisfaction of cultural demands, such ideologically oriented fashion trends should not be able to come even temporarily to the fore and that they should, indeed, be pushed back as soon as possible.

In the social sciences the western fashion phenomena generally have a direct ideological content and largely produce harmful political effects. There has been a growth in the intellectual importation of apparently ideology-free research methods and techniques. I wish to stress that it would be a mistake to commit once again the dogmatic simplification which denied that bourgeois social science exists and is even developing within certain limits. After all, even the interests of the maintenance of the capitalist system require that bourgeois social science should discover and report on certain interconnections of contemporary social reality and that it should develop more modern methods of scientific discovery.

When the discovery and generalisation of concrete interrelationship are involved, however, we must be more watchful: the method and the point of view, that is, bourgeois ideology, can easily merge into one another. The guiding principles on science policy clearly indicate the basis for the process to be followed: the need for critical adaptation. We would harm ourselves by foregoing the utilisable methods or technical innovations of contemporary bourgeois social science but we would cause even greater harm if we did not divorce and purify these methods from the ideological content behind them.

There is no single perfect method and it is not our intention to judge any research method in itself. We are against, however, the absolutization of the various mathematical methods and techniques. The problem, naturally, lies not in the employment of these methods but in the "neutral" point of view, the indifference to value, that is connected with them. The actual content—not of the utilization but of the cult—of these techniques is: the abandonment of social commitment, refraining and persuading others to refrain from value judgements and the opening of the way for the conceptual apparatus of bourgeois theories, and consequently bourgeois ideology, ideological uncertainty and to the turning away from ideology.

The truly Marxist critical adaptation of exact methods does achieve results, as shown by the employment of mathematical models in practical economic planning. At the same time it is impossible not to notice that, for example, structuralist formalism has become an unscientific, value-nihilistic fashion. What is more, it is even being spread in the form of "popular education" and we can witness how certain people fashion these apparently sterile methods into a theory and how a partial investigation

method can become a movement-forming cohesive force, a slogan, an ideology, a world-view.

Social practice and theory cannot be divorced from each other. In the interests of advancing our social existence, the scientific cultural and also the widest social public life must analyse and debate many issues. The enrichment of Marxism, the strengthening of its authority and position depend on how effectively this is carried out. But it also depends on how actively Marxist social scientists engage in the debate of scientific public life and how far the polemical, orientating nature of Marxism manifests itself.

János Kádár emphasised in the introduction to the November session of the Central Committee: "Our main weapon in the sphere of ideology is Marxist truth and our advocacy of it. We have never denied that we are not relinquishing the administrative methods, including banning, when this is necessary, but the spreading of our ideas must be ensured primarily by our convincing advocacy of them."[1]

It has to be emphatically asked in connection with the fulfilment of this task: why is it that the Marxist criticism and the Marxist evaluation of the non-socialist, anti-Marxist tendencies manifested in our scientific life fall behind the requirements? Why is it that the Marxist practitioners of the social sciences keep silent all too often when elements and categories of bourgeois science seep into our ideological life? It is not a witch hunting critical crusade that we want. It is necessary, however, to take a definite, firm, principled stand against the agressive moral terror of snobbish fashions. And, most of all, it is necessary to realize the unity of the research and ideological functions of Marxist social sciences and the polemical, fighting, debating character of Marxism–Leninism.

The consistent confrontation with bourgeois views has always been a source of theoretical enrichment for Marxism. That is one of the reasons why the statement by the Central Committee stressed the importance of invigorating the spirit of debate with the non-Marxist views. The statement made it clear that debating is the means for the defence and further development of Marxist ideology and it is an inescapable duty for Marxist ideologists. Scientific public opinion, however, often remains silent not only when debatable publications and phenomena appear, but even in the face of publications and phenomena that should certainly be debated.

The causes of the poverty of public debate and for the reticence in this

[1] A Központi Bizottság 1972. novemberi, az Országgyűlés 1972. decemberi ülésszakának főbb dokumentumai (The major documents of the November 1972 session of the Central Committee and of the December 1972 session of Parliament) Kossuth Publishing House. 1973. p. 20.

sphere is largely rooted in the lack of balance in the public life of the social sciences. In more than one branch of the social sciences the various views and schools, instead of confronting each other, become isolated from each other and demonstrate their opposing opinions not by voicing them but by the silent emphasising of their isolation. The representatives of the divergent opinions do not regard it as their duty to take note or even cognisance of each other's views and even less to subject them to serious analytic criticism. Debate can never become offensive if the points of agreement are made clear, because it is possible to speak more sharply regarding the topics of disagreement if one's views are expressed in criticism of the opposing view rather than the person. However, unfortunately, the Marxist spirit of debate is—to understate matters—not satisfactory in Hungary.

The Central Committee does not merely ask but requires of leaders, of communists, to change this, because otherwise the development of Marxism and of the social sciences would suffer.

EUROPE—IDEAL AND REAL

by

IVÁN BOLDIZSÁR

I

These days Europe, European security and cooperation and European unity are very much, and in a most lively fashion, present in world politics.

In culture, in literature, and in intellectual life generally it has always been truly alive, in these last thirty years as well. European spiritual unity is the Europe of art and literature, the potential, the ideal Europe. Whenever writers, artists or scholars in this divided Europe, and this is as true of one half as of the other, spoke or wrote of Europe they always had the whole in mind, regardless of whether they happened to be in Bonn or Berlin, Leningrad or Warsaw. This was as true of Swedish poets as of Italian essayists or British theatre producers. It was even more true of French poets and philosophers. The French always identify themselves with Europe, with the whole of Europe, even when their General does not give the politically correct password: from the Pyrenees to the Urals.

The idea and consciousness of an integral Europe has burnt with a most persistent and lively flame in Hungary. Those who have read the fifty issues of this paper, or even only some of them, do not have to be told who Attila József is. Such readers will no doubt remember his often-quoted poem, the "Welcome to Thomas Mann". In its last line a great poet, in full possession of his powers of condensation, as succintly and concisely as is humanly possible, expressed what Europe means in Hungarian poetry, that is in the common knowledge of the Hungarian nation, and the respect in which it is held:

"In you we greet, here amongst white men, a European."

I recently experienced once again what being a European means in Hungary. One of my plays *(The Survivors)* was recently broadcast by Hungarian Television. The next day, at a PEN Club meeting, a young poet friend, perhaps a little tongue-in-cheek, congratulated me, what a good idea it was, he said, to add a few timely and fashionable phrases about Europe to a story that took place in 1944.

I thanked him, and assured him, that I was not as clever as he was young. Those words about Europe that had struck his ear had not been recently added, that would not have been proper. They were there in the text of the play I wrote eight years ago, and there I reported exactly what I had heard in 1944 from one of the four martyred Hungarian writers, victims of fascism, on whom I based my hero.

These four were Antal Szerb, Miklós Radnóti, György Sárközi, and Gábor Halász, members of that lost generation which war and fascism destroyed and took away from Hungarian literature.* The character in my play, speaking for his whole generation and for Hungarian literature, tells his friend who tries to help him get away, and a Dutch officer, who after escaping from a German PoW camp assists the Hungarian resistance while disguised as a member of the SS, that those "Dutchmen, Frenchmen, Italians and Englishmen stay Europeans even if they wallow in philistinism, but we Hungarians have to renew our struggle to be Europeans day after day."

Europe is not merely a geographical term in Hungarian, but a human one. To say of something that it is European is to express a certain plus in quality. Every Hungarian knows, since Attila József has said it, what being a European amongst white men means: understanding as against hatred, peace as against conquering aggression, an encouraging handshake as against humiliation, humanity as against barbarism, and unity as against divisiveness and splitting.

That is what all of us felt who are survivors today, and so did those ten or twenty years younger, and those even older than us, on that 8th of May 1945. Europe was not a fashionable word for us but much more than that. For a long time it was merely a vision, which is beginning to become flesh now, and in the months to come. That generation, however, which made European unity—security and cooperation in present usage—one of the major aims of its life, thought, wrote, argued, and if at all possible also acted in the past twenty-seven years as well, as if this unified Europe had already come into being. This "ideal Europe" did in fact exist in a certain sense just as a "spiritual Hungary" lived in the hearts and works of Hungarian humanists in the 15th and 16th centuries.

* See "A lost Generation" in *The N.H.Q.* No 36.

Those young men to whom our ageing generation refers ever more frequently because we know them less and less, and they find it increasingly difficult to understand us, imagine that Europe found itself divided all of a sudden, and that for many long years the two halves made signs to each other across the ice floes of the Cold War. Things did not happen that way. For a good two years after the war the Foreign Minister's Council of the Great Powers still operated effectively. I witnessed all four of them, Molotov, Bevin, Bidault and Byrnes arguing in Moscow, early in the spring, arguing and sometimes hopelessly searching for that common idiom which was about to be lost. At the same time a small council of the intellectual Europe held a far from official meeting in the Hotel Moskva. The guests drank vodka and the hosts drank whisky. Foreign correspondents, writers and journalists from every part of the world whom Moscow had asked to attend precisely this meeting because they wanted to take a step ahead.

Few are aware, nor have historians given sufficient attention to the fact either, that there was no Cold War yet when the last meaningful Four Power Foreign Ministers' Conference took place. The Great Alliance between East and West of the Second World War was still alive then. At that time in Moscow there were signs a plenty that the Soviet Union was prepared to negotiate and was even ready to make concessions. Only much later, thinking back, it seemed odd to me how many people released from various prison camps there were in Moscow at the time. Our Russian friends kept hinting, but we naïve enthusiasts did not understand them.

In any event we writers and journalists, there in the Hotel Moskva, which rose out of Soviet lands still bleeding from a thousand war wounds like a mighty luxury liner, were extraordinarily confident. *One World*—we kept on repeating Wendell Willkie's, and Roosevelt's slogan, and we Europeans added: and One Europe as well. This was a bit of a challenge at the same time, after all Churchill's ominous Fulton address had been given a short time earlier, where the fatal word Iron Curtain was first mentioned, there was no Iron Curtain yet at the time, but the great British statesman, by saying the word, evoked it, and actively contributed to bringing it about.

At a time when the policians were beginning not to understand each other any longer, the Europe of the spirit, in that great Moscow hotel, still felt it spoke the same language. Pierre Courtade is there in front of my eyes running in the colours of *L'Humanité*, signing copies of his modern Hamlet. He wrote of a present day Hamlet whose *To be or not to be* is addressed to

the whole of society: society's yes is to be found in humanity and socialism, but he personally is ground between the mill-stones of the contradictions of progress. Those who know the life-story of Pierre Courtade, that youthful resistance fighter, boldly charging Communist journalist, daringly innovating novelist and self-torturing thinker are aware that, in his Hamlet novel, he divined and wrote of his own fate and the tragedy of his generation. He died with a split mind in a Europe still split in two at the time, in the resurrection of which he did not dare to hope.

And there I see Wilfred Burchett, a man whose life was filled by adventures, one of the best informed men in the world, who first told the news that the four foreign ministers were no longer able to come to an agreement. He told me just like that, while we were talking in an ancient ZIS on the way to the airport, where he took me, since he was the first to know as well that Aragon was about to touch down.

In the summer of '46, at the Paris Peace Conference, we already felt that, true enough we were talking peace but the peace of Europe was less and less secure and settled. At the time of writing, evoking these memories, I looked at my '46 diary, not even a diary really but a notebook where I recorded names and odd words serving as mnemonic devices, and found a section I had forgotten. "Let me tell you, there will be two Europes from now on," none other said to me than Gyula Szekfü, in a small restaurant in the Rue Ponthieu, not far from where the Hungarian Legation used to be.

Gyula Szekfü was one of the outstanding figures of Hungarian intellectual life between the two wars, at first a Catholic and conservative historian, who was the first member of the Hungarian ruling class who already at the end of the thirties recognised the two tragedies of the Hungary of the time, peasant misery and the Nazi German danger. In his periodical *Magyar Szemle* he drew the attention of the ruling estate owners, gentry, generals and bankers to this double danger, but all in vain, in spite of the power of his words. He was one of the first to recognise the tragedy of the Hungarian situation at the time, but the way out as well. In *Valahol utat tévesztettünk* (Somewhere we lost the way) and *Forradalom után* (After the Revolution) he not only dealt with the illusions of a generation but also pointed out what had to be done. He was the first Moscow Ambassador of a liberated Hungary, and he attended the Paris Peace Conference in a double capacity, as a historian, and as a diplomatist. Even his authority as a scholar and his persuasive powers proved insufficient to secure an adjustment in keeping with ethnographical principles of the mistaken and damaging Trianon frontiers.

"There are two Europes," he said. I argued with him. I referred to the

impressions I had gathered in Moscow. I quoted Roosevelt and Willkie. Szekfü did not like to argue. He was a taciturn man. He only continued the sentence he had started. "For a time we shall have to live accepting that there are two."

3

Not even two years passed, and all those who believed in Europe left off writing novels or searching for the secrets of the neutrons, they put down their brushes and interrupted their thinking on the specific nature of the aesthetic for the sake of defending the peace of Europe, that is of the whole world. In the autumn of 1948, in Wroclaw, at the first international peace conference of intellectuals, we discussed, already in the awareness of a divided Europe, ways of preventing the worst in the age of the American nuclear monopoly. If there was one man who represented one side, the socialist one, in the world of the spirit, but in such a way that his person, his works and his words expressed the whole of the ideal Europe as well, that was György Lukács, and if there was someone who stood for the other Europe on the same level in the world of science, that was Julian Huxley. They were the images and symbols of a divided Europe, but of an ideal Europe as well. For three days they unceasingly argued in the conference hall, in the patched up hotel amidst the ruins, but they wanted the same things. Those ministering to their holy intention included Picasso, Joliot-Curie and Anna Seghers, Kingsley Martin and Paul Robeson. Éluard sat silently dreaming near them, almost like a prince.

It was not enough to talk and exchange ideas for peace, that is for Europe, organization was needed as well. Anyone who opened the doors of the rococo conference room of the *Maison de la Pensée* in Paris one spring morning in 1949 could well have thought that he found himself at a symposium on world literature. Éluard, Aragon, Pablo Neruda, Ehrenburg, were all around the table, Aimé Césaire was there, the writer from Martinique, Andersen-Nexö, the Dane, as well and Vittorini, the Italian, and so were Fadeev from Moscow and Sholokhov from the banks of the Don. I felt like a little boy suddenly moved from the kid's table and allowed to eat with the grown-ups at the family one. I truly sat at that, geographically in Paris, but actually at the table of a spiritual Europe that was becoming faint, when I was a member of the preparatory committee of the First World Peace Congress.

Joliot-Curie took the chair: "Let us not merely talk about the horrors of atomic war, but also of how beautiful life will be in the atomic age.

Life is worth living, my friends." And Aimé Césaire, a black European who had come from the Antilles, amongst white men, quoted an African saying of his ancestors: "When I see a jackal tearing a corpse I chase him away and shout at him: don't hurt my body." When the Peace Movement, in the years that followed, defended the body of the world in Paris and Sheffield and Vienna, it prepared a united Europe to come. This was the time when the part of Europe that did not start playing at Cold War was cooled below freezing point as well. But it was precisely this half of Europe, everyone knows it was ours, which soonest had a go at melting the icebergs of the Cold War by reformulating the demands of peaceful coexistence and expressing the renewed opportunities for it. The road from stating this to the Helsinki preparatory conference was a long and winding one, so that very often we could not see where the next step should be.

This was particularily true of the German question. Already towards the end of the fifties and early in the sixties East-West meetings and round-tables took place where scholars, artists, writers, philosophers and sociologists joined together trying to find ways of getting the existence of two Germanies to be accepted, in this way taking the first, and most important step towards cooperation in Europe.

I can remember that sometime in 1963 or 1964 in Brussels I sat around the same table with West German thinkers, East German poets and mathematicians, Frenchmen, Italians, Englishmen, Russians, and naturally Belgians as well, and we all had innumerable thoughts, one more beautiful than the other, but even there, amongst ourselves, we were not able to create even a mini-basis for mutual understanding. And still we met again, and others met as well, and a new intellectual way of life took shape in Europe. This was the age of the dialogue. The first of them was the Geneva International Meeting, simply known as *Rencontres Internationales*. It is characteristic of the intertwining of the European spirit and Hungarian literature that a Hungarian dramatist, Miklós Hubay, should write a play about the Geneva *Rencontres*, calling it "One of the Possible Europes." The Venice SEC, the *Société Européenne de Culture* was, and remained, one of the most worthwhile meeting places of the age of the dialogue. What spiritual gymnastics took place there under the firm and visionary guidance of Umberto Campagnolo. Ehrenburg argued with Mauriac, and György Lukács with Moravia.

In Geneva some years ago, at one of the most recent *Rencontres Internationales* meetings, the students admired Herbert Marcuse's grizzly scholar's head, and perhaps they were even about to believe him that Europe's role in the shaping of human thinking was finished, and that the true fires and

points of ignition of the spirit must be sought in California, when a curious European unity suddenly came into being. Raymond Aron, "the cleverest reactionary in the world", and Pierre Abraham, the aged Communist editor of *Europe*, Tertulian, Lukács's Rumanian disciple, Philippart, the Belgian, two Poles, and I all agreed that such "Twilight of Europe" prophecies had already proved to be the downfall of Oswald Spengler.

4

Europe, as an idea, as a spiritual and later political unity, rose ever more clearly from this dialogue. It is to the credit of the Belgians that they produced a novel international configuration in Brussels, a new way in which the nations of Europe could cooperate. Allow me to lower the modest flag of my memories to a barely known great man, an indefatigable apostle, a true European, my friend Maurice Lambilliotte, who died on the very day when the great Unesco Conference of European Ministers of Culture first met in Helsinki, a conference which was one of the results of many years of hard work on his part, preparing for mutual understanding in Europe. This cultural conference was a true Biblical prefiguration for the great, the political, "Helsinki". This was the very first time that, on a government level every European delegation discussed, argued, and agreed.*

The road up to now was not easy. I can remember Unesco conferences not even ten years ago where they tried to bow out the Soviet Union from a European cultural programme. Nor am I able to kid myself that writers, philosophers and artists all recognized in good time that peace in Europe would mean the calm conditions they need for their creative work as well, that is even if one leaves everything else out of account. The very opposite is true, the contradictory situation prevails even today that politicians have progressed further in recognizing what is needed to achieve unity, security and cooperation in Europe than certain writers and would-be writers who attended this or that PEN conference.

Weighing up the situation with a cool head it becomes ever more clear that Europe had to be split in two in order to be able to seize its unity once again. This is where the give-away word slipped onto the paper: "Once again?" *For the first time!* Ever since the end of the Middle Ages—and that was a different Europe, and its unity meant something else altogether—unity only lived in the hearts and in literature. The historians of

* See "Helsinki—Prelude to Europe", *The N.H.Q.* No 48.

the Peace Movement have shown that for a thousand years now a decade rarely passed without a war somewhere in Europe. The unity of Europe, that is its security, its peace, its culture, cooperation within it, in other words a good, worthy and beautiful life for every European could only reach the stage of being on the threshold of implementation because its socialist half came into being, and became stronger at the time when it was split in two.

5

Organizations, institutions and even parliaments that call themselves European but represent only one half of Europe came into being one after the other in Western Europe. But in that part of Europe to which Hungarians belong, the idea of a possible real Europe, including the whole of the continent, was preserved unimpaired. This, after many still-born proposals, finally took an unrejectable shape in the 1970 Budapest Appeal. This was *the* step from an ideal Europe towards the real, the natural Europe, from literature to politics, from dreams to negotiations.

I can still hear Gyula Szekfű's quiet words at that Paris table now twenty-five years later: "For a time we must live accepting that there are two."

What has changed? There still are two Europes and there will be two Europes for some considerable time. The difference is not in the number but in the verb, in the fact that one not only has to live in this Europe, it is also possible to do so.

INTEGRATION AND INTERNATIONALISM

by

FERENC KOZMA

The classic bourgeois view maintained that the good of the public automatically followed from the endeavours of legally equal individuals to make a profit. The experience of the capitalist world economy over a hundred years shows that formal equality in the competition between nations who compete and cooperate under unequal material conditions in fact gives rise to inequality, to one-sided dependence: the differences in the level of development not only fail to disappear but actually become greater. There was a further significant increase in the differences in the level of development between the industrialised and the developing countries in the sixties: in 1960 the gross domestic product per inhabitant in the developing countries was 9.4 per cent of that of the industrialised capitalist countries; by 1969 it was only 7.7 per cent. Even inside Europe, the less industrialised capitalist countries (Portugal, Spain, Greece, Ireland) were unable in the sixties to bring their level of development nearer to that of the leading industrial powers. The gross domestic product per inhabitant of the above mentioned four countries was at 33 per cent of the index of the European Economic Community both in 1960 and in 1969. It reveals the weaknesses of the bourgeois ideals of equality and cooperation that by the second half of the twentieth century the differences between the most advanced and the most backward countries in the world economy increased to a ratio of 20–30 to 1.

Socialist cooperation

The socialist world has not adopted the bourgeois view of formal equality. When socialism moved outside the framework of a single country and became an international system, it was necessary to work out the basic

principle which was to guide its further development. This follows from the nature of socialist social organisation: socialism cannot do other than launch a persistent fight against polarisation in every sphere of social existence. If it failed to do that, it would endanger its social-economic equilibrium and its opportunities for long-term development and, consequently, the historic justification for its existence.

The logic of the situation aimed the development of the economic community of the Eastern European socialist countries in the direction of greater equality. The CMEA cooperation has had three persistent goals ever since the founding of the organisation. Firstly, the fastest possible development of the economic strength of the whole community, catching up with the developed capitalist countries where industrialisation began much earlier. This is indispensable not only for their political-military security but also because it expresses the centuries long ambition of the Eastern European masses, living on the periphery of the developed world, for a better, richer, more cultured life.

Secondly, in order to achieve a general acceleration of economic development, it has been necessary to create the right conditions for undisturbed economic development in every country belonging to the community. This required protection against the competition of those economies which industrialised earlier and were more productive and more competitive in world markets, as well as against the active discrimination born in the 'fifties, in the atmosphere of the cold war. Thus the economic community of the Eastern European countries had to act collectively to overcome the effects of the embargo, the discrimination and the ever fiercer Western European competition.

Finally, the community had to overcome those barriers which obstructed the development of economic cooperation between socialist countries with different historic-economic endowments. The differences in the level of development and those arising from the unequal sizes of these economies could have become such barriers. Consequently socialist cooperation had to develop forms of dynamics which enabled the small and large and the industrialised and the industrialising economies to intertwine—to develop profound commercial and production links—so that neither backwardness nor small size should have an adverse affect on any socialist country.

The development of the whole community, therefore, had to be faster on the one hand than the development of the surrounding capitalist world and on the other hand the cooperation had to facilitate the specially fast development of those CMEA countries which began from an historically less favourable position. It also had to counterbalance those obstacles to

development which the handicap of small size meant for the smaller economies as against the larger ones.

Seldom before has a task of this magnitude been carried out under such difficult conditions. It demanded an extremely close coordination of interests and developmental ideas as well as a very thorough consideration of the peculiar developmental needs of every CMEA country. In the developed practice of the CMEA cooperation, the interests of the various economies have never weighed in the balance in accordance with historically determined development or the size of the country's population. Nor were differences in interests confronted and solved on this basis, but rather in accordance with the importance of the common tasks of economic development in which every country endeavoured—also in its own well understood interests—to play its own part. This approach to development, based on international cooperation, preserved for every country of the socialist community its economic and political independence and ensured an accelerated rate of development for its productive forces.

Superiority and advantage

In the course of its development stretching over almost a quarter of a century, this cooperation has been useful for all participants. Those countries which were already industrialised when they became members of the socialist community opened a great developmental perspective for themselves, primarily as it enabled them to take part in the rapid industrialisation of other countries via the delivery of means of production and by passing on their technological expertise. The Soviet Union undertook an especially great task in this respect. It delivered hundreds of factories and thousands of complete installations to the countries of the socialist community and also took the lion's share of supplying the developing industries with raw materials.

It is true that as the industrially more developed countries spread their productive forces in other countries, they gradually lost their technological "monopolies". It was, however, precisely the supplying of the less developed countries with all their knowledge and technology which ensured that their development greatly exceeded the world average.

There is not a bourgeois model of the world economy which would not regard this activity as madness in the long run. In the capitalist world economy the handing over of advanced technological knowledge to other countries tends to create competition, endangering the inherited and

acquired advantages of the supplying country. The experiences of CMEA cooperation, however, prove that under socialist conditions the flowing of a higher level of development into other countries does not necessarily create competition but rather cooperating partners. It can raise whole countries to a level where the division of labour brings significantly richer rewards also for those countries which industrialised earlier. The socialist social organisation which rejects competition against one another and for which cooperation is the essence of existence was able to produce a process for the international handing over of technological development in which the loss of developmental superiority is not a drawback but a potential advantage for those who forego it. The Bulgarian, Rumanian, Polish and Hungarian economies, which in the capitalist regime had hardly any significant processing industries, have by now developed into partners for the production of machines and chemicals for such traditional industrial countries as the German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia and have relations within many-sided, fruitful division of labour with such a great industrial power as the Soviet Union.

What enabled those economies which began with a historical handicap to aim at the gradual elimination of their relative backwardness was that they could develop their industrial structure from the beginning for a much larger market than their internal one. Thus, their industrial development did not begin within the framework of small workshops which developed into a large industrial structure through the process of concentration and centralisation enforced by competition (in the second part of the twentieth century this road could not have been followed with success) but in a sphere which undertook to create a market for the products of the newly established industries, even if at first those products did not fulfil in every respect the exacting requirements of the world market.

The equalisation of differences

Socialist cooperation has created a new type of economic protection. The maximum achievement of the classic bourgeois national economic protection systems is the safeguarding of the market of that region against the effects of competition from outside. It is not their task, however, to secure the protection of the less developed countries or districts of the region against competition from the more developed countries or industrial districts within it. Thus bourgeois protectionism is either the lonely defence of a weak economy against the outside world or a collective attack by the

strong sectors of several countries against the weak sectors both inside and outside the region, for gaining economic power.

It is a fundamental characteristic of CMEA cooperation that it makes the endeavour of the small, industrializing countries, with relatively weak productive capacities, to develop their national industries a matter for the whole community. That is why it creates markets for emerging industries, why it ensures secure supplies for those industries that are poor in raw materials and that is why it makes the greater possibilities in development due to the size of the large economy a common property. That is the explanation for the fact that the very strong ties of cooperation which have developed between countries that greatly varied in their level of industrialisation and between large and small economies have not only not hindered but have actually facilitated the development of the weaker members.

In the last year of peace before the Second World War, most of the present CMEA countries only reached, according to rough estimates, 30 per cent of the level of development of the industrialised countries of Western Europe. By the beginning of the 1970's, CMEA roughly halved this difference. Even in 1960 the European CMEA countries reached only approximately half of the level of development of the capitalist countries with developed industries as regards net material product per inhabitant. By 1970 this difference decreased by ten points. At the beginning of the 'fifties the difference between the level of development between the most developed and the least developed CMEA countries was in a ratio of approximately two to one. In the course of twenty years about half of this difference was also eliminated.

*Deviations in the per capita Net Material Product among the CMEA countries**
(GDR = 100)

Country	1960	1968	1971	Country	1960	1968	1971
Czechoslovakia	101	95	96	Poland	55	62	59
Soviet Union	79	88	90	Bulgaria	50	62	64
Hungary	61	65	67	Rumania	42	55	57

* Approximate calculations made on the basis of comparisons completed by the CMEA Research Group of the Institute of Economics, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, for 1960–1962. The comparison was made using foreign trade prices. Data for 1968 and 1971 were calculated on the basis of figures for 1960 and 1962, in national currencies, with the aid of available growth indices.

Despite the fact that both the productive structures and the levels of development have come much closer to each other, there are, naturally, still perceptible differences between the CMEA countries as regards their levels of development. These differences mainly manifest themselves in the fact that in the countries which industrialised earlier the industrial traditions are stronger, the research and development capacities are greater and more effective and it is relatively easier for them to create and develop new technologies and products.

Perhaps the most important achievement so far is that the need for transition towards the technological-scientific revolution has matured more or less at the same time in every Eastern European socialist country.

Just as in the first phase of industrialisation the only viable road of economic cooperation for the socialist countries was one of profound internationalism—and by following it they have succeeded in fulfilling their important task—the development of the technological-scientific revolution, too, can only be carried out with the help of international cooperation. The technological-scientific revolution shifted the weight of cooperation from the division of labour between branches to that of within branches. Since the economic structures have moved very close to each other, today every CMEA country can be regarded as essentially industrialised. In the economy of every one of them there exist those branches which ensure the possibilities for independent technological development. Thus the most important cooperational task is the development of specialisation and cooperation within these branches, employing the tools and methods determined in the complex programme for the integration of the CMEA countries. The programme states: "On this basis both the developed and the industrially less developed CMEA countries are necessarily interested in the success of the process of bringing closer and gradually equalizing the levels of economic development."

Just as industrialisation has been achieved by collective effort, the technological-scientific revolution must also be carried out by collective action. Socialist internationalism remains the fundamental principle of CMEA cooperation and it will continue to determine the development of the community of Eastern European socialist countries.

WHO READS AND WHAT?

THE GUTENBERG GALAXY IS STILL SHINING

by

BÉLA KÖPECZI

The goal of the socialist cultural revolution is to put an end to cultural monopolies, in other words to the privileged position which certain strata and the ruling class in general enjoyed in respect of culture as well, and to accord everybody—irrespective of the social class to which he belongs—the opportunity of becoming educated, and thereby to create not only his general and professional culture but to assist his human evolution as well.

What this means for socialist publishing and book-distribution is that they must serve primarily the interests of the fundamental classes of society, awakening and satisfying their demand. In the course of the last quarter of a century this view has led to a large-scale quantitative increase in the volume of publishing. Capitalist publishing issued in Hungary 2,438 titles in 1938 with a total number of 9.1 million copies: in 1971, on the other hand, 5,536 titles were published with a total number of 53.5 million copies. As regards the number of publications the increase has been more than two-fold; but what is even more important, the number of copies printed has grown more than five-fold. These data refer only to books, i.e. to publications of more than 64 pages. The number of all publications (including booklets, textbook notes, scores, pictures and maps) was 28,942 in 1971, in altogether 88.8 million copies, as against 8,156 publications in 1938, in 17.2 million copies.

The quantitative increase has been general, but there has been a certain differentiation according to the branches of publishing. Scientific literature, which was very neglected by Hungarian publishing before 1945, issued 300 to 400 works at the beginning of the fifties and this number grew to more than 600 by the end of the sixties. The number of copies in this bracket was 6–700,000 at the beginning, and exceeded one million at the end of the sixties.

There has been an especially noteworthy development since the beginning

of the sixties in the publishing of educational works and popular science. This branch of publishing was in fact established at the end of the forties and the beginning of the fifties, and it is characteristic of the growth of recent years that not only the number of works rose (to 6–700 by the end of the sixties), but especially the number of copies, which reached—counting only books—11–12 million. It should be noted that in this branch booklets also have their importance, and although the number of copies dropped after the exaggerations of the early fifties, the number is still considerable, reaching 6 million annually.

Trade and professional publishing, which was also developed after the Liberation, has been on a rather steady level, since the number of books seldom surpasses the annual 1,500, and the number of copies is around 3–3.5 million.

There has been a rapid growth in fiction, where the number of titles exceeded 700 at the end of the sixties, as against 300 in the fifties; but it is even more interesting that as against 2–3 million copies two decades ago, the yearly number has already reached 15 million.

As against 100 works of juvenile and children's literature at the beginning of the fifties, the number of 200 was surpassed at the end of the sixties, and the number of copies has increased from one million to 5 million.

Finally, the gigantic scale of textbook publishing must be mentioned, where differentiation is indicated by the number of approximately 1,000 books annually in 15–16 million copies.

Growth has been most dynamic in fiction, in juvenile and children's literature and in educational works, and this seems natural since it is these three branches of publishing that speak to the widest public. Scientific and trade literature is characterized mainly by the extension of scope and the increase in the number of works accompanying it.

It is often said that socialist publishing does not consider books as a commodity. This is true, but a certain reservation is nevertheless necessary, since books have a price in Hungary too and this necessarily influences their distribution. But prices are set in socialist publishing not on the basis of cost but mainly in the spirit of the goals of cultural policy. The price of the book is determined by its character, i.e. the branch of publishing to which it belongs, by its genre and public. It is on the basis of these criteria that the so-called uniform price per sheet (16 printed pages equalling 40,000 letters) has been developed, from which the publishers may deviate only in certain cases. The socialist state generally shoulders the difference which exists between the retail price of books and their cost. The state makes an exception where value is not the determining aspect, and this applies mainly

to entertainment literature, the revenue from which feeds the culture fund, i.e. the subsidy for valuable works.

The average price of books was Ft 20.30 in 1971, i.e. Ft 1.21 per sheet (40,000 "n"), with an average thickness of 16.7 sheets. The average price of books was Ft 18.60 for fiction, Ft 30.20 for trade, professional and scientific literature, Ft 24.80 for educational literature and popular science, and Ft 7.20 for textbooks. It is one of the characteristics of the preferences of the Hungarian reading public that they like the more expensive, bound books, and this is also taken into consideration in the calculation of the average price. The textbooks and juvenile and children's books are the cheapest. These are followed by educational works, fiction, and trade and scientific books, in this order. In certain branches of publishing and in certain genres there are cheap series as well, which are published as paperbacks.

It is part of the democratism of socialist culture that books should not only be published in as many titles and copies as possible and that their price should make them accessible, but also that they should reach the appropriate public. This necessitates a distribution network which can publicize the books not only through the bookshops (the number of these is under 400), but the potential buyer should meet with the books in the factory, on the co-operative farm, in the office, in the hospitals, and at places of entertainment as well. At present, three specialized enterprises distribute books in Hungary but the publishers and other organizations also participate in this activity.

The results are reflected by the fact that while 12.2 million volumes were sold in 1951 at a value of 143 million forints, in 1971 62.6 million volumes were sold at a value approaching 1,150 million forints. Book purchases by the population and by public bodies were approximately equal in 1951, while in 1971 purchases by the population exceeded 80 per cent. It follows that, on average, every inhabitant spent 88 forints on books, including children who cannot read or write. Examining the volume of book purchasing by branches of publishing, fiction is in the first place, followed by juvenile and children's literature, then by textbooks (which amount to approximately 10 per cent of book sales annually), and educational literature.

Another way of disseminating books is to gain attention for them through the libraries and to satisfy demand through them. The number of educational libraries and book-lending points operated by the councils and trade unions all over the country exceeds 9,000, with a stock of books of approximately 25 million volumes. The number of registered readers is on average 2.2 million each year, the number of volumes lent is around 50 million, i.e. every registered reader borrows on average 24 volumes per year.

According to surveys, 70–80 per cent of readers borrow fiction or juvenile books, and the rest mainly educational literature and popular science.

All these data prove that the traditional ways of disseminating books, i.e. selling and lending them, have not only survived but have been further developed, mainly in the sense that they reach people in their homes, at their places of work and entertainment, everywhere they go. This does not, of course, mean that books have reached everybody or that everybody makes use of the opportunities offered.

It may be stated that through the quantitative development of publishing, through its price policy and the means of distribution the socialist state has endeavoured to realize also by way of books the goals of cultural democracy, and has achieved considerable results in this field.

Books and Value

One of the principal goals of socialist cultural policy is to carry genuine values to the broad masses. The selection is especially difficult in respect of contemporary fiction, or juvenile and children's literature, although it is these that speak to the broadest public. In scientific, trade, professional and educational literature even the works representing a lower value are apt to communicate at least certain information and data, but in respect of fiction, children's and juvenile literature even this cannot be said in the case of trashy works. True, worthless scientific, trade and educational works may also spread false views, but the effect of fictional publications in this direction is deeper, because they are presented in a more attractive form. The great advantage socialist publishing possesses over capitalist publishing, which is built on business interests, is that it is not forced, even in the branches of publication mentioned earlier, to publish easily saleable trash. If it makes concessions in respect of value, this is done for two reasons. One is the experimenting taking place in contemporary literature, which cannot always create great values. In this respect any aristocratic view may restrict creative activity, hinder competition, and thereby impede the bringing about of a wholesome cultural atmosphere. The other concession may be made due to the consideration that entertainment literature is a natural need which must be satisfied on a certain level without giving free play to violence, sexuality, and to the cult of inhumanity in general. In both cases the debate is about the right proportions and about the limits. There is no doubt that in recent years adventure, crime and spy stories, as well as spurious historical novels have been published in large numbers

of copies. This is certainly giving rise to some concern, but only as regards the level of entertainment and not from the aspect of the evolution of genuine literature.

In examining fiction publishing from the point of view of value, the "rebirth of the classics" must be mentioned first, the popularity of the classical works of world literature, including Hungarian literature. As far as contemporary literature is concerned, in addition to the products of entertainment literature those works have been published in the largest number of copies which draw attention to essential social and human questions. The same may be said of contemporary foreign literature, in the publishing of which Hungarian publishers have been truly generous, since they have published not only outstanding works but also those which represented only fashionable trends and proved to be of ephemeral success.

From the point of view of education, the publishing of encyclopaedias must be mentioned. Following the publication of the New Hungarian Encyclopaedia, the Hungarian Literary Encyclopaedia, the Hungarian Biographic Encyclopaedia, the Scientific Encyclopaedia, the Encyclopaedia of Art, of Music, and the Film Encyclopaedia, the publishing of the Encyclopaedia of World Literature has also begun. A whole number of small encyclopaedias have been or are being published. Specialized encyclopaedias and series are being published in the various branches of the natural and social sciences. These attract various strata of the public, and in addition to basic knowledge, also include the latest advances.

Books may attract not only through their content but through their outward presentation as well. It is one of the characteristics of Hungarian publishing that the collection of books has developed on a massive scale, which is shown by the fact that bibliophile books are not bought by a few experts only but may reach tens of thousands. In addition to the specialists in the publishing houses, outstanding typographers and graphic artists take part in the designing of books and their covers. This co-operation has given an impetus to the art of publishing such books, leading to recognition at home and internationally.

Window onto the World

Hungarian publishing does not only endeavour to make known the old and contemporary achievements of Hungarian literature but also mediates in an ever increasing sphere the achievements of foreign cultures. The progress in the publishing of fiction since the liberation is especially charac-

teristic of this endeavour. Today approximately the same number of foreign authors have their works published in Hungary as Hungarian authors. The nationality break-down of the authors of books published between 1945 and 1971 is as follows: Russian and Soviet literature 25.7 per cent, French 14.6 per cent, British 9.5 per cent, German 8.3 per cent, American 6.9 per cent, Rumanian 6.4 per cent, Czech and Slovak 4.8 per cent. In addition to fiction, foreign scientific, trade and educational books are also being published, and their number has been increasing in recent years. If one considers the number of copies in which especially fiction and educational works are published, it may be said with justification that it is not only the selection that is wide, but many books reach an extraordinarily broad public. In 1971 for instance, more than 100,000 copies were printed each of Sholokhov's Human Fate, Dumas's Vicomte Bragelonne, Feuchtwanger's False Nero, Colette's Wandering Life, Sinclair Lewis's Dodsworth, H. G. Wells's Kipps, Walter Scott's Kenilworth, Aragon's Island on the Seine, Leonhard Frank's Disciples of Jesus and Chekhov's The Lady with the Dog.

Hungarian publishers also endeavour to make Hungarian works accessible in foreign languages. Although quite a number of Hungarian works of fiction and juvenile literature have been published abroad in recent years, there is a rather large backlog even in this field, let alone in the other branches of literature. According to the statistics published by UNESCO, the number of Hungarian works of fiction translated between 1954 and 1969 approached 3,000, most works having been published in Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Democratic Republic and Rumania (to mention only those countries which published more than 200 Hungarian works). The Akadémia and Corvina publishing houses publish scientific, professional, educational, art and musical works and, to a smaller extent, fiction, by Hungarian authors in foreign languages and make them available abroad through joint publications with foreign publishers or through the sale of assortments. The achievements of Hungarian science and culture are also reported in foreign language periodicals, the number of which has already exceeded sixty.

This is interpreted by some people as the natural interest taken in the wide world by a small country. It is true that in small countries the need for information is often felt more acutely than elsewhere, but this systematic two-way activity is in Hungary the result of a conscious attitude of cultural policy, which opposes any kind of national isolation and takes internationalism seriously in culture too.

Favourite Authors and their Readers

According to the data issued by the Central Office of Statistics, 56 per cent of the population over the age of ten read books. There are no substantial differences between the sexes in this respect, but there are considerable differences between the age-groups. In the age-group of 15 to 24 years, 96 out of 100 young people read books, but among the older people one quarter of the population do no look at books at all. The most important relevant factor is education. Among those who have completed less than the 8 years of the general school, only 40 per cent read fiction, whereas the figure is 92–93 per cent among those who have completed secondary school or some form of higher education.

One of the yard-sticks of book-reading is the family library. According to a representative survey, not a single book is possessed in 48 per cent of those families where the education of the head of the household is less than 8 years of general school. Among those who have completed the general school, this proportion is 19 per cent, while for those who have completed secondary education it is 5 per cent.

The investigation of the situation of the different classes and strata of society from the aspect of literary culture requires special attention. According to a survey made among the workers of the Mávag factory, 70 per cent of skilled workers, 52 per cent of semi-skilled workers and approximately 44 per cent of unskilled workers read regularly or from time to time. The importance of education is shown by the fact that 76 per cent of those who have completed five forms or less, 50 per cent of workers who have completed 6 or 7 forms, and 27 per cent of those who have completed the eighth form are not in the habit of reading. According to another survey which covered a wider field in 1968, 75 per cent of workers read regularly or from time to time. 48 per cent of the non-readers have not completed the eighth form of the general school.

As far as the peasantry is concerned, according to the data of the Central Office of Statistics, 27 per cent of co-operative members read more or less regularly. A representative survey shows that 41 per cent of the peasants questioned read some kind of book in the four weeks prior to the survey. The transformation in the villages has changed a great deal in the cultural situation, including the reading of books, but there are still a large number of non-readers among the peasant population, especially among the older peasants.

While precise data are available from the quantitative aspect, i.e. as regards who reads how much, much less is known about what people read

and with what result. It is concerning fiction that the largest number of surveys have been made and it is perhaps in this field that the most general conclusions can be drawn. Examining the various genres, classified mostly by topic, it has been established that the most popular genre is the historical novel, followed by adventure and love stories, travelogues, biographies, war novels, scientific fiction, and finally by the contemporary novel. Professional people are mostly interested in historical novels, travelogues and works with a contemporary topic. Agricultural physical workers are mostly interested in juvenile works. Young people like historical novels in addition to juvenile literature. Housewives prefer love stories. Poems interest mainly professional people and white-collar workers.

At the end of the sixties the order of the most favoured authors was as follows: Mór Jókai, Géza Gárdonyi, Zsigmond Móricz, Kálmán Mikszáth, Jules Verne, Leo Tolstoi, Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas père, László Passuth, and Ferenc Molnár. This order was, of course, not brought about by spontaneous interest alone, but was also determined by the works that were published in the largest number of copies at that time.

This question is worth investigating according to classes and strata as well. According to the already mentioned 1968 survey, the most read books among workers were: Gárdonyi's novel, The Stars of Eger, Jókai's novels and the works of Berkesi, Rejtő and Dallos. It says perhaps more that out of quality fiction 45.7 per cent was represented by the romantics, 35 per cent by the traditionally structured classics (Tolstoi, Móricz, Thomas Mann) and 19.3 per cent by modern authors (Hemingway, Semprun, Sánta). Out of all reading-matter the so-called quality fictional literature represents 45.2 per cent, and light-weight reading-matter 38 per cent.

As far as the peasantry is concerned, their favourite authors are Jókai, Mikszáth and Móricz, but they also like to read Sholokhov and Péter Veres.

Among university students (according to a survey taken at Szeged) the most favoured Hungarian authors are László Németh, Mór Jókai, Kálmán Mikszáth, Attila József and András Berkesi. The most read foreign authors are Thomas Mann, Hemingway, Leo Tolstoi, Steinbeck, and Dostoyevsky. According to an investigation outside Budapest, romantic works attract 10 per cent of the intelligentsia, traditional classical works 38 per cent, and modern authors 52 per cent. This survey shows, however, that the latter include a fair quantity of light-weight reading.

It would be risky to draw general conclusions from these surveys, which often cover a very narrow sample. It would be risky not only because the samples are small, but also because the reading habits of the various strata change, their cultural level rises and their taste is being developed. Nor

should it be forgotten that considerable changes occur in publishing and these also influence reading.

It is also worth looking at what motives move the reader to choose this or that book, or why he likes the books he reads. According to Judit H. Sas's survey of three villages, the following proportions could be established concerning the various motivations: 28.7 per cent of respondents sought entertainment, 6 per cent factual knowledge, 11.4 per cent considered self-recognition as the experience they looked for, 17.8 per cent the so-called search for happiness, 12.2 per cent were mainly interested in social problems, 20.7 per cent in ethical problems, and a mere 3.7 per cent took an interest in artistic form.

A survey taken among workers in 1968 ranked the categories of demand in the following order of frequency: entertainment, interest in moral questions, activity, the acquisition of knowledge, self-recognition and search for happiness, need for prestige, and compulsory reading.

In comparing regular readers among the workers, peasant library members and intellectuals, one finds that there is no substantial difference between them as regards the satisfaction of the demand for entertainment. It is interesting that among intellectuals prestige, the search for happiness or self-recognition play a smaller role. These investigations prove, on the one hand, that entertainment is a natural requirement and, on the other, that those motives are also important which are somehow connected with the formation of the personality—whether the search for happiness, self-recognition, or moral questions are concerned.

It could be observed recently that some genres of fiction also spread knowledge, and some educational works take a literary form. In recent years educational literature of an essay type has gained ground. This appears to be not only a Hungarian but an international trend. The main factors in the spreading of educational literature are the degree of education, age to a certain extent and, of course, the need to learn of the great social transformations of the scientific achievements, and also the growth of consciousness.

Debates and Plans

The problems of the Hungarian culture of books are connected with the general cultural situation, therefore it is only possible and worthwhile to discuss them in this context. According to the data of the 1970 census, in Hungary 0.9 per cent of the active earning population of 5 million had not had any schooling at all, 10.2 per cent completed only 5 forms of the general

school, a further 27.5 per cent seven forms and 42.3 per cent completed all eight forms of general school. What this adds up to is that 38.6 per cent of the active earning population had not completed even the eight forms of general school. It is true that these include many older people, but there is also a stratum of younger people who do not proceed to secondary education. 2 million people are involved, and it is a great task for our publishers and book distributors to arouse their interest.

As a consequence of the educational differentiation of the population, considerably more people have completed secondary school or have a diploma from an institution of higher education than was the case in the past. Their number together approaches one million. Our publishing trade has discontinued uniformization for some while and has endeavoured to take the requirements of the various strata into consideration. The substantial increase in the number of active earners with higher education presents, however, a warning that further differentiation is necessary with respect to this stratum.

One of the most important topics for debate in recent years has been how publishing should be further developed as far as content is concerned, and especially how it should satisfy the demands of the masses and stimulate new demand. It is obvious that entertainment is a natural requirement, consequently the problem is not to treat it as some kind of socially prohibited and harmful passion, but to find ways to satisfy it, bearing in mind higher standards. Incidentally, entertainment never appears on its own, but always entails a certain fund of knowledge and naturally education for a certain way of life and as regards taste. Consequently, there are many genres of entertainment and the value concerned is not necessarily an aesthetic value. The attitude which wishes to measure the various historical and biographical novels, adventure stories and travelogues against the greatest literary works, is mistaken. On the other hand, it must be seen that the greatest classics can also be entertaining, depending on how the reader approaches them and on his erudition and pretentions. The extent to which light-weight reading on the one hand and quality literature on the other spread in the different strata is worth thinking about. When light reading is the exclusive reading-matter, the question arises whether it is possible to proceed from here to genuine literature.

An interesting problem arises concerning interest in new and old literature, and in respect of up-to-dateness in general. Surveys prove that those with lower schooling are more attracted to old literature, while the younger age groups are more interested in the new. But new literature must not be generalized either, because according to experience the most popular new works are often those which present easy reading-matter. In recent

years there has nevertheless been a welcome change in interest, which has occurred in the attitude of at least some strata. This is not only welcome because it assists the progress of contemporary Hungarian fiction, but also because it shows that the world-view of the readers, and perhaps their taste too, are becoming more modern.

It is part of the question of up-to-dateness, that the Hungarian reading public should avail themselves to a greater extent of the opportunities offered by educational and professional literature. In recent years considerable progress has been made in this respect, but both the scientific-technological revolution and the transformation of society demand the intensification of this interest and especially its extension to new strata.

All this is connected with the need for the Hungarian publishing and book trade to become more modern too. In this respect great importance must be given to cheap and satisfactorily printed mass series, not only in fiction but in educational and professional publishing as well. As long as our publishing trade is unable to overcome the shortage of printing capacity, it is unable to fulfil fully those tasks which are connected with the modernization of the structure of reading and with the stimulation of the demand of the broad masses. This also entails the utilization of new means for promoting the distribution of books, and primarily taking advantage of the new communication media, especially television, in the publicizing of books. The Gutenberg galaxy continues to "twinkle" above our heads, but there is no doubt that the new technological instruments may strengthen its brightness.

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Socialist publishing in Hungary has compensated in two decades for the omissions of centuries: it has established the essential conditions for cultural democracy, it has made value and its dissemination the centre of its activity and has served the education of the masses and the satisfaction of their needs. We may remember the 500th anniversary of publishing and printing in this country in the knowledge that everything that was valuable in the past has been continued, and goals have been realized which for centuries appeared humanistic dreams.

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FIVE HUNDRED YEARS OF BOOK-PRINTING IN HUNGARY

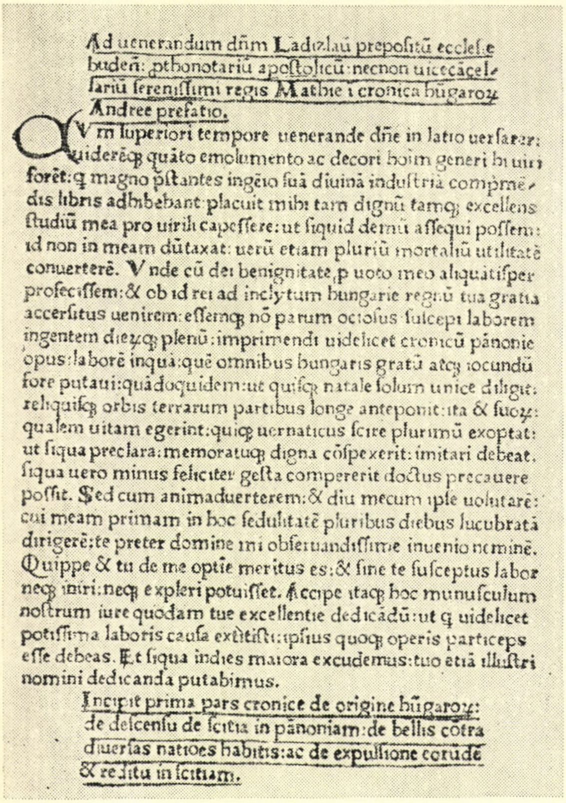
by

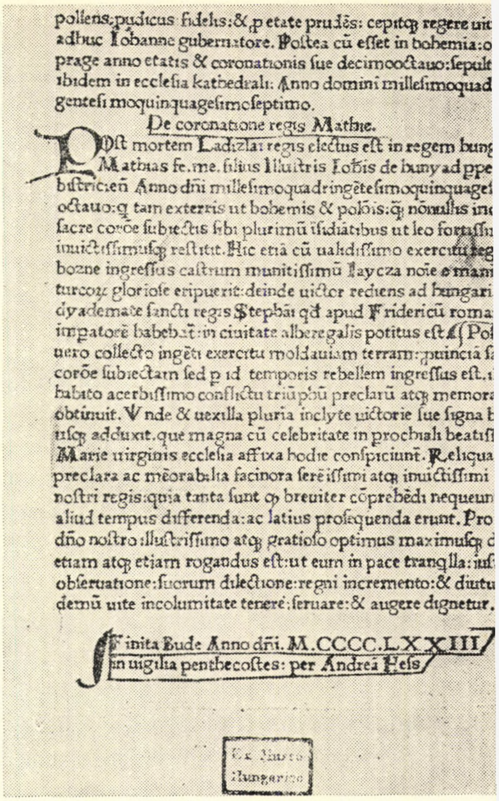
GEDEON BORSA

The Chronica Hungarorum, or Hungarian Chronicle, was completed on June 5th 1473, the Saturday before Whitsun, in Buda, in the printing house of Andreas Hess. With this achievement Hungary was among the first countries to introduce the printing of books. The "art of artificial writing", as the new invention was called, had spread first in Germany, the homeland of Johannes Gutenberg. His workshop was operating steadily in Mainz during the first half of the 1450s. The first prints in Italy were made in the monastery of Subiaco in 1465 and those in Switzerland (Bermünster) and France (Paris) in 1470. In the same year or perhaps a year later the first printing press was set up in the Netherlands, probably in Utrecht, although the exact date and place are still unknown.

It was after such a relatively brief history that printing came to the capital of Hungary. In a whole score of developed countries printing began only later. The first prints appeared in the territory of today's Belgium (Aalst) and what is today the Netherlands (Utrecht) dated 1473, but without specifying the month or the day. Probably at the end of the same year a calendar for 1474 was printed in Cracow, Poland. According to general opinion the first printing presses in Spain, in Valencia and in Barcelona, started work towards the end of 1473 although their dated editions are of later years. In all the other countries, such as England, Portugal, Sweden and Denmark, the first prints appeared much later.

The first printing press in Buda did not survive and only two of its editions are known today. Apart from the above-mentioned Chronicle, it published the moral philosophical essays of Basilius Magnus and Xenophon in forty folios. The incunabula of the 15th century—like Medieval codices—had no title-page and the data referring to the place and date of print, together with the name of the printer, were mostly given on the last page, in the colophone. This is also the case with the Hungarian





First and last pages of the Buda Chronicle (1473)

Chronicle (Illustration 1.) where the last two lines in the text state: "completed by Andreas Hess in Buda, on the eve of Whitsun, Anno Domini 1473". In the other book, that of Basilius, there is only one line to indicate the circumstances of printing: "Buda A. H." Thus Hess gave only his initials and the place of printing, without the date.

While the two closing lines of the Buda print reveal little about the printing, more details can be gathered about the printer on the first page of the Chronicle (Illustration 2.). Here is "The foreword of Andreas to the Chronica Hungarorum addressed to the Reverend László, provost of the Buda Church, apostolic protonotary, Vice-Chancellor of His Majesty King Matthias":

"Reverend Sir, when in past times I busied myself in Latium and had the opportunity of seeing there the great service done to the well-being and glory of mankind by those men who had used their talents and divine abilities for the printing of books, I myself felt like embarking on this

noble and excellent venture and I resolved that if I attained anything in this work I would turn it to the benefit not only of myself but of all other mortals. And when I had made some progress in this work to which I had dedicated myself, I came to Hungary by Your favour to continue the work.

I was without work here for quite a time; till finally I began a very great and time-consuming task, the printing of the chronicle of Pannonia. I thought that this would bring joy to all Hungarian men: since everybody loves and esteems his homeland more than other countries and everybody is burning with desire to acquaint himself with the life of his ancestors in order to be able to emulate their acts if excellent and worthy of remembering; also for learning about the disasters that had befallen them in order to avoid them.

When I pondered and meditated at length as to whom I should offer this first product of my labour, which I completed a few days ago, I could think of no one else but You, Reverend Sir. You have acquired great merits as regards my person: I could neither have begun nor completed my work without your support.

Therefore please accept this small book of ours, justice also requires me to dedicate it to Your Excellency: as you were the main incentive of the work, it is only proper that you should share its results. And if, in the future, we print larger volumes, we shall dedicate them also to Your glorious name."

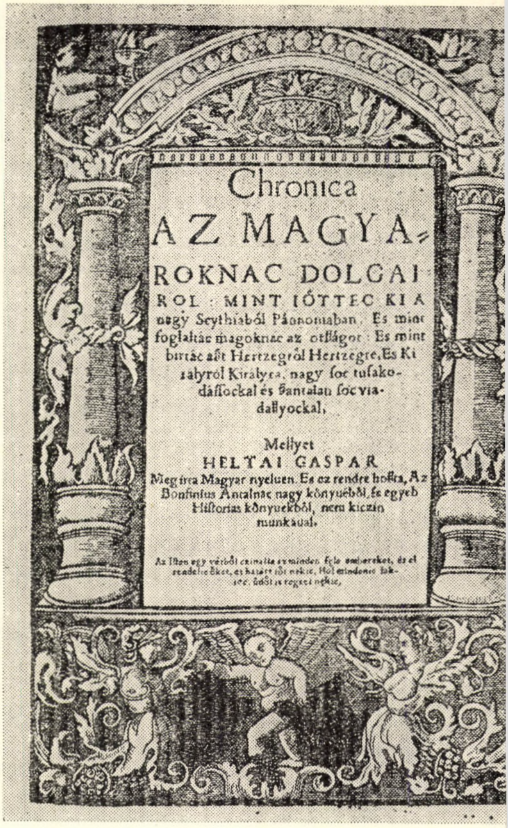
This poetic dedication was addressed in excellent Latin by Andreas Hess, printer, to László Karai, provost of Buda, Royal Vice-Chancellor. (Only the first names of either are given in the Latin text.) From it we learn that Hess had acquired the art of printing in Rome and that he came to Hungary under the auspices of Karai. It was only after some time that he resolved to print the Hungarian Chronicle. The printer must have owed much to the Vice-Chancellor, as he emphasized in his foreword: "I could neither have begun nor completed my work without your support."

This is all that the Buda prints reveal about the printing shop and its master. Apart from this, no contemporary data, not even a written line has remained about Hess or his workshop. Any further facts can be deduced only from the above lines and the prints themselves. This research was carried out by József Fitz with thorough expertise. His monograph, "Andreas Hess, the incunabula printer of Buda", appeared in 1932. Subsequent researches have to some extent modified and filled in some of his findings. The account given below gives a brief outline of the present state of opinion.

*

Uy Testamentū
Magár nelwen mellet
az Görög es Diak nelwböl
wonnan fordítank az
Magár nipnek Kerestien
hütben valo epülisire.

Frontispiece of the New Testament, translated by János Sylvester (1541)



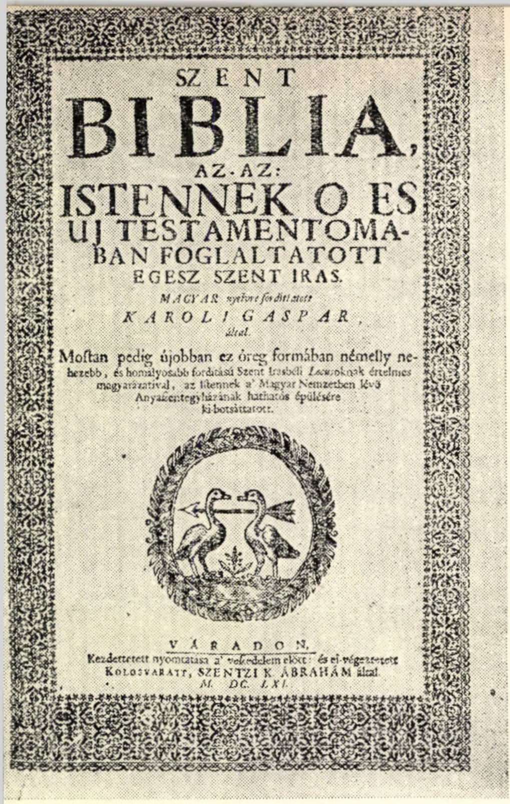
Chronica
AZ MAGYA-
ROKNAC DOLGAI
ROL : MINT IÓTTEC KI A
nagy Scythiából Pannoniaban. Es mint
foglaltác magoknac az otságot : Es mint
birtác aſt Hertzegről Hertzegre, Es Ki
ralyról Királyra, nagy ſoc tuſako-
dáſſockal és ſzamtalan ſoc via-
dallyockal,

Mellyet
HELTAI GASPAR
Meg írta Magyar nyeluen. Es ez rendre hoſta, Az
Bonfinius Antalnác nagy kőnyuéből, ſe egyeb
Hiſtorias kőnyuekből, nem kiczin
munkáual.

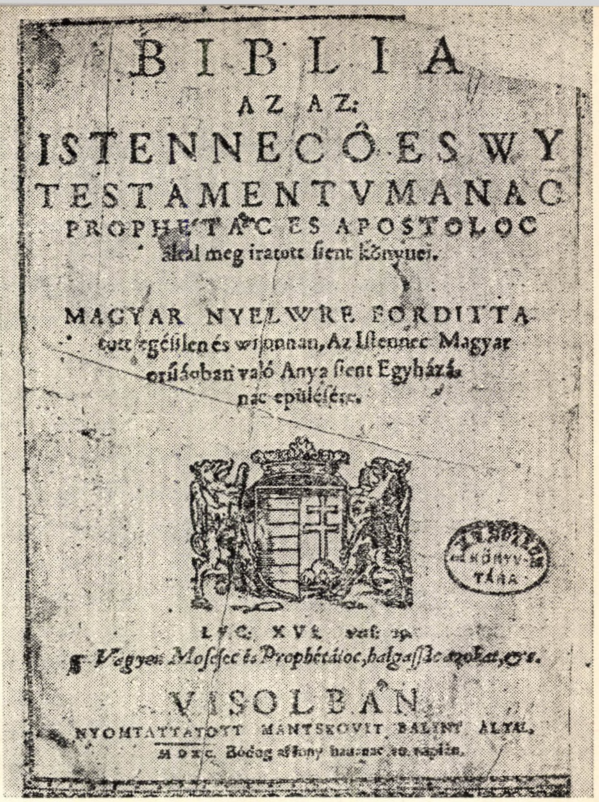
First page of Gáspár Heltai's Chronicle (15

Andreas Hess, as his name suggests, was probably of German origin. As his family name occurs only once, and at that time spelling was rather uncertain, it could also have been Höss, or Huss. It is surprising that he studied printing in Italy and not in Germany. He might have been staying in the "eternal city" before the functioning of the first printing shop there. László Karai stayed in Rome as the ambassador of King Matthias from November 1470 to the end of January 1471. He probably became acquainted with Hess there and invited or encouraged him to come to Buda.

Hess wrote in his foreword that in Hungary "I was without work here for quite a time" and that then "I began a very great and time-consuming task". As this work, i.e. the printing of the Chronica Hungarorum was completed on June 5th 1473, it is justified to suppose that he had arrived


SZENT
BIBLIA,
AZ-AZ:
ISTENNEK O ES
UJ TESTAMENTOMA-
BAN FOGLALTATOTT
EGESZ SZENT IRAS.
MAGYAR nyelvre fordittatott
KAROLI GASPAR,
által.
Mostan pedig újobban ez óreg formában némelly nehezebb, és homályosabb fordítási Szent Irásbéli Locusoknak értelmes magyarázattyal, az Istennek a' Magyar Nemzetben lévő Anyaszentegyházának hathatós épülésére ki-botsáttatott.

VÁRADON.
Kezdettetett nyomtattatni a' veszedelem elött: és el-végeztetett
KOLOSVÁRATT, SZENTZI K. ÁBRAHÁM által.
M. DC. LXI.


BIBLIA
AZ AZ:
ISTENNECÔ ES WY
TESTAMENTVMANAC
PROPHETAC ES APOSTOLOC
által meg iratott sent könyuei.

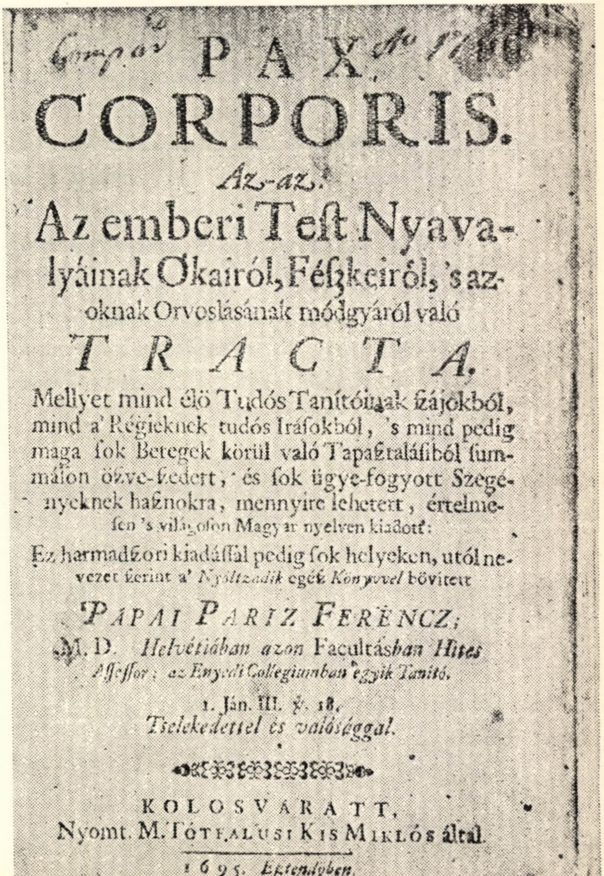
MAGYAR NYELWRE FORDITTAtott egéßlen és wyonnan, Az Istennec Magyar orßágban való Anya sent Egyházánac epülésére.

LVC. XVI. vers. 29.
Vegyen Mosesec és Prophétáioc, halgassác azokat, etc.
VISOLBAN
NYOMTATTATOTT MANTSKOVIT BALINT ALTAL.
M D X C. Bódog aßony hauanac 20. napián.

'he 1661 edition of the Károli Bible,
rinted by Ábrahám Szenczi Kertész

'he "Vizsoly Bible",
anslated by Gáspár Károli (1590)

erenc Páriz-Pápai's "Pax Corporis",
rinted by Miklós Tótfalusi Kis (1695)


PAX
CORPORIS.
Az-az:
Az emberi Test Nyavalyáinak Okairól, Fészkeiről, 's azoknak Orvoslásának módgyáról való
TRACTA.
Mellyet mind élö Tudós Tanítóinak szájokból, mind a' Régieknek tudós Irásokból, 's mind pedig maga sok Betegek körül való Tapasztalásiból summáson özve-szedett, és sok ügye-fogyott Szegényeknek hasznokra, mennyire lehetett, értelmesen 's világoson Magyar nyelven kiadott:
Ez harmadszori kiadással pedig sok helyeken, utól nevezet szerint a' Nyóltzadik egész Könyvvel bövített
PAPAI PARIZ FERENCZ;
M.D. Helvétiában azon Facultásban Hites Assessor; az Enyedi Collegiumban egyik Tanító.
1. Ján. III. v. 18.
Tselekedettel és valósággal.

KOLOSVÁRATT.
Nyomt. M. TÓTFALUSI KIS MIKLÓS által.
1695. Esztendőben.

in Buda earlier, perhaps during the first half of 1472. Here, in the medieval city, stood the house of Karai near the Dominican church, in what is now called Hess András Square. It is possible that the printer set up his workshop in that very house.

The equipment he brought from Rome was very modest: about one hundredweight of type. Their shape seems to confirm their Roman origin. The press and other equipment was probably made in Buda by local craftsmen. He used almost 2,000 characters for composing the text of one folio of the Chronicle: this was probably one-fifth of his set. He had one small letter-press on which he could print only the surface of a half-sheet at a time, so all the 133 folios of his book were printed separately. With this modest set of type, when one folio was already printed the type was redistributed into the boxes of the type case to be used again soon. Two people were needed for efficient and economical work, thus it is probable that Hess had one or two assistants.

The two known Buda editions consist of thirty-eight and a half printed sheets. The number of copies—to judge by contemporary analogies in other countries—was probably between two and five hundred. Only a few copies exist today and they are the among the most valued treasures of a few collections. The author considers himself lucky to have had access to all nine known copies of the Hungarian Chronicle. Two are in Budapest (one in the Széchényi Library, the other in the library of the Eötvös Loránd University), while the other seven are abroad: In Vienna (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek), Cracow (Czartoryski-Museum), Leningrad (Library Saltikov-Shtchedrin), Leipzig (University Library), Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale), Prague (University Library), Rome (Biblioteca dell'Accademia dei Lincei). One complete copy of the Basilius-edition exists today (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek), and there is another incomplete copy (Eichstätt, Staatliche Bibliothek). In the Second World War one copy of the Chronicle from Braunsberg was destroyed and a copy of the Basilius edition disappeared from Salzburg.

It is notable that Hess did not print ecclesiastical works: the contemporary prints and books (including the hand-written codices) were generally religious works. The Chronica Hungarorum had probably a well deserved success. Its copies must have quickly sold out, which is shown by the fact that there exists a hand-written copy made in Vienna in 1481, eight years after its appearance. Similar copies were made in the decades following. The printer was probably less fortunate with the moral philosophical essays of Basilius. The Neo-Platonic humanists around King Matthias were interested in the work and Hess had probably expected them to buy it.

But the world had greatly changed in Hungary since Karai's visit to Rome: political issues had turned the King's wrath against János Vitéz, Primate and Archbishop of Esztergom, and his humanist group, which included the well-known poet Janus Pannonius, Bishop of Pécs. In 1471–72 these two outstanding clerics were stripped of their offices and both died soon after*. It is not surprising therefore that neither the uncertain and hesitant humanists, nor the King himself showed much interest in the Buda edition. It can be assumed that Hess ceased his work as a printer in 1473 or soon after. No more works are known by the Buda printing press, its modest equipment disappeared together with their master and neither his name, nor his type appeared again in any print made in Hungary or elsewhere.

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Hungary did not, however, remain without a printing press for long: one existed between 1477 and 1480, but its exact location and the name of its master are unknown. We know of three editions by this press. The first is the "Confessionale" (manual for confessors) by Antoninus Florentinus, published in 1477. Its unknown printer is referred to as the "printer of the Confessionale". This second 15th century printing press in Hungary also had a brief existence. The country suffered increasingly from the attacks of the advancing Turks and for about 50 years there was no printing press in Hungary. About a dozen booksellers in Buda satisfied the special needs of the country (school manuals, liturgical works) with printed books produced abroad—mainly in Venice.

In 1526, the Hungarians suffered defeat at the hands of Turkish invaders at the battle of Mohács and the southern and central parts of the country were occupied by them for the next 150 years. During this time no printing press could function in this part of the country. The non-occupied zones were also in a state of disintegration: Transylvania in the east became an independent principality, the north and the west came under Hapsburg control. The Reformation began in Hungary at the time of the Turkish invasion and its influence grew steadily. Under the specific historical, geographical, ethnic and economic conditions the religious situation also developed in a peculiar way. Lutheranism spread primarily among the German population in Transylvania and Northern Hungary and among the Slovaks, while the Hungarian population favoured Calvinism. Anti-Trinitarian Unitarianism found roots among the Hungarians living

* For János Vitéz and Janus Pannonius see: No. 48.

in Transylvania where a religious tolerance quite uncharacteristic of the age prevailed, while the Rumanian population kept its Orthodox faith. Catholicism was almost superseded in the 16th century, but from the first half of the 17th century it partly regained its positions as a result of the Counter-Reformation. For almost 200 years printing in Hungary was determined geographically by the Turkish occupation and from the religious point of view by this religious schism. In that very difficult epoch burdened with internal and external struggles printing could only develop to a limited extent. This is true of the number of presses, their permanence and output alike. During the period while Hungary was without printing presses, Hungarian language prints were produced—the first in 1527—in the two nearest university cities: Cracow in Poland and Vienna in Austria.

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In the 16th century printing started in Szeben and in Brassó, in Transylvania, in 1529 and 1539 respectively. In 1539 a printing press was established at Sárvár in Western Hungary where two years later the first Hungarian edition of the New Testament appeared. In 1550 a printing press was set up in Kolozsvár, the most important town in Transylvania: its owner and master was Gáspár Heltai, for several decades an outstanding figure in Hungarian literature. He is a good example of the volatile nature of the conditions of religion in those days: he was successively a Catholic, a Lutheran, a Calvinist and an Anti-Trinitarian. It testifies to his good business sense that he founded a paper mill to provide his printing press with cheap paper. Besides this, it is only in Brassó and Szeben that, to our knowledge, paper was manufactured in the 16th century in Hungary.

There were special printing presses in Transylvania using Cyrillic script for the Rumanians who used this type. The first press operated in Szeben from 1544 onwards, but most of the Cyrillic script publications were Orthodox lithurgical works printed in Brassó.

The spreading of the Lutheran Reformation was served by Gál Huszár who worked as a printer in several Hungarian towns from 1558 onwards. In 1561 he founded a printing press in Debrecen: that particular workshop acquired extraordinary merits in subsequent centuries both in the service of the Calvinist Reformation and the Hungarian language. Raphael Hoffhalter, a well-known printer of Polish origin, fled from Vienna to Debrecen because of his religious beliefs: he too had reached Anti-

Trinitarianism, having gone through all the stages of the religious metamorphosis mentioned earlier. This last conviction cost him his life: he was clubbed to death in 1568 at Gyulafehérvár, the capital of the princes of Transylvania. His son Rudolf, born in Zürich, followed in his father's footsteps; he first printed in the south-western part of the country and then in Debrecen.

An outstanding literary figure of the 16th century, Péter Bornemissza, had a printing press in northern Hungary. He printed mostly his own works which were imbued with a Lutheran spirit. His helper and successor, Bálint Mantskovits, printed the first complete Hungarian Bible in Vizsoly in 1590. Bártfa, near the Polish frontier, with a Lutheran population, had an important printing press at the end of the century.

The first Hungarian printing press to serve the Catholic Church exclusively was set up in 1578 in Nagyszombat, where the Archbishop of Esztergom and his chapter had taken refuge from the Turks.

Joannes Manlius, who came to Hungary from Krain, a hereditary province of the Hapsburgs, was especially mobile. He had fled because of his Lutheran faith. He was a very active man who changed his residence many times and lived in at least six west Hungarian towns during the last twenty years of the 16th century. Besides printing, he also bound and sold books.

It appears, therefore, that two printing presses functioned in Hungary during the 15th century, while in the next century about 850 works were published in 30 different places by 50 known printers.* Because of the difficult conditions already discussed, most of these printing presses were short-lived: by the end of the 16th century only 6 workshops were still functioning.

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The 17th century was dominated entirely by the struggle against the Turks. Despite this, the development of printing in Hungary continued, even if not without interruptions. Kolozsvár, in Transylvania, continued to be one of the most significant centres of Hungarian language publishing. During the last decades of the 17th century the most outstanding printer, not only in Kolozsvár, but perhaps in the whole country was Miklós Tótfalusi Kis. It was during his earlier stay in Amsterdam that he acquired his great fame. He worked there as a type founder between 1683 and 1689,

* *Res Litteraria Hungariae vetus operum impressorum 1473–1600*, Akadémia Publishing House, 1971. (With an English preface).

and his prestige was such that he received orders from the whole of Europe, from Sweden and England in the north to the Vatican in the south. He engraved Hebrew, Armenian and Greek type too, and made the first Georgian printed alphabet. Cosimo Medici bought a complete set of type from him for his new printing press in Florence. The popular Roman type, which was till recently attributed to Anton Janson, was also his work.

The other printer who turned out works of a very high standard was Ábrahám Szenczi Kertész, who had also learnt his craft in Holland. He worked in Nagyvárad with equipment that he had brought from the Elzevirs in Holland, until 1660, when the town fell into the hands of the Turks. The Transylvanian princes raised him to the nobility in appreciation of his art.

Debrecen was also an important centre of printing in the Hungarian language, but the town suffered especially greatly from the Turkish wars and from subsequent struggles. Within twenty years after the second siege of Vienna (1683) the joint European forces drove the Turks out of Hungary but the Hapsburgs regarded the liberated territories as one of their hereditary provinces and not as an independent country. Thus, after the centuries of war against the Turks, the Hungarians continued their struggle for independence. In the first decade of the 18th century this struggle was headed by the last Prince of Transylvania, Ferenc Rákóczi, until he had to flee in 1711. In this War of Independence the printing press of Debrecen was completely destroyed by the Hapsburg armies in 1705.

In the 17th century the town of Kassa had a prolific printing press. The Danish Marcus Severinus (1657–1663) and the Swedish Ericus Erich (1669–1674) were among the many printers who succeeded one another in Kassa.

The Counter-Reformation increasingly gained ground in Hungary: it was led by Cardinal Péter Pázmány, Archbishop of Esztergom. Its vanguard were the Jesuits. They controlled the university of Nagyszombat which was founded in 1635. At the end of the 17th century the printing press at Nagyszombat developed into the largest printing house in Hungary. It turned out several thousand publications in the following decades. Catholic pressure on the country's Protestants was especially great in the 70's. This led not only to a substantial increase in the Catholic publications produced in Nagyszombat but also to the limitation of the output and even the closing down of Protestant printing houses, including the Brewer-printing press in Lőcse (Upper Northern Hungary) which had been very prolific. In 1671 the printing press of the famous Calvinist College in Sárospatak, which had started work in 1651, upon the initiative of Transyl-

vanian princes, was also closed. Joannes Amos Comenius had taught in this school for several years and his works had been the first products of the Sárospatak press.

The printing press at Gyulafehérvár was founded by Gábor Bethlen, a Calvinist Transylvanian prince. Some well-known teachers of the Calvinist college of the town, e.g. Johann Heinrich Alsted, Johann Heinrich Bisterfeld and Philippus Piscator, availed themselves of the services of the workshop to publish their works. The printing press at Gyulafehérvár operated until 1658, when the Turkish–Tartar army broke into Transylvania and destroyed it.

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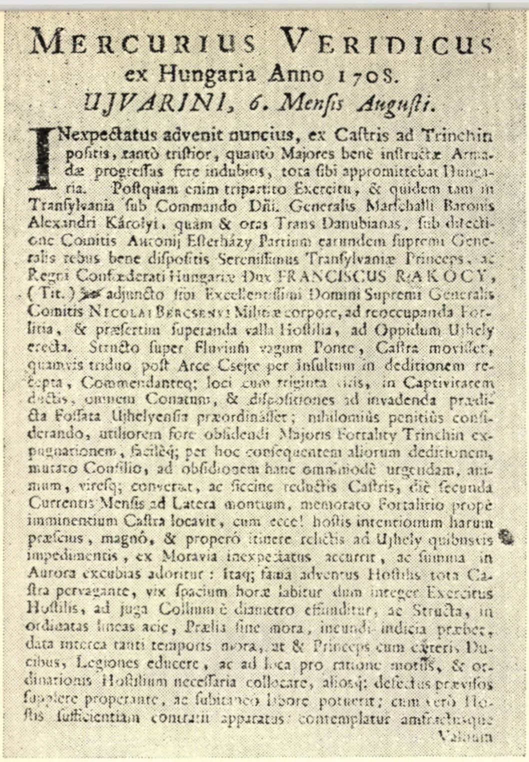
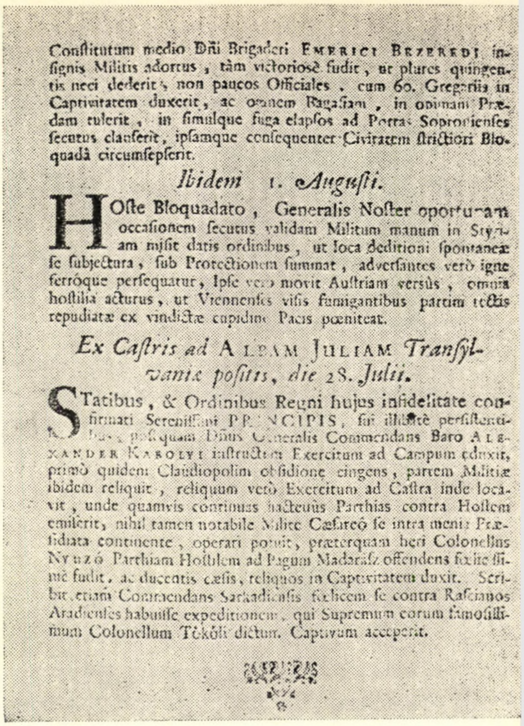
This brief outline conveys an idea of the difficult conditions under which printing houses operated in Hungary during the 17th century. Despite this, thirty printing presses existed in the country and in general they now had a longer span of life than those of previous centuries. The names of over a hundred printers are known from this century and more than 4,000 publications, or at least their memory, survived.

The first decade of the 18th century was the period of Rákóczi's War of Independence. The struggles were, of course, not favourable for the development of printing. The difficult conditions are well illustrated by the fate of the first Hungarian weekly, the Latin Mercurius Hungaricus, later Mercurius Veridicus ex Hungaria, a publication of the Rákóczi movement which informed the public at home and abroad about the developments of the Hungarian War of Independence. The first editions appeared in Kassa in the spring of 1705. The printing press was then transferred to Lőcse where the paper appeared until early 1710. Then, because of the war, the workshop was once again transferred, this time to Bártfa and finally back to Kassa. Only a few copies exist today of this rare and very interesting paper. After the defeat of Rákóczi's War of Independence in 1711, many settlers, especially Germans, came to the exhausted and in places almost depopulated country. This also had its repercussions in printing. In the area reconquered from the Turks life slowly returned to normal; printing presses were set up one after the other in the main towns. Most of them are still working today. Thus printing houses were set up in Pozsony, the Hungarian town nearest to Vienna, the capital of the country during the Turkish invasion (1718), in Kassa, Northern Hungary (1715), in Buda, (1724), in Győr, located halfway between Buda and Vienna (1727) and in Sopron, which is also near Vienna (1733).



MERCURIUS VERIDICUS
ex Hungaria Anno 1708.
UJVARINI, 6. Mensis Augusti.

INexpectatus advenit nuncius, ex Castris ad Trinchin positis, tantò tristior, quantò Majores benè instructæ Armadæ progressus fere indubios, tota sibi appromittebat Hungaria. Postquam enim tripartito Exercitu, & quidem tam in Transylvania sub Commando Dñi. Generalis Marschalli Baronis Alexandri Károlyi, quàm & oras Trans Danubianas, sub directione Comitis Antonij Esterházy Partium earundem supremi Generalis rebus bene dispositis Serenissimus Transylvaniæ Princeps, ac Regni Confœderati Hungariæ Dux FRANCISCUS RAKOCY, (Tit.) adjuncto sibi Excellentissimi Domini Supremi Generalis Comitis NICOLAI BERCSENYI Militiæ corpore, ad reoccupanda Fortilitia, & præsertim superanda valla Hostilia, ad Oppidum Ujhely erecta. Structo super Fluvium vagum Ponte, Castra movisset, quamvis triduo post Arce Csejte per insultum in deditionem recepta, Commendanteq; loci cum triginta suis, in Captivitatem ductis, omnem Conatum, & dispositiones ad invadenda prædicta Fossata Ujhelyensia præordinâsset; nihilominùs penitiùs considerando, utiliorem fore obsidendi Majoris Fortality Trinchin expugnationem, facilèq; per hoc consequentem aliorum deditionem, mutato Consilio, ad obsidionem hanc omnimodè urgendam, animum, viresq; converat, ac siccine reductis Castris, diè secunda Currentis Mensis ad Latera montium, memorato Fortalitio propè imminentium Castra locavit, cum ecce! hostis intentionum harum præscius, magnò, & properò itinere relictis ad Ujhely quibusvis impedimentis, ex Moravia inexpectatus accurrit, ac summa in Aurora excubias adoritur: itaq; fama adventus Hostilis tota Castra pervagante, vix spacium horæ labitur dum integer Exercitus Hostilis, ad juga Collium è diametro effunditur, ac Structa, in ordinatas lineas acie, Prælii sine mora, ineundi indicia præbet, data interea tanti temporis mora, ut & Princeps cum cæteris Ducibus, Legiones educere, ac ad loca pro ratione motûs, & ordinationis Hostilium necessaria collocare, aliosq; defectus prævisos supplere properante, ac subitaneo labore potuerit; cum verò Hostis sufficientiam contrarii apparatus contemplatur anfractusque
Valuum



Constitutum medio Dñi Brigaderi EMERICI BEZEREDI insignis Militis adortus, tàm victoriosè fudit, ut plures quingentis neci dederit, non paucos Officiales, cum 60. Gregariis in Captivitatem duxerit, ac omnem Bagasiam, in opimam Prædam tulerit, in simulque fuga elapsos ad Portas Soproniensés secutus clauserit, ipsamque consequenter Civitatem strictiori Bloquadâ circumsepserit.

Ibidem 1. Augusti.

HOste Bloquadato, Generalis Noster opportunam occasionem secutus validam Militum manum in Styriam misit datis ordinibus, ut loca deditioni spontaneæ se subjectura, sub Protectionem summat, adversantes verò igne ferròque persequatur, Ipse vero movit Austriam versùs, omnia hostilia acturus, ut Viennenses visis fumigantibus partim tectis repudiatæ ex vindictæ cupidine Pacis pœniteat.

Ex Castris ad ALBAM JULIAM *Transylvaniæ positis, die 28. Julii.*

STatibus, & Ordinibus Regni hujus infidelitate confirmati Serenissimi PRINCIPIS, sui illibatè persistentibus, posquam Dñus Generalis Commendans Baro ALEXANDER KAROLYI instructum Exercitum ad Campum eduxit, primò quidem Claudiopolim obsidione cingens, partem Militiæ ibidem reliquit, reliquum verò Exercitum ad Castra inde locavit, unde quamvis continuas hactenùs Parthias contra Hostem emiserit, nihil tamen notabile Milite Cæsareò se intra menia Præsidiata continente, operari potuit, præterquam heri Colonellus NYUZÓ Parthiam Hostilem ad Pagum Madarász offendens fœlicissimè fudit, ac ducentis cæsis, reliquos in Captivitatem duxit. Scribit etiam Commendans Sarkadiensis fœlicem se contra Rascianos Aradienses habuisse expeditionem, qui Supremum eorum famosissimum Colonellum Tököli dictum, Captivum acceperit.

The 1708 August issue of the first Hungarian newspaper Mercurius Veridicus ex Hungaria

The Catholic Church, which tried to renew its old organisation in the areas liberated from the Turks, had a lion's share in this process of consolidation. Thus almost all episcopal sees had their own printing presses in the 18th century, which amounted to half the towns with printing presses.

Another characteristic feature of contemporary Hungarian printing was that whole families of printers emerged whose members did not only succeed each other in the workshop of a certain town but settled in other parts of the country and founded or took over workshops there. The three most important were the Landerer, Royer and Streibig-families whose members worked in about a dozen towns in the country.

The long rule of Marie Therèse (1740–80) was marked by a process of consolidation. Printing developed in step with the country's economic development, both quantitatively and qualitatively. The greatest number of works were produced in the workshop of the university, at Nagyszombat, the intellectual centre of the country, until the Jesuit order was suppressed in 1773. The State then took over the university and transferred it to Buda in 1777 along with the printing press. This shift characterized the

whole economic, political and cultural life of the country at the time. The institutions and offices which, at the time of the Turkish occupation, had been driven to the peripheric parts of the country, gravitated towards the central parts at the end of the 18th century. The reformist policy of Joseph II. (1780–90) accelerated this trend by breaking up some parts of the old structures. The number of printed publications also show that the weight was shifted from Nagyszombat, first to Pozsony, in the 70's and 80's, and then, from the last decade of the 18th century, to Pest, the twin-town of Buda, where industry and commerce started to concentrate.

This shift led to other changes. The division of labour developed and besides the printers, publishing houses were set up to publish and sell the books. There was an increasing number of temporary or permanent companies with a growing number of branches. Capitalist enterprises emerged and their increasingly large capital enabled them to undertake significant tasks. The full effects of this appeared in the second part of the 19th century.

PETŐFI'S PROSE WRITINGS

by

SÁNDOR LUKÁCSY

In May of 1848, arguing with the Hungarian revolutionary government, whose measures in defence of freedom he considered inadequate, Petőfi compared the government to a team of horses, and himself to a coachman: "When the coachman cracks his whip, he does not expect his horses to complain of tiredness, but to move more swiftly." Even he seems to have considered these words strong because, before continuing his line of thought, he stopped for a moment and reflected on the severity of the expression: "The comparison is hardly poetic..."—yet he did not strike out, nor could he modify, these words born of anger and despair, but with a defiant shrug, accepted responsibility for them: "...hardly poetic, but perhaps not so very bad."

All Petőfi's individuality, his entire *ars poetica*, are contained in this sequence of thought. And if one may use the expression, his entire political *ars poetica* as well. The man who wrote that rude metaphor was a son of the people, a man who in politics, in private life and in poetry acknowledged no greater majesty than theirs; a man who said, "what is true is natural, what is natural is good, and to my mind, beautiful"; and who felt it an obligation of conscience to speak truthfully and naturally at all times, no matter with or against whom.

The essence of Petőfi's individuality, the chief characteristic of his historical role, is opposition. It was his unfailing tendency to oppose and his audacity which made him a revolutionary, in politics as in literature.

One knows of revolutionaries who have had conservative literary tastes, and of innovating poets who in politics espoused conservative views. Petőfi's revolutionism, it may be said, is complete: the impulses which led him to oppose the antiquated institutions of society were the same as those which led him to oppose an antiquated literary taste. On March 15, 1848 he stood at the forefront of a political revolution, at a time when, in his work, he had already carried out one of the greatest revolutions in Hungarian literature. He is one of Hungarian literature's great stylistic innovators, both in prose and in verse; although the brilliance of his poetry, like a curtain of light before a stage, almost conceals his prose. True, Petőfi was a poet above all else, a poet entire, to whom poetry was as natural a manifestation of life as breathing; but his oeuvre also contains nearly all the prose forms. Had he not died so young, at the age of twenty-six, it is possible that in his more mature years he would have turned his many-sided talent more and more often toward prose.

He wrote novels, short stories, dramas, travel accounts, political articles, political appeals, and letters which have the value of works of art. Not all his prose works attain the level of his poetry, although one might add that a goodly number of his poems fall below the level of his best prose writings. This much is certain: the bulk of his prose is not merely the

incidental production of a universal talent. In Hungarian prose Petőfi was a revolutionary reformer, and he remains one of its greatest masters.

In prose as in poetry, he was most in his element when he could convey his own lyrical personality, when he could speak about himself. His novel (*The Hangman's Rope*, 1846) and his historical drama (*Tiger and Hyena*, 1845) are valuable chiefly as records of his mental and emotional state, since in neither of them did he attain the objectivity of representation required by the genre. His major prose works were created when considerations of genre did not tie him down; when his lyricism could flit from one subject to another in prose as it did in poetry. This is why his greatest prose works are his travel accounts, his correspondence, his diary entries and his articles.

He wrote two series of travel sketches: *Travel Notes* in 1845, and *Travel Letters* in 1847. Both are accounts of wanderings in Hungary, since excepting his military service in Croatia and Austria, Petőfi never travelled elsewhere. All the more, however, did he travel in his homeland, about and through nearly every county—on foot when he was in financial difficulties, and later by cart, by fast coach, and on the first railroads. In his sketches—inspired by similar works of Heine—he blends with consummate art the most various elements of theme, tone, and style. He mentions what he ate for breakfast just as he does the works of art he sees on the way, the encounters with friends and the women he falls in love with; he combines masterful descriptions of the countryside with political and literary meditations; arriving at a familiar place, he will conjure up one or another episode from his past. Mischievous jokes, earnestness, irony, satire, romantic pathos and gestures to annoy the bourgeoisie: all these are brought together in a constantly shifting kaleidoscope, in such a way that the unity of the various elements is assured by the lyrical presence of the congenial traveller. It is as though one were not reading a written work at all, but were listening, rather, to the traveller's always attentive, always witty and continually changing voice. This approach toward living speech was what was bold and revolutionary in Petőfi's prose (often in his poetry as well), in contrast to the awkward, circumlocutory, ornate style of his contemporaries.

His letters have survived in rather large numbers. These are not literary letters which cast a sneaking glance toward posterity, but letters filled with practical affairs: the writer asks for a loan of money, arranges a meeting, gives orders to his printer... Nonetheless, Petőfi's correspondence is valuable as literature, owing to the style and the ideas it contains. This is especially true of the thirty-four letters Petőfi wrote to his poet-friend, János Arany. (Twenty-nine of Arany's letters to Petőfi have also survived.) Arany was a worthy friend, in whom Petőfi could confide his most important and most personal literary and political ideas. He was also a worthy correspondent, who welcomed the stylistic excellence of Petőfi's letters and was able to respond in kind. Indeed, the stylistic excellence of this correspondence makes it a still unsurpassed miracle, an imperishable treasure of Hungarian prose. It is the adolescent game of two great spirits, rejoicing in the pleasures of language and exploiting its possibilities to an extent never equalled: a deluge of puns, plays upon words and jokes; a stream of linguistic humour that, not content with Hungarian alone, often becomes macaronic, drawing English as well into its games. (They could do it: both were admirers and translators of Shakespeare, and knew English well.) The two poets romp and frolic, cuff one another like cubs, play at fairy tales and sometimes stick out their tongues, like children; yet in amongst these games one finds the most serious aesthetic discussions, plans for literary reform, and revolutionary ideas.

It was only after the outbreak of the revolution, on March 15th, that Petőfi was able to write political prose. He began at once: the first entry in his diary of the revolution

concerns the night of that famous day. He intended this diary for publication, and did, in fact, publish it. In it he addresses the public on political questions: he is trying, like an engine, to drive the revolution forward. He wants to spread its principles, to defend the justness of it; he chides, predicts, becomes impatient. The revolution is not proceeding in the direction he thinks it should, and the Hapsburg counter-attack is closing around it in a fatal ring; Petőfi pressed both prose and poetry into the service of the revolution: he wrote battlefield reports, political articles and political appeals, all in his characteristically sharp, outspoken manner, in the rude plebeian spirit of the *ars poetica* of the "coachman and horses" metaphor. Then came more diary entries, but no longer for the public: pressured out of politics, the poet could only write for himself his increasingly bitter opinion of the politicians of his homeland and the tangled, bloody events of the fight for freedom.

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Petőfi's poetry is one vast self-description. So is his prose. The selections which follow, in chronological order, have been assembled to document this testimonial character of his prose.

On January 1, 1847, Petőfi wrote a preface to the first edition of his *Complete Poems*, which was then in preparation. In this preface, which did not appear, he responds to the remonstrances of his critics. They accuse him of incoherence, to which he admits.

Finally, as for my incoherence, this, alas, is true, but not surprising. God did not give me the fortune to mingle my song of peaceful happiness or peaceful woe with nightingale songs, whispering leaves and purling brooks in a pleasant grove. My life has been spent on a battlefield, the battlefield of suffering and passion; the corpses of the good old days, the death-rattle of murdered hopes, the scornful laughter of unattained desires and the eldritch shrieks of disappointments form the background to the songs of my half-crazed muse, who sings like the accursed princess on the island in the magic ocean, guarded by wild beasts and dragons. And then this incoherence is not entirely my fault, but that of the century. Every nation, every family, indeed every man, is at loggerheads with himself. Humankind has grown up since the Middle Ages, yet it still wears mediaeval garb, patched and let out here and there though it may be; but man demands new clothes, for this is too tight for him, it constricts his breast so that he can hardly breathe, and then he is ashamed of himself for having to wear children's clothes when he is a youth. Such is mankind, between shame and constriction; outwardly he is calm, only a little paler than usual, but inwardly he smoulders all the more like a volcano on the verge of erupting. Such is this century, and can I be different? I, the true child of my century?

Pest, 1 January 1847

An unknown village notary, János Arany, has won an award for his narrative poem *Toldi*. Petőfi immediately recognizes in the author a worthy colleague, and without jealousy (!) greets Arany in an outburst of joy.

Letter to János Arany

Pest, 4 February, 1847

Greeting to you!

Today I have read *Toldi*, today I have written this poem, and today I shall yet send it off. It will appear in *Életképek*, of course, but I want you to know as soon as possible the surprise, the delight, the ecstasy your work aroused in me. There's no denying it, folk poetry is the real poetry. Let us do our utmost to make it predominant! If the people dominate in poetry, they will be near to dominating in politics also, and this is the task of the century, to achieve this is the aim of every noble spirit who has grown wary of seeing millions suffering martyrdom in order that a couple of thousand may spend their time in idle pleasures. To heaven with the people, to hell with the aristocracy!

Write to me if you don't mind taking the trouble. Write about yourself—anything, everything, how old you are, whether you're single or married, fair or dark, tall or short... I shall be interested in everything. Farewell to you, farewell.

Ab invisis
Your sincere friend,
Sándor Petőfi

(Petőfi enclosed the poem *To János Arany* in his letter.)

The most beautiful record of Petőfi's love for, and profound understanding of, Shakespeare is this critique of a performance of *Richard III* given in Pest on February 13, 1847.

Shakespeare. Change his name into a mountain, and it will surpass the Himalayas; turn it into a sea and you will find it broader, and deeper than the Atlantic; convert it into a star, and it will outshine the sun itself.

It would seem as if Nature had once created a genius to be increased by interest year after year, and, having grown into enormous wealth with the passage of millennia, this colossal spiritual endowment could crush the canopy of heaven with its weight and so fall into the poor hovel of a wool-trader in the little English town of Stratford at the very moment when that good man's son William was to be born into the world, to inhale with his first breath that which showered down on him from heaven.

Much more could be added which might seem to be ridiculous exaggerations; they aren't, by far. Shakespeare himself is half of Creation.

Before his appearance the world was incomplete, and when creating him God said, "And behold him, oh men, from now on you shall never doubt of my existence and greatness, if ever you dared to doubt!"

Neither before nor after Shakespeare did a bird in flight or a human mind soar higher. Pearls hidden in the ocean of the human heart were brought to light, the tallest flowers of imagination's giant tree were picked—all by him. He robbed Nature of its beauty; we have been gleaning and gathering what was left for us by his whim or what he did not deign to take.

No feeling, no passion, no character can be found the image of which was not depicted by him in colours that do not lose their lustre with the flight of time or fade with passing years; he inherited the palette with which the colourful earth, the sparkling stars and the azure skies were painted and which shall remain unchanged in the millennia to come as they have been proved unchangeable during those that have elapsed.

Richard III in its entirety cannot be classed among Shakespeare's most important plays; compared to his other works its sound is flat and onesided . . . every act and almost every scene is loaded with curses and violent death . . . the action itself is less interesting than, for example, that of *Romeo and Juliet*, and against *Othello* or *Lear* it lacks passion; however, in character painting this play ranges among the most amazing ones and is comparable to *Coriolanus* and *Falstaff*. Richard is the perfection of villainy. He does not stagger or sink gradually, nor does he step by chance upon a primrose path, but he simply makes the cool decision to turn into a scoundrel—with the casual gesture of putting on or taking off his coat. His aim is to rule; he fixes his eyes on this goal, regardless of means or measures, and he strides cheerfully towards his target, marches blithely towards his aim as if treading on sweet-smelling blooms and not on the corpses of his victims. This merriness, this gaiety, this humour surpasses in horror any knitted brows, gleaming eyes or grinding teeth; the smiling sea softly rocks and plays with sunbeams while wrecks of scattered ships wash in its waves. Yet the play has a scene whose greatness and boldness was never equalled by Shakespeare, and even trying to follow the like would mean utter despair, sheer madness for anyone, except for the unlimited and all-pervasive force of his creative talent. It is the coffin scene in the first act.

Richard, in spite of his being deformed, lame, humpbacked and ugly, Richard the killer is able to persuade the lady, driven to despair by her husband's death, to accept an engagement ring from him; the widow, well aware that Richard is the one who has killed her husband, utters oaths and curses on the killer's head, on the head of him who has appeared on the spot and whom she intends to stab. Richard hands her his own sword, saying: "Lo! here I lend thee this sharp-pointed sword." The lady prepares to stab; Richard encourages her: "Nay, do not pause; for I did kill King Henry"; the lady is about to stab; "Nay, now dispatch", says Richard; " 'twas I that

stabb'd young Edward, but 'twas thy heavenly face that set me on." She lets fall the sword and before long accepts Richard's ring. This scene is unrivalled in its grandiosity. It must have been conceived in a delirious moment, as otherwise even Shakespeare would not have dared to venture upon such a task.

In Letter IV (May 15, 1847) from his second series of travel sketches *(Travel Letters to Frigyes Kerényi)*, Petőfi recalls his first acquaintance with Júlia Szendrey, who later became his wife.

Nagy-Károly, 15 May 1847.

Oh my friend, I've not had such a long day as this since I read *Spirit in Conflict*. This road from Debrecen to Nagy-Károly is dreadfully boring. Sand and more sand. Neither hill nor plain; neither horse nor ass, but real mule-country, which is the most abominable of all. And it lasts from morning till night. The hours stretched out before and behind like dough for strudel, and when I had succeeded with great difficulty in shaking one off, the next turned up immediately with its sermonising face and each bored me more than the last.

In the end, just as I was beginning to despair of it, we did in fact arrive at Nagy-Károly. It is a dreary prosaic town, and what's more it was here last year that the noble Conservative Party wanted its supporters to beat me to death; nevertheless I'm delighted with it, because it was here that I got to know my Juliska, the most wonderful girl in the world. I expect every lover thinks this of his beloved, but whoever dared to allege this to my face would get the reply, "You're as big a liar as Falstaff! . . ." My friend, I'd describe her to you, but I'd have to dip my pen in the middle of the sun to be able to describe her spirit in all its light and heat!

Over there opposite the inn is the garden with the trees in it beneath which I first saw her, between seven and eight o'clock on the evening of 8 September last year. This is the time from which I reckon my life, the existence of the world. . . before that I did not exist, nor did the world; there was nothing; then into the great void there came millions of worlds and into my heart there came love. . . all this was created by one glance from my Juliska. In a sweet reverie I gaze across at the trees in that garden and pronounce a blessing on them and upon the man who planted them. —Now it's nearly midnight, yet sleep is still far from me. How can anyone sleep when tomorrow he's going to see the girl he loves, by whom he's loved, and whom he hasn't seen for six months? What a six months it's been! Can the oceans have tossed and turned during them as much as my spirit?

I'd like to write much, much more to you, my friend, about my beloved, but since I'm going to publish these letters, I shall be silent about her. Love stories aren't really of much interest to the public, unless they read them in novels... and anyway not everyone deserves to know the story of my own love. Farewell!

The following passage, from a travel letter, is dated May 25th: a visit to a mine gives voice to the revolutionary thinker.

Nagybánya, 25 May, 1847

Today I went with a party down the mine. It was appallingly deep. We were about a thousand fathoms inside, and there was no sign of the end. We went on and on along the long narrow gallery inside like stuffing into a sausage-case; for a time it was level, then we went up and down, till in the end we heard faint tappings in the distance and the miners' lamps began to appear and disappear as we passed by, like stars among black clouds. I doubt whether there is a more wretched life then the miner's. These pallid moles burrow and burrow far from the light of the sun, far from the greenery of nature, to the end of their lives. And why? So that their wives and children can have something to squander. Oh for an earthquake to shake together all the mines in the world and sink them to the centre of the earth! Then there would be no money, and there would be happiness.

The following day, May 26th, the writer of the travel letters announces publicly his joy over Júlia's decision. Even in the midst of his travels, however, he is still thinking of the Shakespeare performance in Pest in February. He quotes from *Richard III*—and would rush off to England and France. This plan could not be carried out.

Erdőd, 26 May, 1847.

"My kingdom for a horse!" cries Richard III. "Half of my future for a single tranquil hour!" is my cry, so that I can describe what has happened, describe the love of my darling, a love whose like has never been seen before.

I am happy. For eternity.

It is night, a moonlit, starry, silent night. There's no noise, no sound, except for a nightingale singing—it's my heart.

Wonderful, wonderful girl! It is you I have sought since my earliest youth. I have gone up to every lady, have knelt before each one and worshipped her. I thought each one was you. Only when I was on my knees I saw that it was not you, that instead of the true God I was worshipping

an idol, so I got up and went on my way. At last I found you. You are the sweet drop of medicine that will heal my soul, which my mischief-mongering destiny has so long striven to kill with the poison of damnation. Thank God the antidote has come in time!

> Wonderful, wonderful girl!
> She had to choose between her parents and me.
> It was me she chose.

She is the apple of her parents' eye; since her infancy they have discovered and fulfilled her every thought and desire; they have given her everything except a harsh word. And there on the other side was I... an unknown stranger whom prejudice had smeared with mud and slander had sniped at with her arrows, and I had no time to say to her, "I'm not what I seem to be, or what the world wishes to see in me." And yet it was me she chose. Oh in this girl there dwells a god who sees into the hearts of men, who sees beneath the muddy surface of the ocean to the pure pearls in the depths. Blessed be her name, as I am blessed by her!

In September I'm getting married, my friend, I'm getting married... I won my independence at a price, and I'm selling it at an even higher one. Where should I get a higher price for it than my Juliska?...

Look, once more I'm writing about her, and only about her. It's no use, my heart was so full that it had to overflow, otherwise it would have burst. Can you understand anything of this letter or nothing? I can imagine how confused it is. Joy is stumbling through my heart and head like a drunkard in his room; he throws the furniture around, upsets the table, breaks chairs, smashes the window and plays havoc with everything. Unexpected joy is a wild and demented lad. He has almost dashed even my brain to the ground, that timepiece in my head.

Tomorrow I'm off to Pest via Nagy-Várad, and from there I go abroad. I shall spend the last few months as a bachelor in travelling. I shall visit the sea, which I have so longed to see, for after all it is akin to my heart—deep and stormy. I shall visit dark England, the home of Shakespeare, Shelley and Byron, and I shall visit the home of Béranger, bright France, and Béranger himself, the greatest apostle of liberty, the new saviour of the world. The thunder of the cannon in the July revolution was the echo of Béranger's songs. Let everyone mention his sacred name with respect. He is the world's greatest poet!

Travel Letter VII, written on June 7th, announces another joyful occasion: at last Petőfi is able to make the personal acquaintance of his beloved poet friend, János Arany.

Szalonta, 7 June, 1847.

Do you want to know why I hurried here and why I have been here for a week now? Because in Szalonta there lives a great man, and this great man is a good friend of mine, and this good friend of mine is János Arany, the author of *Toldi*. If you haven't read this work yet, there would be no point in my talking about it; and if you have read it, then talk is superfluous anyway. And this poem was written by a simple village notary in this minute room five paces long and two wide—and that anyway is as it should be. The muses are not conservative ladies; they keep up with the times, and since the slogan of the century is "Hurrah for the people!," the muses too have come down from aristocratic Helicon and settled in hovels. How happy am I to have been born in a hovel too!

This week I've spent here with my new friend and his family I count among the happiest days of my life. On one side there is the seriously jovial father of the family, on the other the jovially serious mother, and in front of us the two chattering lively children, a little fair girl and a little dark boy... Such is the garland that wreathes my heart, and I am happy; my only sadness is that I am leaving them soon—I have to leave them, whom I love as if they were my own brother and sister. Farewell, dear Frigyes! Your sincere friend wishes for you the happiness that is his. My next letter will come from abroad.

The beautiful poetic statement below is taken from Travel Letter X (July 8, 1847). The statement is romantic, but the idea is surprisingly modern: "Poetry is the grammar of the world's mysteries."

Miskolcz, 8 July, 1847.

I passed the time with nature, my best friend, who has no secrets from me. We understand each other marvellously, and this is why we are such good friends. I understand the babbling of the brook, the roar of the river, the whispering of the breeze and the howl of the tempest... this I have learnt from poetry, the grammar of the world's mysteries. And I have a particular understanding of the rustling of the leaves. From time to time I sit beneath a solitary tree and listen for hours to the rustle of its foliage as it whispers fairy tales into my ears, tales which cause my spirit in an ecstatic dream to toll the bells of fantasy and ring down the angels from heaven into my heart, this little shrine.

The following letter (to János Arany, August 17, 1847) also concerns poetry, or rather, this time, Petőfi's efforts to organize those who worked with him on the periodical *Életképek*.

Szatmár, 17 August, 1847.

I wanted to unite the representatives of folk poetry. Why in *Életképek?* because it has the most readers, because that's where the best minds have signed on, because the editor is one of the chief members of Young Hungary, in which I include all those who are truly liberal, not small-minded but bold and desirous of great things, that Young Hungary which does not want to continue patching the homeland's mocassins forever, one patch on top of the other, but to dress it in new clothes from head to toe...

In March 1848, the time for literary organizing is at last succeeded by the time for political action. This is explained in the March 17th entry from *Pages from the Diary of Sándor Petőfi*

Pest, 17 March, 1848.

For years the history of the French Revolution has been almost my only reading, my morning and evening prayers, my daily bread; this is the new gospel for the world, in which liberty, the second redeemer of mankind, proclaims her word. I have graven on my heart her every word, her every letter, and within me the dead letters have come alive, and the newly-born infants have been cramped for space and have raged and raved within me.

I need to plunge my pen into the heart of a volcano to be able to describe my days and the agony they have brought.

This was how I awaited the future, the moment when my ideas and sentiments concerning liberty, those eternally damned spirits of my heart, might leave their prison, the place of their torture... I awaited this moment; not only did I hope, but I firmly believed that it would arrive. The poems I have written for over a year are proof of this. It was not reasoning, but that prophetic inspiration (or call it animal instinct, if you prefer it) which is in the poet, that made me see clearly that Europe was drawing closer each day to a magnificent and violent convulsion. I wrote this many times, and declared it to even more folk. Nobody believed my prophecy; many ridiculed me for it, and in general I was called a fanciful fool. Nevertheless this belief continued to live in me, and I was like an animal sensing the approach of an earthquake or an eclipse.

I watched our political life from afar, or I took no notice of it whatsoever, and for this I was accused on the one hand of partiality and on the other of criminal indifference. How short-sighted folk were! I knew what they did not, therefore I pitied the loud-mouthed heroes of everyday politics and smiled at the importance they attributed to themselves. I knew that their splendid deeds and splendid speeches were no more than a picture traced

in the sand which is swept away by the first breath of the approaching storm. I knew that they were not the great actors who were to play out the gigantic drama of regeneration on the stage of the world, but only the scene-painters and extras who hang the curtains and carry chairs and tables on to the stage.

I shut myself in, as the astronomer shuts himself in his tower, and I lifted my eyes from the earth to the heavens, from the present to the future. All of a sudden the heavens crashed down upon the earth, and the future became the present... revolution broke out in Italy!

As the seers gazed upon the infant Jesus in the manger, so I gazed with fervour and rapture at this new meteor, these southern lights, which even at birth far outstripped every other light in the night sky and which, so it was recorded in my spirit, would travel throughout the world.

And so it was. It spent its infancy in Italy, then roamed northwards and suddenly appeared in the prime of life in Paris, whence it drove out Louis Philippe as Christ drove the moneychangers out of the temple in Jerusalem.

Oh when I heard that Louis Philippe had been exiled and France was a republic!...

I was travelling in the provinces far from Pest and there at an inn this news surprised and overwhelmed my heart, my brain, my spirit, my nerves.

'Vive la république!' I shouted, then stood silent and straight, but ablaze like a pillar of fire.

When I recovered my senses I began to be disturbed by a disquieting thought; the watchword has been proclaimed, I thought, but who knows what has happened or will happen while I am on my way home? Is the revolution to begin without me? Hah!

I dashed back hell-for-leather to the capital and arrived home trembling and out of breath...

During the revolution Petőfi's letters to his friends become briefer. Understandably so: he had much to do. Even to János Arany he sends only a few lines, an account of the revolutionary events of March 21, 1848. His affairs were not so pressing, however, that he could forget his favorite plan: it was Petőfi's idea that the complete works of Shakespeare be translated by Hungary's three greatest poets: Mihály Vörösmarty, János Arany, and himself. The plan was carried out only in part.

Pest, 21 March, 1848.

There's a revolution on, my friend, and you can imagine how very much in my element I am!... Many try to argue that name away from our movement, and why?—because there's no flow of blood. Which does it honour, but doesn't change the thing itself. I consider every forcible change a revolu-

tion; and we won freedom of the press and the release of Stáncsics by force. If there was no resistance, that shows only that the opposition either realized their impotent weakness, or were too cowardly to attack us. Hah! if you could have seen, when the deputation from the *comité du salut public*, accompanied by thousands and thousands of people, appeared with their demands, how pale they were, and how the worthy Council of Governors trembled!

But I don't have time right now to write at length, only to tell you that my *Coriolanus* is already being printed, and the first title there is: "The Complete Theatrical Works of Shakespeare, translated by Arany, Petőfi and Vörösmarty," so keep to that. Prepare either *King John* or *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, so that in time, when they're needed, you can send them. Why didn't you send the sample from *King John?* And generally, why don't you write, eh? The works to be translated later we can talk about later on.

The *Diary* entry of March 24, 1848, shows Petőfi the true revolutionary, determined if need be to stand at the forefront of the bloody mass movement of the peasantry.

Pest, 24 March, 1848.

The Diet has abolished feudal dues. And very nice too, but it would have been even nicer if it had acted earlier. Then the nobility might have been called generous, but now it cannot claim this title, since it has acted out of sheer necessity. The honourable noble Estates of the Realm and the most worthy magnates and goodness knows who else received the news that Sándor Petőfi was camping out on the field of Rákos, not by himself, but with 40,000 peasants, and this pleasant surprise spurred them to such generosity that they immediately abolished feudal dues. As far as the news was concerned, it was groundless, but if the noble gentlemen had not done what they did, I can assure them in the name of Sándor Petőfi that this unfounded rumour would soon have acquired both foundation and substance. The only slight difference might have been that not 40, but 80 or even more thousand folk would have appeared at Rákos. In any case it is better that it happened as it did, infinitely better. I thank God that he has preserved me from that fearful honour; I have not said this as a reproach to the nobility to which I myself belong, but I merely tell the noble gentlemen to their faces that it is ridiculous for them to boast of their generosity. Respect, esteem, but also justice!

This passage (April 19th) from the *Diary* gives philosophical justification for Petőfi's revolutionary actions, and is at the same time the revolutionary's lyrical statement of moral belief—a belief vindicated by his entire life.

April 19, 1848.

I am a republican body and soul; I have been one since my first moment of consciousness, and will be until my last breath. This dauntlessness of mine, which has never once wavered, is what put into my young hands the staff of the wandering beggar, which I carried for years; and it is this which puts into my hands, now, as a man, the palm of self-respect. In a time when souls were bought and dearly paid for, when an obsequious bow meant a certain future, I stayed far from the market place and refused even to nod my head to anyone; I stood with my head straight, even though I froze and went hungry for it. There may be greater, more elegant lyres and pens than mine, but there is none more unblemished, because I have never offered for sale a single note from my lyre or a single stroke of my pen; I have sung and written as the god of my soul inspired me, and the god of my soul is freedom. Posterity may say of me that I was a bad poet, but it will also say that I was a man of strict morality, which is to say, a republican: because the motto of the republican is not "down with kings!" but "moral purity!" It is not the shattered crown, but an incorruptible character and stern integrity which are the basis of the *respublica*... without them you may besiege the throne as the titans lay siege to heaven, and they will still strike you down with their thunderbolts; but with them you can slay the monarchy with your slings as David slew Goliath!

I am also a republican from religious belief.

The men of the monarchy do not believe in, or want to obstruct, the development and progress of the universal spirit; and this is atheism. I, on the other hand, believe that the universal spirit develops by degrees; I can see it developing, and the road along which it moves. It advances slowly, taking one step every hundred or thousand years, but why should it hurry? It has time; eternity belongs to it. Now it has lifted its foot again to take another step... from monarchy to the republic. Should I stand in its way with a reproachful glance, to curse and destroy it? No. Rather, I bow down in its lordly presence, rise with a blessing on my lips, grasp its holy sceptre and follow in its glorious footsteps.

The diary entry for April 22nd applies the internationalist revolutionary's noble ideas to contemporary politics.

April 22, 1848.

The ministry's first responsibility is to bring back our soldiers from Italy. Until they do this, they have done nothing. We need those soldiers, because

we are threatened from all sides, and must be ready at any moment for war both at home and abroad. Neither the one nor the other will be able to destroy us: I believe in my god, the god of the Hungarians!—but both can give us painful wounds, although we have enough wounds and scars already to show that we deserve the name of heroes and martyrs.

But our soldiers must be called back, even if it should happen that we do not need them. It is the blood of our own hearts which falls from their hearts onto Italian ground; but the blood they draw from Italian hearts is the blood of Abel, which cries out to God in Heaven for vengeance, vengeance on the head of the Hungarian nation, which has given itself into the hands of the Lie to fight against Truth. Woe, then, to us!

When freedom becomes the universally accepted deity (as it soon will), the nations will gather before freedom's altar to accept its blessing, and they will stand in snow-white robes; but we will not be able to join them, because our robes are covered with black stains, the shameful stains of the Italian war. And sooner will the Danaides fill the bottomless barrel, than we shall wash away those stains. We have not a moment to lose, because each day leaves its indelible stamp. Let the ministers consider this: let them consider that they are responsible not only to the present but also to the future, to history. History... if once the strict hand of that terrible judge draws a dark veil over their gravestones, not even the almighty hand of God will be able to draw it aside!

Petőfi's article of May 27, 1848, of which the passage below is a part, was written during the period of political isolation. He is forced to defend himself because of his anti-royalist and anti-government statements. Even now he refuses to betray his principles.

Pest, 27 May, 1848.

At all events, our transformation will cost blood: there is no doubt of that; so we must see to it that it costs as little blood as possible, and the most expedient method of doing this is to spread the new idea slowly, gradually and to make it acceptable. Woe to us if it bursts in upon us without warning! Then we shall have no bread, for the rivers of blood will have washed away our crops!

It was to avoid this that I wrote what I did, and I am satisfied that the damage I have done to myself is equal to the benefit I have given to others. Therefore do not attack the republicans or stir up trouble against them until they themselves stir up trouble; and they will not do this, for they know that what must be shall be. The Christian religion had but twelve apostles, yet it spread far and wide; so how should republicanism with all the apostles

and martyrs it already possesses, not follow suit? Do you know the Rue Saint-Mery* in Paris? There in 1832 a hundred young republicans lost their lives... Read this page of history and you will be able to learn what soldiers the republicans are... 24,000 trained executioners, and they were hard put to it to wipe out these 100 children!

(Published in *Életképek*, 11 June, 1848.)

Petőfi had not reconciled himself to the fact that in Pest he had suffered political defeat at the hands of the government of the nobility. He therefore took his complaint to the people, and stood for the National Assembly in the area where he was born. The passage below is taken from his electoral appeal.

Truth to tell, it is not for myself, but for you here that I am speaking, at least with the good intention of promoting your good. I offer myself as an instrument in your hands and that is all. In recent years Hungary has done much, but by no means enough, to be happy and free... for happiness and liberty are the two main aims of all nations. Till now Hungary has been a pine in its natural state; now it has been cut down and sawn into planks, but they are certainly not yet planed, and you must plane them before you make a table of them—that noble table at which the two earthly gods, happiness and liberty shall sit as guests.

As I have said, Hungary is a rough plank, and you wish to plane it smooth. Very well, I offer myself as one of the planes in your hands. I can state with a good conscience that I am a well-tried plane; I have planed many rough blocks of wood and have not suffered the slightest damage. The simple meaning of this fancy speech is that the national assembly is near at hand, and representatives must be elected to it... If you elect me as a member, I shall regard that as glory for me; and you, I believe, will suffer neither injury nor shame from me.

Petőfi's opponents stopped him from getting a parliamentary seat. In his *Statement* of June 15, 1848, he speaks bitterly of his failure, although even now he accuses not the people, but those who lead them astray.

And it had to happen today, today being June 15, that the Hungarian people wanted to strike me dead as a Russian spy and a traitor—three months after March 15, when I was one of the first to raise my voice and take up the cause of the liberty of the Hungarian people! But for all this I condemn not the people, but those who have deluded and misled them; for this the law and God alike shall some day punish them... to me the

* Merri

people are holy, and all the holier since they are as weak as women and children.—Praised be the name of the people now and for ever!

János Arany also stood for the National Assembly, but he too was defeated. In his letter of July 1, 1848, Petőfi comments on their mutual failure in the elections.

Pest, 1 July, 1848.

It's an outrage, what people are doing all over the country, an outrage. There will still be enough stout hearts at the National Assembly, but the most ardent and unselfish friends of the people will be almost entirely left out. Long live popular representation!... You can still be somewhat satisfied with the election, because, so far as I know him from hearsay at least, the representative has common sense and integrity... but me! my triumphant opponent has such a wonderful fragrance about him, he would have done credit to the Augean stables. It isn't that I didn't become representative that I regret, so much as the fact that he did, who is unworthy of the rope on which he shall one day hang. But if the verification committee doesn't chase him right back, he still won't serve out the three years... hoho, in three years time, maybe less, an entirely different breed of representative will be representing the people... that will be the true National Assembly. Never fear, little brother, we'll be there too. Now they say: "he's a republican, we don't want him!"; at the new election they'll say: "he's not a republican, we don't want him!" or "he's a republican, he's the one we want!" How beautiful that future will be, my friend, how beautiful! You can't imagine it, I'm the only one who knows, because I see it, see it as clearly as your portrait there on the wall, and here, the portrait of Marat... does it make you hiccup in alarm, that I mention you together with Marat?...

By the summer of 1848 Petőfi's political dissatisfaction had increased to the point of despair. He no longer hopes for anything from the hesitant Hungarian government, but as his letter of August 16th to János Arany shows, anticipates a solution only from a new, bloody revolution.

Pest, 16 August, 1848.

But the homeland is in a bad way; either a revolution will come that will turn everything upside down, but save everything, or else we will lose, but more shamefully than any nation has ever lost before. I believe that we are on the eve of a great revolution, and you know I don't make blind guesses. Our first business then will be to set up a huge gallows, and on it, nine men!

In place of a new revolution, there followed a bloody armed struggle on the part of the Hungarian people to defend themselves. Petőfi too rushed to the battlefield. Along the route he was struck by the horrifying spectacle of the destruction caused by both sides. It is characteristic of Petőfi's sense of justice that in this fragmentary travel note he mentions not only the enemy's atrocities, but also those of his own camp, the Székely troops from Transylvania.

In the middle of January 1849 I left Debrecen to go to General Bem, into whose army I had had myself transferred by the National Defence Committee. It was a cold winter morning when I passed over the Királyhágó. I gazed with sad dreaminess at the countryside, which in summer is so lovely, but whose beauties could now only be imagined and guessed at, like the vanished charms of an old woman's youth. Beyond Feketető traces of the ravages done by the Vlachs began to appear, and continued all the way from the area around Kolozsvár to Beszterce. The houses had been looted and put to the torch; some were partly in ruins, others completely destroyed. Between Csucsa and Sebes lies the battlefield where, toward the end of the last century, our troops under Riczkó defeated the troops of the Emperor under Major Saint-Quentin, whose death enabled us to win the battle. My companions pointed out the place where Saint-Quentin had shot one of our men. From Kolozsvár I wanted to approach our camp, which was in Szelindek, by way of Torda and Balásfalva; but the road being uncertain—indeed quite dangerous—owing to the Vlachs, I was forced to turn up toward Dézs and Beszterce, and from there down to Szászrégen, Maros-Vásárhely and Meggyes. It was night when I arrived in Szászrégen, which the Székelys looted and burned last year. It was a terrible sight: the big houses were without doors and windows, and stood like huge skulls, staring out with their empty eyesockets. A few hours beyond Szászrégen is Petele, a small Saxon town also laid waste by the Székelys, but so entirely that all one sees are a few walls here and there. In Maros-Vásárhely I saw the wagons which were transporting our men who had been wounded in the battle of Szeben. A few of my companions thought it best to remain there "until we have certain news" from our general, a roundabout way of saying "so long as Szeben remains untaken"—this from men who are supposedly soldiers. I myself went on and stayed in Gálfalva, where a few days before we had fought a successful battle in which we routed the enemy as no enemy has ever been routed before. It was in this battle that, when the trumpets sounded *attaque*, one of the hussars sighed, "May God help us!"; to which another hussar replied: "Let God help neither us nor the enemy. Let him just look on and see what we are doing."

In József Bem, the Polish general and hero of the Hungarian fight for freedom, the dejected and oft-disappointed Petőfi found an understanding, paternal patron. A beautiful record of their friendship is this dialogue, which was noted down by the poet. We here print a fragment.

'Whom do you regard as the greatest soldier?'

"Napoleon. I do not like him in the least, but I regard him as the greatest man. Others were great only in one or two matters, but he was great in everything. Wherever he laid his hand he left an imprint for all time."

'Hannibal is a favourite hero of mine.'

"Ah," (he touches his hat), "he was a great man, a very great man, but, as common opinion says of him, he was unable to make the best use of his opportunities, and this is a great drawback. After the Battle of Cannae, I would have marched directly on Rome and destroyed it in one blow. But he was a great man, and the very idea of crossing the Alps, never mind its realization, places him among the very greatest of great men. The immensity of the plan is a measure of the greatness of the spirit, and this is his alone; its realization depends on two elements for its greatness, on him, and on chance."

'Talking of Hannibal, do you know whom I consider to resemble him as closely as two men can possibly resemble each other?'

"Well, who?"

'You, General.'

"God knows I lay no claim to that. I know just one thing, or rather I don't know it: I don't know what fear and despair mean."

'This is the main point. Hannibal didn't know these two either.'

"It's true that this is not an everyday thing. Nor am I boasting about it, for it is no merit of mine, but the gift of God."

1849 (between February and June).

Petőfi spoke and corresponded with Bem in French. In one of his letters the poet complains of the bitterness and humiliation caused by clashes with his military superiors. *(Fragment of a draft: original in French)*

To General Joseph Bem

Szalonta, end of May, 1849.

After the capture of Buda I came to Szalonta to rejoin my family, with whom I shall leave finally for Pest in the next few days. I have reaffirmed my resignation. I wish to live in Pest away from public life, in the solitude

of my wounded spirit, until its injuries have healed a little—the injuries I have received from my compatriots and from God, who not long since has deprived me of my revered father and dearly-loved mother, both of whom were the object of my most fervent adoration.—

And yet another thing, General. The horse which was so dear to me because it was a gift from you—I confess with tears in my eyes—I shall have to sell in order to be able to buy bread, since I shall have none whatsoever on losing my army pay. I declare this to you openly, not because I wish to complain to you of my misery, but because I want you to know what pressing reason made me sell your valuable present.

Amidst the vicissitudes of the war, Petőfi's family caused him great concern: his wife and his son, whose "biography" he began to write in the summer of 1849. We print a fragment.

The Biography of My Son Zoltán, To the Age of Seven Months

On the evening of December 14th I was speaking about Tacitus with my wife, when suddenly she became ill. All that night and the following morning she suffered the most dreadful tortures, which it still makes my soul shudder to think of; I had given up hope that the poor creature would live through the birth, because she is otherwise so tiny, so thin and so weak, or at least appears to be, that even a breeze would make short work of her. My son too was so weak, so cold, so tiny, so formless I might say, that at first I thought him stillborn. At three months he became ill and the illness was wearing him down; but he soon recovered, and since then has continued to become visibly stronger.

So far as I and my wife were concerned he might have remained what he was born, an upstanding heathen; but for the sake of my father- and mother-in-law, who are very ardent Christians, I had to have him baptized. But I thought: let his name, at least, be heathen, and so he was christened Zoltán. His godfather is János Arany, one of the greatest poets in the world and the most upright man alive; his godmother is Mrs. János Arany, who is a simple woman and such a good wife and mother.

Summer, 1849.

Petőfi's last surviving work dates from July 29, 1849, two days before his death. This is a letter to his wife; in it he writes of Bem and his son Zoltán, those whom—Júlia excepted—he loved best.

To Mrs. Sándor Petőfi

Maros-Vásárhely, 29 July, 1849.

My dearest Juliska,

I have just arrived back this very moment from six days of incessant travel. I am tired; my hand trembles so much that I can hardly hold the pen. Did you get my last two letters? I wrote one from here, and the other from Kézdi-Vásárhely. I'll give you a brief account of my journey. Here we heard that Bem had gone with a troop to Moldavia. We dashed in pursuit to Udvarhely, Csíkszereda, Kézdi-Vásárhely and Bereck. There I met him; he had already returned from Moldavia, where he had taken revolutionary proclamations and in addition had mercilessly battered four thousand Russians with one battalion. In Bereck he received a report that our troops had been defeated at Szászrégen and had fled terribly in all directions; so he galloped here to put things right via Kézdi-Vásárhely, Sepsi-Szentgyörgy, the forest-lands and Udvarhely, I with him. We dashed along almost without a break. It was a frightful journey. Now we shall be here for two days or so while he gets the army into some sort of shape; then what we shall do is up to him. In my last letter I wrote that the countryside at Csík-Szereda and Kézdi-Vásárhely is wonderful; it is perhaps even more beautiful at Sepsi-Szentgyörgy, and the town pleases me more. We'll have a closer look at it when we travel together through Háromszék like swallows looking for a place to nest. I met Bem at Bereck; I stopped by his carriage and greeted him; he glanced up and recognized me, then shouted and stretched his arms out to me; I leapt up and fell on his neck, and we embraced and kissed each other. "Mon fils, mon fils, mon fils!" said the old man weeping. The bystanders asked Gábor Egressy, "Is it the general's son?" Now he is far more kind, generous and fatherly towards me than ever before—and he has been all these to me hitherto. Today he said to his other aide, "Report to the Ministry of War, but make certain that you report in these very words: 'My adjutant, Major Petőfi, who resigned his commission because of General Klapka's shameful treatment, has returned to duty once more.' " And today on the way he suggested that we should find lodgings for you here in Maros-Vásárhely and that I should fetch you here. This is my chief desire too, but I dare not do this until we are in a stronger position to deal with the Russians in the neighbourhood. They are only two miles from here, and the people here have fled in all directions like chickens in the last few days. But as soon as there is some security in this place, that will be my first task, you may be certain. How are you, my dear, adorable ones? If only I could have some news of you! If it's possible,

if you can find a way, my dearest, write just one little word. I'll not fail to do so as often as I can. Is my son still being breast-fed? Stop this as soon as possible and teach him to talk so that he may give me a surprise. I kiss you heart and soul a million times, countless times!

Your adoring husband,
Sándor.

Address: Mrs. Sándor Petőfi, care of Miklós Miklós,
Calvinist Minister, Torda.

Translations by G. F. Cushing (most of the Petőfi passages), courtesy Corvina Press, Budapest; and Carl Erickson (Sándor Lukácsy's essay and explanatory notes and some of the Petőfi texts).

THE KITCHEN WALL

(Short story)

by

IVÁN MÁNDY

The tap still stood out from the wall, as if the kitchen with all its pots and pans and jugs, and the hands reaching to turn it, were still all around it.

There was an empty yard around it, with yellowish-green grass and one bare wall. Then another yard. The empty area stepped over the crumbling stairs into another empty area. Bricks with chipped edges climbed higher, to where their rise was stopped by the gap of a door.

The children came running into the yard. Two of them, hand in hand. Then they let go of each other, as if they were going to ambush the tap from either side. The girl in the red tights disappeared in a pothole, only to pop up again the next minute. The boy—with earmufflers on his cap, and knee-length pants—stood facing the tap, staring into the blackened basin.

"It seems funny," he said to the girl, "that this was left here."

The girl twirled round in the courtyard and danced over to him. "This is the kitchen." She stretched her hand towards the tap, naturally, as if she had always used it. "Shall I fill the kettle?"

The boy laughed. "You and your nonsense! The kettle, indeed!"

She did not laugh. Very seriously, worriedly, she stroked the boy's face. "You must have a shave. You can't meet them like this." She bent closer. "You can guess what they'd think."

The boy spread out his arms and looked around the empty yard.

"But who? Who's there to meet?"

The girl pointed all around, waving to the air. "The tenants. You mustn't think that this is just any old sort of building." She drew a line on the ground with her heel. "This is the living room. So, when you come in, wipe your feet properly. I really don't wish to have mud on my floors."

She went on scoring lines and circles. Rooms grew out of her lines and

her circles. She swung her hand in the air, and the railing of the gangways was there. The first floor, the second, the third.

The boy shrugged, then stroked his chin as if to smooth down his beard. The girl followed him around. She found a pebble to define the various squares.

"The bedroom. Put the calendar in the dining room. Don't pull such a silly face; you know that yesterday I bought a forty-five calendar. And do you like these blue curtains?"

The boy nodded; yes, they were nice. He crossed into the dining-room from the bedroom, then back into the kitchen. Doors opened in front of him one after the other.

"I think the water's hot enough; I can get on with shaving now." He used the phrase like that: get on with shaving.

The girl called out from the bedroom: "Don't let the water drip all the way to the bathroom." She flitted from room to room, straightening the table, the curtains. She called to him, still in the bathroom: "You know, I don't even mind being on the ground floor; lifts always give trouble, and then, your legs..."

In the bathroom, the boy had no idea what was wrong with his legs, but he didn't say anything. After he'd shaved, he went into the dining-room. The girl drew her hand across his face once again.

"That's better. Now you're fit to be seen."

They went out through the front door.

The girl said: "Lock it properly. Bolt it at the top, too." She sighed. "You're always so careless."

They stood there, outside their flat. The boy spread his fingers. "If only I knew why we have to introduce ourselves to the tenants. If you'd only tell me that."

The girl shot an annihilating glance at him, a real "annihilating look".

"You never know what might happen. Just think. We're not so young any more; and who will do the shopping, or who'll fetch us anything, if we don't know a soul."

"Well, yes," mumbled the boy.

The girl looked around, and pointed to a corner of the yard. "The Bakos family, with five children. Just think: five children." She thought they ought to call there first. "It's true that Mrs. Binder on the third floor will be mortally offended; you know, she's the alderman's widow. But sooner or later she'd be mortally offended at something anyway."

"Look," she whispered, pointing upwards.

"I see," he whispered back.

"Do say hello to her," said the girl. "She's there by the railings. All day long she just stands there by the railings."

The boy pulled his head in a little as he nodded to Mrs. Binder. "How do you do!"

"We're coming straight away," said the girl, waving, "but first we'll just call in on the Bakoses."

Mrs. Binder on the third floor acted as if she hadn't even seen them. Only her nose quivered a little as she sulked, as she breathed. Go on, visit the Bakoses, you just go and visit that sort, was more or less written on her face.

"She's an unpleasant female," whispered the girl.

"Perhaps we could leave her out," he whispered back. But the girl shook her head.

"No, no... But really, let's get going. I don't like hanging about in the yard."

They started on their calls. First, to the Bakoses.

She rang the bell.

Mr. Bakos opened the door.

"You see," whispered the girl, "he's in his railway uniform."

The boy nodded, greeting Mr. Bakos, who was wearing his railway uniform. At first, Mr. Bakos seemed rather surprised, but then he smiled almost apologetically.

"The new tenants. Of course. My wife did say that you would probably drop in on us. Please, come in..." He pointed towards their room, and then, again with the same apologetic smile, said: "We're a bit tight for space, but then, you know what it's like, with five children..."

They were a bit tight for space. The woman, with her drained face, was mending a shirt. The smallest child was squealing in the cradle, rocked by a sharp-faced girl. Nándi Bakos, the eldest boy, was in the corner, immersed in his books.

"He's going to be an engineer," the mother said. "This is his final year."

The girl accepted a chair with thanks, and glanced towards Nándi Bakos as she sat down.

"An engineer... That's very nice. Our son wanted to be a doctor, but..." She stopped.

A sense of mourning fell over the room. Mrs. Bakos stood up and put her arm around the girl's shoulders. The boy said: "Come, come, you must try to get over it..."

The girl looked up. "Please forgive me for starting off like this... for spoiling the atmosphere straight away..."

"Have a good cry, my dear," said Mrs. Bakos, "a good cry always seems to help a little."

They brought in tea and cakes. The girl started to ask whether the district was too noisy for them. "For we are getting on, after all."

"The bus stops right at the corner," said Mrs. Bakos, "but apart from that, it's very quiet."

Bakos was talking of the years he'd served on the railways. The visitors were talking of their pensions.

When they left, both Mr. and Mrs. Bakos saw them to the door. From the doorway, Mrs. Bakos added: "If you need a shirt or something, I'd do it gladly. You know, with so many children..."

"Every penny counts," nodded the girl. "I'll bring you anything that turns up."

"See you again."

"Yes, see you again."

When they were alone in the courtyard, the boy remarked: "They're nice people."

"The woman talks a little too much," said the girl.

They didn't even dare to look up. They knew that Mrs. Binder was still standing there, by the railing.

"But do come up, my dears," said Mrs. Binder, "please come along."

They set off up the stairs, puffing like any elderly couple who couldn't really take stairs any more.

Mrs. Binder didn't invite them into her flat. She stopped by the kitchen window, saying: "My lodger is in. He's cooking. He uses the gas all day long. And at night, he doesn't turn off the tap, the water keeps dripping all the time. I put everything down, but even so!" After a short pause, she went on: "I'm not asking you to come inside, my dears; when that character is around, I don't feel safe."

"That's dreadful," said the girl.

The boy asked: "But who is he?"

"He's an insurance agent," nodded Mrs. Binder. "Sometimes he brings all his pals together and they make such a racket! I've given him notice, but he won't leave. What's more, he's threatened to throw me out... me, you understand? From my own flat!"

Mrs. Binder's voice broke, her chin trembled. Then, she went on: "We should stick together, people like us." She looked down into the yard with deep contempt. "As for the others in this building... they're not worth mentioning."

"But then, what could one expect of people of that sort?" Mrs. Binder

whined on. "What can a poor widow expect of anyone? You know, I once asked this thug," she pointed towards the kitchen window, "to scrub my back. What do you think he answered?"

Mrs. Binder looked at the girl; then she looked at the boy. Both were silent.

"He laughed in my face!" Mrs. Binder shrugged. "In number four, there's a journalist; they say he's an educated man. I rang his bell, and I asked him to wash my back: he stared at me, and shut the door. An educated man!" A shrug, a pause. "I went up to the fourth floor, to Iván Keller, you see... But why should I go on?" Mrs. Binder stared down into the depths. Then, unexpectedly, she said: "But if I were to ask you..."

"Yes, of course," stammered the boy.

"With pleasure," whispered the girl.

They took their leave. As they descended the stairs, the boy asked: "Do you think she'd come down to us? With her back...?"

The girl didn't answer.

A back followed them down, an old back was stalking the building... Perhaps it was already there in their flat, perhaps in the bath, waiting...

Doors and windows followed them along the different gangways. At some flats they didn't even have to ring the bell. Rózsika, from the post office, seemed to have been waiting for them behind her door for some time. She'd hardly began to chat when Mrs. Binder's name came up.

"I've bathed her twice," said Rózsika. "And then she started telling everyone that I was trying to kill her. That I was trying to drown her in the bath to get hold of her money..."

"She never did!" gasped the girl, horrified.

They found out that Mrs. Binder had chased away the lodger's fiancée. They found out that Mrs. Binder had wanted the lodger to marry her. They found out that...

"We shant't let Mrs. Binder come in," said the boy, as they left Rózsika.

They visited the old bachelor, who played the piano for them. They called on the journalist, who showed them all kinds of books.

There were some who did not answer the bell.

"It doesn't matter," said the girl. "We don't have to know everybody." As they reached the ground floor, she took the boy's arm. "Look, there are some musicians."

"I see," nodded the boy.

They were just buskers, going from building to building and playing the same song everywhere, as if each building was passing on the song to the next.

"There are two of them," said the girl, "but only one is playing. What a hawk-like face!"

"But he plays well," said the boy.

"I could imagine better," said the girl.

The second man was only an upturned hat, walking round the courtyard.

"I could imagine better," said the girl, "but everyone is here."

The boy looked up. They were all out on the gangways. Rózsika was bending forward to listen to the music. There was an angry frown on Mrs. Binder's face, as if to say "So this is what I have to bear, this terrible creaking noise," but she wouldn't have budged from the railing.

Money dropped into the hat.

The girl touched the boy on the arm. "What can we give him? We came out without money. And he's just coming this way..."

The hat was drawing near. And then, the girl's face lit up. "A glass of cold water! They'd enjoy that, on such a hot day!"

The boy agreed that that would do very well. And they'd make them sit down in the kitchen, and they'd have a chat.

The girl went over to the hat. "Please, do come in to see us." She went on ahead to open the door.

She was inside the kitchen, facing the tap. "Fresh water, it's nicer than anything."

She made a movement as if to turn on the tap. But as she looked at that decaying, rusty tap, her hand fell back. "Fresh water," she muttered.

She looked at the tap, but now there was no one standing behind her. The musicians, the kitchen, the flat, had all disappeared.

"What about it?" said the boy behind her.

The girl bent over the blackened shell under the tap as if she was looking for the neighbours who had disappeared down the drain.

"What about it?"

The girl stayed like that, bending over the shell. Then she rose. Her face was sharp, wicked, as she laughed at the boy.

"What about it?"

She kicked away the lines enclosing the kitchen, the flat. She skipped next door and kicked away the Bakos family. She rushed up the pile of bricks, yelling through empty doorways: "Nobody! There's nobody here!"

She stopped right in front of the tap. She looked at it through narrowed eyes. "Why were you left here? Tell me, why?"

She picked up a pebble and smashed it against the tap. Then she grabbed the boy's hand and ran from the yard.

Translated by Mari Kuttna

THE ADVENTURES OF THE HUNGARIAN CROWN

by

GYÖRGY BÓNIS

"The crown of Hungary," to quote Ernst Kantorowicz's classic, *The King's Two Bodies*, "was at once the visible holy relic of St. Stephen, Hungary's first Christian king, and the invisible symbol and lord paramount of the Hungarian monarchy." Both the visible and the invisible crown, the crown jewel and its theory, fascinated scholars and politicians for centuries. To this day ideas have frequently changed about the diadem, and feelings have often risen high about the idea of the crown. In surveying the adventurous story of the "holy" crown, one must look at two separate aspects in different ages: the fate of the visible and that of the invisible crown.

THE ROYAL CROWN

The traditional view about the origin of the Hungarian crown as an object was expressed by the learned Jesuit, István Katona, in 1792. According to him the two parts of the crown date back to two different periods. The lower, open crown, decorated with enamel portraits with Greek inscriptions, was a present from Michael Ducas VII (1071–1078), the Byzantine emperor, to his contemporary Géza I (1074–1077), king of Hungary. The enamel work portraying and naming both of them, together with Michael's son the Basileus Constantin, support this view. The upper part, consisting of two crossed bands and displaying enamel work with Latin inscriptions, was sent for the coronation of the Hungarian ruling prince, Stephen, by the Pope Sylvester II (999–1003) at the time of the founding of the Hungarian state, when he also granted Stephen the dignity of the royal and apostolic title. The basis of this view is what is called the "Bull of Sylvester," supposedly dated 1000, that has long been proved a forgery, and Bishop Hartvik's Life of St Stephen. Thus the corona-

tion jewel consisting of these two joined parts is traditionally called "the crown of Saint Stephen."

Although some demurred, this two hundred year old view continued to be held until recently. Since the Hungarian crown and the jewels have very seldom, and only subject to considerable restriction, been available for direct examination, this stubborn insistence on tradition is understandable. The crown had to be associated with the figure of the founder of the Hungarian state, precisely because of its theoretical and political importance. This is why it was an almost revolutionary act when József Deér, a Hungarian historian who died recently in Switzerland, in 1966, after a most intensive examination came to a conclusion which fundamentally differs from the traditional view. Although the experts have not yet come to a final conclusion, it is quite possible that Deér's hypothesis will stand the test of time.

This new view also holds that the Hungarian crown consists of two separate parts. The present form of the "Greek crown" goes back to a woman's crown made in Hungary in the last quarter of the 12th century, which was only later decorated with the ten enamel pieces. The latter were actually taken from a present—probably from the cover of a codex—given by Michael Ducas to Géza I. The open crown, decorated in this way, was never used at the coronation of kings and so it was never "the crown of the realm". The upper part, the "Latin crown" was not intended to serve this function either. The two bands were originally made for a different purpose and were bent much later. The crown was made in the first quarter of the 13th century, in Hungary. The two parts did not gradually become one, but were joined in one act and it was attempted at the same time to give the whole piece an archaic look. The fact that the hole for the cross on top of the new crown was oblique, and the Pantocrator was also damaged shows that fast work was involved.

Deér nonetheless believes, and seems to prove, that another, older crown existed during the reign of the Árpád dynasty, a crown whose traditional association with the figure of the first Hungarian king is more justified, but the upper part of the present crown has nothing to do with this. This raises a further question: when was the Hungarian crown that we know today, assembled? Excluding other dates by a thorough analysis, Deér calls attention to the disturbances following the death of Béla IV (1270). There was a long armed struggle between the old king and his son, the future István V. On his death-bed, King Béla entrusted his most treasured jewels to his favourite daughter, Princess Anna, so that they would not get into the hands of István. Anna escaped to her son-in-law,

the powerful Czech king, Ottokar II, taking the jewels with her. In the peace-treaty of Pozsony, in 1271, István V gave up his claim to the crown jewels, and their fate can only be followed for one more decade. According to Deér, the present crown was put together under the pressure of circumstances, for the coronation of István V, using older components. By 1290, the year of the coronation of András III, this crown was regarded as the Crown of St Stephen.

If Deér's conclusions are correct, the continuity of the story of the Crown of St Stephen was broken in the last decades of the Árpád dynasty. But the various ideas associated with it began to develop and flourish exactly in this period. The symbolic meaning of the crown appeared frequently in the first product of Hungarian political literature, the "Admonitions", supposedly written by St Stephen. The crown appeared as the symbol of the monarchy. This symbolism of religious origin drew a parallel between the earthly and the heavenly crowns: if the sovereign practises the virtues advised in the "Admonitions", he will "glorify his crown", and by doing so he will be worthy of the crown of the saints. The same parallel is repeated in the legends of Saint Stephen and in the Hungarian historical literature of the 11th century (e.g. the Gesta Hungarorum). According to the chroniclers it is by way of the crown that the kingdom is transferred and, in distinction to the other princes, the crowned member of the royal family is the king. Thus the crown is the symbol of royal dignity and monarchic power.

In the 13th century the theory that closely associated the crown with one person flourished in the documents of the Hungarian chancellery. The king regarded his position, his monarchic rights, therefore the crown, as his, as private property inherited from his ancestors. In the terminology of his subjects the crown was "royal", and the monarch spoke about it as something of his own, as "ours". Charters and documents often speak of the honour, glory and benefit of the crown and also of its dishonour, harm and injury. "Everything that raises the dignity of the king, enriches him morally or legally, at the same time enhances the prestige and wealth of the crown. And the king's injury, everything that harms him morally and financially, also damages and injures the crown"—wrote Ferenc Eckhart. That is why the kings had the visible crown guarded in the church traditionally used for coronation and royal funerals, in Székesfehérvár, leaving it to the care of the custodian. That is why Béla IV carried it to safety from the Mongol invasion in 1241, all the way down to the Adriatic and guarded it when the emergency was over, in the new fortress of Visegrád. But in 1290, the crown that we know today, was again kept

in the church of Székesfehérvár. In one respect, however, the crown began to become distinct from the person of the king, i.e. the "inalienability" of the landed properties needed to keep the power of the king. These properties were part of the "crown's estates", estates that the king had to keep intact as early as in the 13th century. Naturally, it was not specified which of the king's estates were inalienable, but from time to time kings took back some of their "unnecessary" grants. One such act assumed European importance. In his decree, "Intellecto", Pope Honorius III called on the Hungarian King András II to take back the grants through which he dishonoured the royal dignity even if these were affirmed by his royal oath, because—in the pope's opinion—at his coronation the king took an oath to preserve the country's rights and the "honour of the crown" intact. This pontifical law, dated 1220 by tradition, was included in Gregory IX's great collection of canon law (Extra 2, 24, 33), and thus became the classical source of inalienability. W. H. Bryson recently pointed out that this provision of law is listed in the pontifical register under the date of July 15, 1225 (as in the old Hungarian edition). It should be added that its second part reflects an article of The Golden Bull of Hungary of 1222. Pope Gregory IX reiterated the principle of "Intellecto", which dealt with Hungarian matters, when in 1233 and in 1235 he warned Henry III, king of England, to keep his coronation oath to safeguard crown properties. Thus, in a way, the wasteful grants of the Hungarian King András II contributed to the development of the crown-theory in Europe.

THE CROWN OF THE REALM

The Árpád dynasty became extinct in 1301. Following this, the crown went through the very same troubles as the country. Not much later the pope declared the young Caroberto Anjou to be the heir to the Hungarian throne, and other relatives of the female line also pressed their claims. The Czech king, Wenceslas II wanted to help his under-age son, Wenceslas, to the Hungarian throne, but in 1304, realizing the failure of his venture, took both his son and the crown home with him. Later he passed the crown to another claimant on the female line, the Bavarian prince, Otto, who was subsequently captured, together with the crown, by the powerful Governor of Transylvania, László of the Kán clan. After he was released, Otto quickly left the country, and the Neapolitan Anjou obtained the throne. He was aided by the papal legate Cardinal Fra Gentile, who eventually also secured the crown from Governor László. It shows the almost religious

regard in which the crown was held that although the papal legate consecrated a newly made, ornate crown for the coronation of Caroberto and based its power on the papal benediction, public opinion refused to acknowledge this coronation and in the following year it had to be repeated with the Crown of St. Stephen.

From this time on the Anjou kings (Caroberto and Louis the Great) did not return the crown to the church of Székesfehérvár but kept it at Visegrád, a place recaptured in 1316 and developed into a magnificent royal residence. This shows that they regarded the crown as their property, in the same way as the Árpád dynasty had done before them. When, in 1403, the pretender László came with an army to conquer the country, Sigismund of Luxembourg, the future Holy Roman emperor, had himself crowned at Visegrád, to demonstrate the legitimacy of his rule. But the seat of the country's government was transferred to Buda in the meantime, where the crown was also taken by Sigismund once the crises which arose at the turn of the century were over. The crown was guarded by the king's confident, Miklós Garai, in the treasury of the country, but under the seal of the king. In the middle of the 1430s, on the order of Sigismund, the guarding of the crown was taken over by the Pálóczi brothers—who were respectively the Primate and the Chief Justice of the country. But during the reign of his son-in-law and successor, Albert of Hapsburg, the first signs of change began to appear. Following the death of the Primate Palatine György Pálóczi (1439) the crown was taken back to Visegrád and the crown-chest, as well as the room where it was kept, were sealed with the seals of several prelates and magnates.

After the early death of Albert, his widow, Erzsébet wanted to take over the government of the country but, with the help of the nobility, the young Wladislaw Jagello ascended the throne. (His coronation, as we shall see, occasioned a further development in the theory of the crown.) Albert's widow, however, did not give up and after a thorough preparation, one night in 1440, she arranged for the crown to be stolen by a lady in waiting, Helene Kottaner. The next day her son, Ladislas V Posthumous, was born and when he was only three months old, she had him crowned. As a result of Wladislaw's victories in the field, Erzsébet took refuge with her relative, the Emperor Frederick III, taking the "holy" crown with her, not, however, as a pledge, as was generally believed for some time. Though in 1452 the Austrian nobility forced the emperor to hand Ladislas over to the Hungarians, he still kept the crown. Only Matthias Corvinus, who was elected king after the death of the young king, succeeded in getting the crown back in 1463 by paying a heavy ransom, which was raised by

levying a special tax for this purpose. On its way to Buda, the crown was celebrated by the people of Sopron for three days "as if it had come down from heaven".

The events in the middle of the 15th century show that the crown was no longer in the sole possession of the king. It indicates the oligarchical nature of the age of Sigismund and Albert that the right to guard the crown was claimed by the secular and temporal lords, that is, by the members of the royal council. In the 1440s, during the regency of János Hunyadi, the Hungarian corporate state came into full flower and when, with a great financial sacrifice, the diadem was recovered by Matthias Corvinus, the guarding of it was, for the first time in Hungarian history, was regulated by parliament. Act II of 1464 decreed that the king was to select the suitable place and men to guard the crown, giving full weight to the wishes of the lords spiritual and temporal. After the death of Matthias Corvinus, the Jagello Wladislaw II had to confirm by law that he would never take the crown out of the hands of the lords spiritual and temporal, and, what is more, that for this reason he would hand over the castle of Visegrád to the guardians of the crown (1492). The laws enacted at the turn of the century excluded the lords spiritual from the guardianship of the crown. It was also settled that there should be two guardians. This ruling remained in effect for many centuries. The guardians were selected by the king and parliament. Thus, around 1500, the coronation jewel truly became the crown of the realm.

The theory of the crown developed in keeping with social and political changes. In vain had the papal legate, Gentile, a new crown made for Caroberto in 1309; he had to realise that the country had as much respect for the diadem, as if "the royal rights were embodied in it."

Caroberto and Louis both regarded the crown as their personal property, just like their predecessors of the Árpád dynasty. According to contemporary documents, the faithful subjects served the king and the crown, and the faithless ones were untrue to the oath they had taken to serve the king and crown. Examples for the separation of the two can be found only starting with the end of the 14th century, primarily in diplomatic documents. In 1382, in a situation of dire necessity, Venice gave up her claim to Dalmatia in favour of King Louis and "his successors in the crown" and committed herself to pay seven thousand golden ducats to the representatives of the king and the crown. This distinction is made even more clearly in the civil war following the death of Louis (1382).

The legislation enacted by the parliament held while Queen Maria was in captivity made a clear distinction between the public good of the country

(respublica) and of the holy crown on the one hand, and the person of the king on the other. The participants of this parliament undertook to prevent the monarch from acts that would bring harm to the public good and to the crown.

A year later, when Sigismund was elected, the lords spiritual and temporal included a passage in the conditions to which the elected king gave his assent which stated that the king "shall always keep in mind the interests of the holy crown and the benefit of the people of the country" and regard as void any treaty made against them. The symbol of the crown as a concept of state, separate from the monarch, was beginning to develop. During the few months of Sigismund's captivity in 1401, the lords governed the country in the name of the "holy crown", and even had its own seal made. This distinction is even more marked in the famous document of the parliament of 1440. Wladislaw had to be crowned but the diadem was not in the country. So parliament ordered that the sublime act of coronation was to be carried out using a crown taken from St Stephen's reliquiary. At the same time they issued a solemn charter declaring that all the powers of the old crown were transferred to the new, because "the coronation has always depended on the will of the nation" (meaning the nobility) "and the power and efficiency of the crown was based on their consent." Thus the principle of transference became part of the Hungarian constitution, but the transferors were no longer only the peers of the realm but also the nobility who were represented in large numbers in parliament.

In the fully developed corporate state, therefore, in the words commonly used in contemporary documents—the crown was in fact the "crown of the realm". That is why the Estates of the Realm made such a sacrifice for it in 1463—naturally, taking the money from their serfs. Grants were received for services rendered firstly to the crown and only then to the king. As the crown—mainly in international treaties—became synonimous with the state, its theory came closer to another centuries old concept which viewed the country as a body. Eventually István Werbőczi, the author of the "Tripartitum" (1514), completed the task of linking the two concepts and bringing the development of the Estates of the Realm to its logical conclusion.

Werbőczi, the Protonotary of the Chief Justice, was commissioned by the king to compile a summary of Hungarian common law. In consequence his work deals with the civil law of the Estates and legal procedure rather than political theory. But the work opens with the—socially and politically false—theory that lords spiritual and temporal and noblemen have identical rights and privileges, and he also tried to prove this with a peculiar theory.

He took the legend of a distant past in which idyllic equality ruled, from the chronicle of János Thuróczy, published in 1488, a story which claimed that Hungarians were once all equals who chose their leaders in free election and could also freely replace them. Only those became serfs who refused the call to arms. But the community of equals entrusted government and the granting of lands to St Stephen and to the crown. The king grants titles and land but is elected by the nobility. This relationship of mutuality thus makes every nobleman a member of the holy crown.

Werbőczi created something new by linking the increasingly comprehensive theory of the crown with the conception of the organic state. His aim was to justify his political theory: the equal status of all nobles, and to emphasize the deep gap separating a nobleman from a peasant serf. It should be kept in mind that the "Tripartitum" was created at the same time when bloody sanctions were brought against the leaders and participants of the peasant rising of the summer of 1514. The theory of the holy crown, which played hardly any role at all in the following centuries, was in fact only revived to reach an intensity never seen before when the ruling class of capitalist Hungary wanted to use it to justify the preservation of its power.

The crown in the hands of the Hapsburgs

Following the tragic defeat of Hungary at Mohács (1526), the country had two kings. In the autumn of 1526, the powerful Prince of Transylvania, János Zápolyai was elected and crowned by the nobility. Ferdinand of Hapsburg, the younger brother of the Emperor Charles V, was crowned by almost the very same people. His claim was based on treaties of succession. Since the see of Esztergom was vacant, both (!) kings were crowned by the bishop of Nyitra, in both cases with the Crown of St Stephen. Ferdinand acquired it with the aid of King János's guardian of the crown, Ferenc Perényi. In 1529, in the course of another Turkish offensive, this same Perényi was captured together with the crown. The Turkish supreme commander, Ibrahim, showed it to the pashas in his camp, then sent it back as a present to the protégé of the Sultan, King János. After the king's death, Buda and the central part of the country were occupied by the Turks (1541), and his son had to content himself with Transylvania. For a decade the crown was kept by the king's widow, Isabella, then upon leaving Transylvania in 1551, she delivered it to the representative of Ferdinand. Thus the Hungarian crown fell into the hands of the Hapsburgs,

where it remained for centuries; first it was kept in Vienna and then, during the reign of Rudolf, in Prague.

At the beginning of the 17th century a successful uprising, led by István Bocskai, took place in defence of the Protestant religion and for a constitution based on the Estates of the Realm. In the Treaty of Vienna (1606), the Hapsburgs were compelled to make some concessions. The powerless Rudolf abdicated and in the summer of 1608 handed over the crown to his younger brother, Archduke Matthias, who became his successor, as Matthias II. An Act declared in that year that the holy crown should be guarded in Pozsony—the seat of the country at that time—and by secular guardians. The two guardians were also elected. One of them, Count Péter Révay, is remembered for his passionate devotion to the diadem. He is also the author of the first monograph written about the crown. The crown under his care was undisturbed for a whole decade in the keep of Pozsony Castle. But in 1619 the Reigning Prince of Transylvania, Gábor Bethlen, who was waging war against the Hapsburgs at the time in alliance with the Protestant countries, appeared at the walls of Pozsony. Révay's repeated resignation was each time refused, so he stayed with the crown, going to Kassa, Eperjes and to the castle of Ecsed, where he died a short time before the Peace of Nikolsburg. "We must stay with the crown till our death, we must never leave it"—he said, and so it was.

After Bethlen, the crown was seldom taken away from Pozsony Castle. The laws of the 17th century took care of the expenses of guarding the crown. It had more guardians, and the law stated that the crown was not to be taken out of the country. Despite this, at the time of the last great venture of the Turks, ending at the Siege of Vienna (1683), the crown got as far as Linz and Passau, escorted by its guardian, Kristóf Erdődy; and between 1703 and 1712—after the burning of Pozsony Castle—it was kept in Vienna. Though the war of independence, led by Prince Ferenc Rákóczi II probably also played a part in this. In 1715 legislation specified the oath of the guardians of the crown. In the same year the coronation diadem was back, unharmed, in the castle of Pozsony. Only the rule of Joseph II brought a new turn in its fortunes. The emperor broke with the feudal traditions of the country and did not have himself crowned. (That is why he was nicknamed the "hatted king" in Hungary.) In 1784 he ordered the coronation symbols of the countries under his rule to be taken to Vienna. Even the protest of the highest administrative authority of Hungary, the governing council, was in vain and the crown was taken to Vienna. It only stayed there for six years, however, because at the beginning of 1790—under the pressure of the consequences of an unsuccessful war against the Turks and

faced by increasing opposition—the emperor withdrew almost all his orders and died soon after. The diadem was given back to its guardians and was escorted to Buda in a triumphal procession. The passionate enthusiasm which it evoked was due in part to the delight felt over the decline of German influence. During its three days' journey from Vienna to Buda the crown was escorted by the banderia of the counties. In Győr it was displayed with the herma of Saint Ladislas. In Buda it was received with great celebration. When the crown-chest was to be opened, the Chief Justice of the country, Károly Zichy asked for the key in German. A Hungarian nobleman spoke up: "Your Excellency, the crown is not German, and will not understand you in German. You should try Hungarian and the chest will open." Legislation of 1791 ordered the crown, together with the other symbols, to be guarded in Buda, the capital of the country. The law was observed, and the crown was only taken away for coronations, which were generally held in Pozsony. During the Napoleonic Wars the crown found refuge in Munkács and Eger. After that it left Buda in the middle of the century only, in quite dramatic circumstances.

The Hungarian war of independence of 1848–49 faced mounting difficulties at the end of 1848. The enemy was approaching Buda. The Defence Council, functioning as the government of the country, appointed a member of parliament, Samuel Bónis, to be state commissioner, responsible for taking the crown to Debrecen, or even further if necessary. The railway line was already completed between Pest and Szolnok, but to reach the railway station, which was in Pest, the crown had to be transported over the Chain Bridge, which was then still under construction. The crown was transported in Samuel Bónis' glass coach. On the bridge the chest was carried by the twenty four grenadiers guarding the crown. It was taken to Szolnok in a special train, and then to Debrecen by coach. It was received there by Lajos Kossuth. Another turn of military fortunes brought the crown back to Pest, but during the collapse in the summer of 1849 it was carried to a refuge again. The minister for home affairs, Bertalan Szemere took responsibility for it. First it was taken to the temporary seat of the government, Szeged, then to Nagyvárad, Arad and finally to Orsova, a town near what was then the southern border where Szemere ordered his faithful followers to bury the crown, not far from the Danube. For a long time the search ordered by Francis Joseph, the young, victorious Hapsburg ruler, was in vain, but in the autumn of 1853 the crown was found by a judge-advocate, Major Titus Karger. After a short stay in Vienna it was again returned to Buda.

The crown performed its function on only two further occasions: at the

coronation of Francis Joseph (1867) and of Charles IV (1916). This was, however, the time when the "theory of the holy crown" was revived.

It is interesting to note that despite the all-important part played by the "Tripartitum" in the civil law of the nobility, the parts of the same work concerning public law faded into oblivion in the centuries following the defeat at Mohács. It would be wrong to say that the "Tripartitum" was not well-known; after its first publication in Vienna (1517) it went into some fifty other editions and in a way it became the bible of the nobility. But the crown-theory with its actual political function did not have a lasting effect. The terminology of the Hapsburg era seemingly kept that of the Middle Ages, and the crown remained the symbol of state power. When there were talks and disputes about state borders, the crown was represented, and losses of territory were interpreted as injuries to the crown. The territorial significance of the crown was due to the fact that in practice since 1541 the territory of the state consisted of three parts: the "royal" Hungary, the more or less independent principality of Transylvania and the territories under Turkish rule. In their talks—for example—with Bethlen, the Hungarian councillors often emphasized Transylvania's subordination to the "holy" crown. The only exception was the revolt led by István Bocskai, which reflected the crown-theory of Werbőczi in order to utilize it for their demand for freedom of religion. In their proclamation justifying the uprising (1605) the nobility supporting Bocskai declared that every landlord and nobleman was in the absolutely free possession of his estates and that no clergyman was to be placed in these estates by any king or prelate. They argued that the magnates, the noblemen and the free Hungarian towns were all members of the crown. This was the theory of "cuius regio, eius religio". The grievances inflicted by the Counter-Reformation were mostly apparent in these royal towns, thus Bocskai's followers also included them among the members of the holy crown. The towns also participated in the feudal parliament, which was regulated by law in 1608, after the success of the uprising.

The idea of the "member of the crown" appeared again in the principal decisions of central courts in the 18th century and had a clear anti-peasantry function. They stated that in the cases of certain lands, people who were not members of the nobility were not entitled to sue, for they were not members of the crown.

In the beginning of the 19th century the foreign interpretation of the word "crown" also entered Hungarian political theories. Besides being used as the symbol of "royal power", as in the early Middle Ages, it was also used—mainly in court correspondance—to indicate the monarch when direct

reference to his person was to be avoided. The word "Crown" is used in the same way in modern English. In the years of absolutism following the downfall of the revolution of 1848, the above terminology was quite common, it even appeared in the Act I: 1875. This was also an obstacle to the crown becoming the representative of the national state of the 19th century. This was the time when the Hungarian word "állam" (state) began to be used for the Latin "status". In the parliamentary speeches of the 1830s this new word became quite common and replaced the previously used "res-publica".

The generation of the Reform Era and of the Compromise of 1867 generally adopted the tradition of the crown-theory of earlier ages. The idea of territorial integrity was especially emphasized every time a certain regained part of the country was involved. The idea of the unity of the old state territory was still symbolised by the "holy crown". All this happened in the century when there was an upsurge of nationalism in the Danube valley, and its centripetal tendency threatened the framework of the "Hungarian Kingdom—the countries of the holy Crown". On the other hand Hungarian nationalism, which already in the 1830s appeared quite intensive, used the old theories for its own purposes.

This is how the peculiar situation arose that when the legislation of the Revolution of 1848 abolished the main institutions of Hungarian feudalism, and opened the capitalist period of Hungarian history, the crown-theory reflecting the spirit of the corporate state, instead of being put aside, started to flourish in the ideology of public law. Although the crown-theory began to be discussed in public-law books from the middle of the 17th century, interpreting it from the point of view of the court, or of the nobility, its final form took shape only in the heyday of Hungarian capitalism, after the Hungarian–Austrian compromise. The shaky building of the theory of the "holy crown" was constructed by otherwise outstanding legal historians (Imre Hajnik) and constitutional lawyers (Győző Concha), partly influenced by growing Hungarian nationalism, partly as an ideological struggle against the Austrian imperial theories. A historian of law at the turn of the century, Ákos Timon, proclaimed in several languages the false idea that the development of the Hungarian constitution—in contrast with those of feudal Europe—was based on public law from the very beginning, meaning that it was much more perfect, and that it had always been based on the theory of the holy crown. The chauvinistic public opinion of the turn of the century enthusiastically accepted this idea and the sarcastic criticisms by Ferenc Eckhart created a "national" outcry in 1931.

*

The epilogue of the story of the Hungarian crown is a sad one. After the abdication of Charles IV (1918) and the fall of the Hapsburg dynasty, the crown was kept by the Regent, Miklós Horthy, in Buda Castle, as the symbol of state power. When the old regime collapsed in October 1944, the Hungarian Quisling Ferenc Szálasi got possession of the crown. While he was escaping to Austria, it was captured by the Americans. In 1951 the crown—together with the other crown jewels—was classified to be a "property of special status" by the State Department. It still has not been returned to Hungary, its rightful owner: to the Hungarian nation, who consider it one of their most precious national relics.

The crown-theory, which survived its social basis, is no longer a theory of the Hungarian state. Hungary was declared a Republic in 1946, and a People's Republic in 1949. The theory is no longer a subject for political controversy, but of historical interest only.

GÁBOR GÖRGEY

INTERVIEW

(Parts of a longer poem)

I'm fine, thanks.
Teeth
in good shape.
Some hair, yes. I hope
it stays on, who knows.
Yes, family.
Naturally—why, dont I look
like a man, who loves life?
It's brushed me, twice
Vitality, and style.
Size 12. Yes, a little large.
I've quit, finally.
I wouldn't know.
This and that.
Here and there.
Lots.
Have a smoke? Coffee?
Any other questions, Miss?

Visions? Haven't any.
Showing on step by
step through some
inimical stubborn
jungly stuff as sly
and tricky as a rogue beast,
clawing it out of the ground

down to the bone
I make what I can of it.
In childhood, once upon a time,
I had visions, lots of them,
poetic, the real thing.
But it stopped, just like that,
when I started writing poems.
Visions. What I get's the old shaft.

Favourite dish?
If you could pour
some of that brisk-smelling
mushroom sauce over
the High Tatra and garnish it
with a crisp salad of Maytime
pastures awash in a dressing
of fat dew—I'd gladly dine on that.

Our forefathers?
When they were building
Sumatra City
these tigers and antelopes
hopped into their heads.
There's supposed to be a Mongolian still alive,
a wonderworking shaman somewhere
who could purge them,
but they've never had time
to go for the cure
because of all their congresses
and official parades.
So the tigers have come down to us,
and the antelopes, their feed.
Still and all, that grand Sumatran
housing-project was neat;
it's a pity they couldn't get it finished
and the city of the future
was swallowed by the jungle's
green fire.
O good old days.
O heroes of yore.

Snow? I like it, yes.
Sometimes though it seems
to sort or blend in
with the Sahara.
Discrimination's so difficult
these days, don't you think?

That rock-artist howler?
Sure I know him? We chatted
for hours the other day.
He told me
extraordinary
things about early medieval Russian
icon-painting.

I'll tell you about that too.
I was led
to a girl's boudoir
packed with masked bandits.
I had to rescue the virgin
who gratefully gave herself to me
in that pink and white decor.
When it was over we went
for a ride, a cloud of lace floating
fragrant on the horses rump.
Finally we rowed, I think,
on a pointillist pond.
So that's what happened
to me in the Jeu de Paume.

They sawed some
left-over gaslights
in half.
The iron torsos
line the embankment
where lovers stroll.
They are kissing, and
from the black, cavernous stumps
the hovering, sweet, insidious stench
of gas surrounds them.

The racket of that locust-colored
Diesel train running along
the other shore of the lake
Can be heard even from here.
It's coming round the bay
one fine day
right to our house. O, Miss,
why won't you take it from me
a man can't see those tracks coming
till they run through his room
right over my bed?

Like linens stacked
with love's fragrant lavender
in grandmother's cupboard—
in the terminal wards
old age homes
despair, loneliness
catarrhal laughter
vitamin deficiency, bedwettings,
fiftyseven varieties of cancer
lined up, neatly catalogued.
Isn't it adventurous of us
to lay our doddering folks
away so scrupulously in lavender?
Those bugs live
only a couple of hours
They've got it made, though.
Excavator-legs, prismatic lenses,
radar-sensors and a perpetual motion
sexual subsystem.
With supersonic wings extolling
nature's sophisiticated engineering.
Naturally, because millions of years
of labor have been invested
in each
bug,
born in glory
just to drop dead in an hour or so.

What I admire?
Concentration of soul
giving you the strength,
for example, to burn yourself alive,
And the iron calm
of the citizen in me
listening to the 8 a.m. news
and cracking the second
soft-boiled egg,
so essential for his existence.
It's a big, fat hypothesis, of course.
But well-constructed, even
a Martian could see that.
I admit there are other
palatable hypotheses, but
I'm not about to kowtow
grovelling in the dust
with the rest of them
every time the tribe's adored totem-face
stares at me.
My backbone's no thrilling conductor
of cultural currents—
in fact I'm turned off:
because these days it's not just
connoisseurs of the primitive
but conquerors too who ooze goodwill.

Were you there too? You got to see
tha fabulous well, didn't you,
where tourists take the plunge
from the edge, immersing themselves,
doing the antique
abyss?
A marble phallus
broke off under me and I lost
interest in the whole trip,
but take my word for it
I was the only tourist
with that kind of luck,
and I brought home an empty soul.

That indefatigable American woman though,
what a thirst for culture she had, and
what a splash she made, ye gods!

Nice to hear that, Miss.
I do make a point
of shaving close, yes.
It brings in this sort
of mini-success, among others.
But after razoring it clean,
deep-rubbing my wincing face—
how the lotion bites—
behind its contented grin
a bit of that endless rope of pearls
stringing out through the earth
exposes itself:
the Homo Sapiens mandible.

Happiness?
Listen, all it takes
with this grace-contraption
is losing that one single
screw
and my ramshackle residence
of lights and shadows
tumbles down.
Happiness, it seems, is merely
a malfunction in the rhythm
of horror.

I do.
Naturally I do.
If I didn't I couldn't.
But since I can,
I have to,
and if I have to,
I certainly
can.

Translated by Jascha Kessler

A HUNGARIAN FOLK BALLAD

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, certain types of Hungarian folk ballad began to appear which bore witness to a new style. The new types were less epic, more dramatic; the lyrical element was more prominent, and the form of the folk song predominated. One such ballad is the present, the translation of which is given below. The possibility of dramatic conflict between two lovers belonging to different classes—or rather, between their families—has always existed, and over the centuries has ensured the possibility of many ballad-type arrangements. This theme is dealt with, for example, in the old-style Hungarian ballad "The Ballad of Kata Kádár", in which the proud noblewoman has the peasant girl whom her son loves flung into a lake, and the boy, on hearing the news of the girl's death, commits suicide. A flower grows from their graves; the hard-hearted mother picks it and the flower bewitches her.

How different is this new-style ballad, even though the basis of the conflict is similar. Here the baron's daughter elopes with a clever shepherd boy, but they are pursued, she is found and brought back in a carriage, while the boy is forced to pay for his bold offence against the law with his life. The girl, on the other hand, remains alive, and no flower grows on the boy's grave because he has been executed as contemporary highwaymen were —by hanging. The ballad is therefore not realistic: in this period eloping with a girl was never punished by death, however high the "victim's" rank. It is probable that the ballad was not created by the people, but that the original is rather a romantic penny dreadful which has been reshaped under the influence of highwayman ballads and filled out with parts from shepherd songs. Indeed, it may even have merged with a similar epic song titled "The Young Woman's Herd of Cattle". The story did, however, serve to point a moral: after the 1848 revolution members of all social classes were declared to be equal before the law, but true social equality was a long time in coming. Here then are these romantic verses, cast in a new poetic form by the contemporary quasifolkstory tellers of the market, from whom it passed to the people, who reshaped it under the influence of the highwayman ballads. It is still one of the most popular of the new-style Hungarian ballads.

Imre Katona

BARON SZENDRE'S DAUGHTER

Translated by W. D. Snodgrass

Down the way from Baron Szendre's high estate
All alone a spreading lime tree gives its shade
All alone a spreading lime tree gives its shade
Where a shepherd boy beneath the branches stays.

All the clocks are striking and the midnight's gone;
Even now the flute is sounding, clear and warm,
Sounding through the vacant courts of that estate
Where old Baron Szendre's daughter lies awake.

Lonely in the night, the Baron's daughter sighs:
"Why should I be Baron Szendre's daughter; why?
"Why should I be Baron Szendre's daughter; why?
I should be the darling of the shepherd boy."

Baron Szendre mounts up on his red-roan steed,
Riding to the homestead where his shepherds sleep,
Asks the oldest master-shepherd biding there,
"Saw you my young Mistress Szendre anywhere?"

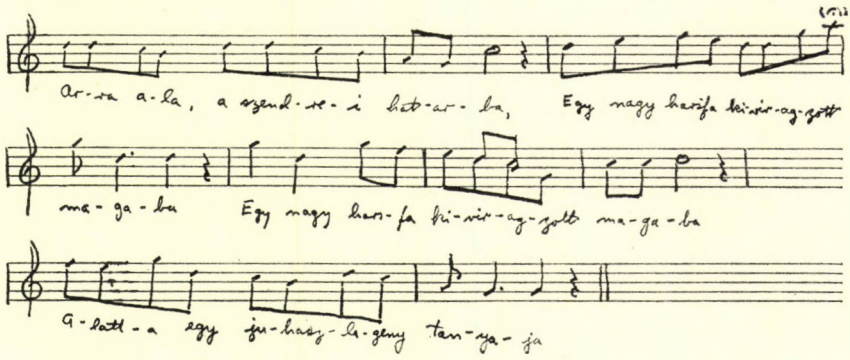
"Baron Szendre, little do I dare to lie:
Three full days I haven't seen my shepherd boy;
Three full days I haven't seen my shepherd boy;
Surely your young Mistress Szendre's by his side."

Baron Szendre's daughter is right there, right now;
There beneath the briar bush they found her so,
There beneath the briar bush they found her so,
Found her in the arms, there, of the shepherd boy.

Baron Szendre sends his coach to fetch her in;
For the shepherd boy he sends nine well-armed men,
In his carriage, at the head, the Lady rides;
Wearing iron, they lead the shepherd boy behind.

Fine and fair they carpenter the scaffold tree
Where they'll take the shepherd boy to hang on high;
Wind blows through his linen trousers and his blouse
All because he had the Baron's daughter's love.

The tune of the ballad in W. D. Snodgrass' handwriting



ACTA OECONOMICA

Periodical of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Volume 9 1972 Number 2

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ACTA OECONOMICA is published in eight issues, making up two volumes of some 400 pages each yearly.

Subscription rate per volume: $24.00; £9.60; DM 90,—

AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ

Budapest

Distributors: KULTURA H—1389 Budapest, P.O.B. 149

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Studies about Eastern Europe published in four issues per year

Editors:

I.S.D.E.E. — ISTITUTO STUDI E DOCUMENTAZIONE SULL'EST EUROPEO — TRIESTE

Editorial director: Tito Favaretto

Anno III N° 3/1972

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Direction, editorial office and administration: I.S.D.E.E. — Corso Italia, 27 34122 Trieste — tel. 69130.

Annual subscription rates: Lire 3,000.— (outside Italy Lire 4,500.)

Subscription rates for supporters: Lire 20,000.— Price of a single volume Lire 1,500.—

Subscription should be placed to C.C.B. No. 4107/3 at Cassa di Risparmio of Trieste Agency No. 2

SURVEYS

AN INTERVIEW WITH EUGENE WIGNER

Q: Professor, the public is considerably interested in the careers of great scholars such as you. The Hungarian public is particularly interested in you since, as generally known, Hungary was your starting point.

A: Hungary was my starting point and I am very grateful for what I experienced there and the years I enjoyed there. I am particularly grateful to the Protestant *Gimnázium* of the Lutheran Persuasion which used to be in the *Fasor*, and where I learnt so much, not only science and scholarship but also human things such as commitment to science, knowledge and teaching. My teachers were always happy to pass on this knowledge to their pupils. This greatly impressed me.

Q: If I am not mistaken many of the teachers did research work themselves.

A: That is so. A considerable proportion of the teachers did research, for example, Sándor Mikola was the author of an outstanding text-book of physics. He was somewhat odd and his behaviour and absent-mindedness made the class laugh. But we were attached to him and respected him; smiling at someone's foibles does not mean one does not love or respect that person.

This is a somewhat abridged version of an interview with Professor Wigner broadcast by Hungarian Television on March 8th and 9th 1973 as published in Hungarian in *Valóság* No. 2, 1973. The interviewer was István Kardos, a senior member on the staff of the Hungarian TV who videotaped the interview with Professor Wigner in September 1972.

Q: Do you remember any of your classmates, any of the boys who were at school with you?

A: I can remember just about every one of them. András Kubacska and I write to each other. His father was a teacher in the *Fasor* School, and my friend, who is a scientist himself wrote an excellent book on the world of giants, I don't really know how to put it in Hungarian, the animals of the fossil age...

Q: Prehistoric.

A: Yes, about the life of prehistoric giant animals; he has described it very well and in a highly interesting manner. And another thing, the teacher I liked best and from whom I profited most was László Rátz. He did everything he could to awaken an interest in mathematics on the part of the *Gimnázium* and of secondary school pupils and it was due to him that the Secondary School Mathematical Papers were started. He wrote books about mathematical problems which can be solved by common sense. I have kept these books to this day and when I am tired or am in no mood for work I get them down from the bookshelf and try to solve the problems.

Q: I should imagine that Eugene Wigner, the Nobel Laureate in Physics, will succeed in solving problems, Jenő Wigner the schoolboy could.

A: You know one's imaginative powers do not improve in the course of time. In the view of many they decline as one grows older.

I have not noticed this yet. My father always said: "Don't hurt Jenő, watch his head, that is his weakest part." There is some truth in this but speed is not of the essence in science but commitment and curiosity and the ambition to truly enter into a question and to understand it are.

Q: Professor, to the best of my knowledge you were at school with a brilliant scholar who later became world-famous.

A: Yes, John von Neumann. He was truly a genius. I met a great many people in my life, I knew Einstein, Planck and von Laue—I can't even enumerate them all. Dirac is my brother-in-law and Heisenberg a good friend of mine. But I know of no one who had a mind as quick and acute as John von Neumann's. And I mean what I say. I do not only tell you this, I told my brother-in-law Dirac as well, and everyone else.

Q: If it is all right with you I suggest we discuss John von Neumann apart, later in the interview.

A: I am sorry, I cut in ahead.

*

Q: Professor, you took part in what might be called the most exciting event in the history of science in the twentieth century, in the setting up of the first atomic reactor. Could you tell us something about this that might be of interest to the general public?

A: I don't know whether it was as interesting as all that. But I don't know what you mean by the first atomic reactor, the one Fermi constructed in Chicago or the ones which later really reacted for a longer time.

Q: I have the one in mind which was partly still inspired by Szilárd, although based on Fermi's ideas in the first place, the one built in 1941–42.

A: In the Eckhardt Hall? Yes, that was the Chicago one. Yes indeed a most interesting event though not from the point of view of physics but rather from a psychological aspect. All of us knew beforehand what was going to happen and what happened was neither theatrical nor striking. A huge graphite pile was heaped up and even Fermi himself, who devised the whole thing, carried graphite parts and columns and assembled them. When we arrived there all this was already built up and there was a large, they called it gower..., I'm sorry, control rod, in it to stop the reaction. The control rod—this is the precise term in English—is a neutron-absorbent whose purpose is to hinder the nuclear reaction. Subsequently the control rod was slowly pulled out, about 20–25 cms at a time. When they began to draw out the rod, the recorder started to tick. But as soon as it started to tick the pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat died down. In the end, however, after the whole of rod had been pulled out it did not turn quiet, it ticked more strongly than ever. And this was the moment we became aware that the nuclear reaction came about not only as something temporary. Of course, all of us were glad although we knew it beforehand what was to happen. When the control rod was replaced and the nuclear reaction stopped once again I produced the bottle of Chianti I bought in Princeton six months earlier for this occasion and we toasted the event wishing that the nuclear reaction should turn the life of man happier and more pleasant and that men should become less prejudiced. For we know that every kind of invention —this or another one—can have a two-way effect: it can lead not only to good or evil, but can result in both.

Q: Well this was the historic moment which of course only turns into a historic event looked at from a certain perspective; in this case it meant that mankind had reached the threshold of the atomic age. Earlier you referred to this event of unparallelled importance from the point of view of the history of science as a matter of psychological interest.

A: You know we did not confront difficult theoretical problems. Fermi worked out the method of establishing the reactivity of a lattice so that it should react in practice,

he also tested the lattice which was to be the basis of the first nuclear reactor. Between you and me—we all knew what would happen. We theoreticians were not even concerned with the theory of the lattice for we knew that if a carriage is built and a team of four horses is hitched to it, the four horses will draw it. Our task was at that time to design a big nuclear reactor able to operate at a high degree of intensity for a long time. We were engrossed in solving the difficulties connected with this problem.

Q: You described in your book that a team made up of members of many different nationalities was engaged in working out this problem. Could you tell us roughly who were your collaborators and how this multinational team was assembled?

A: It was not such a very multinational team. I don't know whether you consider Fermi an Italian?

Q: Yes.

A: In this case the team was multinational indeed. Of course, Fermi considered himself to be an American. The team was multinational because those in charge of the country thought at the beginning of the war that it might be preferable not to let in new Americans on secret war work. This is why the Cambridge Research Department which was concerned with radar consisted of reliable Americans of old-standing.

Q: Was this the American Cambridge?

A: Yes, the USA Cambridge, the Massachusetts Cambridge. Therefore those of us who were new Americans were left out and our research institute was made up of us new Americans. Compton, who really was an eminent scholar, was appointed to head the institute and he, of course, knew us and also knew that we were reliable and well-meaning people. Compton initiated us into our tasks. Fermi, of course, was an uncommonly clever man and headed that group which produced the first nuclear reaction.

Q: I believe that conditions prevailing in world politics at that time, meaning the advance of fascism, also greatly contributed to this kind of international scientific collaboration.

A: Naturally. We all feared that the German National Socialists would succeed in carrying out what they not only planned but expressed openly: that is conquer the world.

Q: Professor, in your lectures and writings on the construction of the first atomic reactor you mentioned that over and above theoretical work in a narrow sense of the term you often dealt with practical as well as technological problems which—strictly speaking—are not within the province of a theoretical physicist. Why was this so?

A: Our aim was to design this reactor and we pretty well understood what would go on in it. The engineers did not know what a neutron was. I remember Fermi always began his lectures for these engineers: "The neutron is a very tiny, wee bit of a particle." This was necessary for these engineers had not studied atomic physics and did not know that a neutron was teeny-weeny. They were not aware of the effects of radiation. I was lucky, I had studied chemical engineering, so I had an idea that corrosion must be prevented and knew that all potentials must be examined from every angle. We devoted particular attention to this so it proved easy to calculate when the atomic reaction would happen.

Q: You said earlier that Fermi basically calculated the theoretical question connected with the atomic lattice. Then what was your theoretical activity centred on?

A: Fermi did not calculate as much as all that. He knew well what was important and what was not, and he constructed the lattice empirically. He tested a number of lattices and built the one where the smallest amount of material induced nuclear reaction, a continuous nuclear reaction, that is. But one might say that there were no difficult theoretical questions. We had a theory how this could be computed quickly and easily, that was not difficult. It was something of the kind as if I were asked to calculate today how a pyramid should be built without

tipping over in strong wind. Although this too requires a certain cleverness and reflection, it is not really a theoretical question. In this context we did not aim at the most suitable lattice but at a particular lattice from which this enormous heat produced by atomic reaction could be taken off. We suggested that water be used for this purpose and this was not a very original idea either.

Q: Another important problem was to take care that the neutrons should not get lost, that is, to hinder neutrons from escaping.

A: Indeed, this was an important problem, however, the solution was rather obvious. A large lattice had to be constructed, a lattice with a diameter of several metres, so that the neutrons which originated at, and started from, the middle should become absorbed on their topsy-turvy way out. The danger of neutrons getting lost by leaving the lattice was set off by constructing a very large lattice.

Q: Professor Wigner, in the course of your work you have intensively dealt with the possible peaceful use of atomic energy. So you are most competent to answer the question: can we say at present that we are already living in the atomic age?

A: Energy is doubtless an important, but not the most important, problem facing mankind. Energy supply, considered as a physical question is a question of small consequence only. Since I happen to know the size of the national product in the USA, I also know that energy production amounts to two per cent of it. On the other hand, it would be a great catastrophe if energy sources were to be exhausted. From this point of view atomic energy might be highly important. Immense quantities of energy are available. I once calculated just for fun: if the whole of the energy available in the form of atomic energy were released today, the temperature of our Earth would rise to 100,000 degrees. This shows that sufficient energy is available to last a long time. At present the total energy stock released in America raises the temperature of the United States by one thousandth degree. This provides sufficient energy to meet the energy needs of the most industrialized state in the world. The fact that atomic energy provides energy should therefore not be made too much of, for it is only a very minute requirement of man.

Q: Thus, in your opinion, by having built the atomic reactor we have not entered the atomic age yet.

A: I don't know what atomic age means. I hope that mankind enters an era in which the human mind, and human feelings, will be appreciated to a higher degree and the increased satisfaction of human happiness will be a more pronounced aim. This is the core of the problem. It is a great error to believe that material goods matter most in the life of man. Food for the mind is also needed for human happiness. If one can walk in a beautiful garden, bask in the sun, be together with someone one loves, delight in one's children and respect one's parents, these are as necessary for happiness as anything else. It is true that one can't live without food, and energy undoubtedly makes life easier and lessens many of our worries. This, however, amounts to only a fraction of what is needed for happiness. People often fear, mainly in America, that trouble might arise if life gets too easy, for people do not know what to do with themselves, what to aim at. To earn our bread by the sweat of our brow is a necessity which has its advantages, it gives us a purpose. Vörösmarty said: "Nor does the world last for ever but as long as it lasts, it spoils or improves but never idles." Today too much is spoilt and too many attempts are made to improve matters and the latter also gives trouble and does more harm than good. Atomic energy is a good thing and very important. However, if it is compared to the first steam-engine it appears that the importance of the latter was far greater because it raised something from zero to one. Now we are about to raise something from one to five. But five is five times as much as

one, whereas one compared to zero is infinite.

Q: I see. In your book and other writings you speak about the possibilities of various fuels and about the problem that a switch-over to atomic energy would necessarily create in the technological transformation of production.

A: This much is certain that if far larger amounts of far cheaper energy are available many things will change. It is very difficult to foresee the overall impact of these changes. I mentioned earlier that we speculated a great deal about what might go wrong with the atomic reactor. Now we are concerned with a far greater problem: what kind of difficulties shall we be up against if the hitherto proven energy sources will be replaced by new ones. This is very difficult to predict. Although I am optimistic in this respect the results of our activities cannot be foreseen clearly.

Q: You mentioned solar energy in your book.

A: At present we owe the temperature of the Earth to solar energy. A fantastic amount of energy reaches us all the time. As far as I can remember the value of the energy reaching one acre of land in any one year amounts to far more than the value of this one acre of land. We often are totally oblivious of it and find it quite natural, for this energy comes into being by itself. But we must be thankful for it. Without solar energy we couldn't live and, perhaps, nuclear energy could not make up for it either. This is so for several reasons. Solar energy supplies the Earth with more energy than coal energy sources amount to from now until the end of the world. Not to mention that coal energy sources as well came into being through solar energy.

Q: Then what do you ascribe the fact to that we pay relatively little notice to making use of solar energy though large resources are concentrated on energy production?

A: This is a technical question and therefore difficult to answer. A very good friend of mine Feringston Daniels was concerned with and devoted many years of research to this question. The difficulty lies in that—even if only the amount of solar energy per acre is taken into account—it falls on to a large area. And it does not radiate very densily. Thus, if electricity is to be produced out of solar energy it has somehow to be concentrated from a large territory. For this purpose different methods can be adopted: mirrors or, or...

Q: Refractors.

A: Refractors, lenses. Various lenses have been suggested and Oak Ridge has now taken up this question and is working at it seriously. They have not achieved significant results up to now but we are beginning to see the difficulties more clearly than we did earlier, and to get the hang of how to overcome these difficulties. It is, however, not clear yet whether it will be better than nuclear energy. The great drawback to nuclear energy is that it produces radioactive materials emanating radiation which, if it were to spread over the Earth, would cause very many difficulties. Excessive radiation affects both the human and the animal organism.

Q: It would be interesting to know when atomic energy, one of the greatest achievements of our age, will make its way to another modern domain: space flight. When will it become the propelling power of space travel?

A: This is a very difficult question. I am glad you asked that one and I speak about the problem with the greatest of pleasure. If one does not think over every detail of the question one might think that atomic energy lends itself particularly well to space research for it is even difficult to give an idea of its high degree of concentration. One kilogramme of uranium or plutonium suitable for atomic fission contains as much energy as ten million kilogrammes of coal if the oxygen need is also taken into account. Ten million is an enormous, an incredibly large, quantity. There are, however, disadvantages, notably two serious drawbacks, attached to it.

One of these is: the astronaut must be protected from the considerable radiation released when atomic energy is put to use. This can be done in two different ways: either by putting a protective shield between the astronaut and the source of radiation, however, the protective device has an enormous weight. The second solution is to put the energy inducing machine, which produces the driving force, a long way from the man, the astronaut. This can be done by extending an iron chain or iron wire between the two, so that one hauls the other. This iron wire must be very long, several kilometres long. This is one of the difficulties. The other difficulty is that it does not suffice to produce energy but one also has to get rid of it somehow.

Q: In the form of heat...

A: Yes, one must dispose of it in the form of heat. It is quite easy to use atomic energy for the propelling of ships because heat can be let off into the water. The situation differs in the case of airplanes for both difficulties play a considerable role there. Difficulties, however, are still greater in space for the released thermal heat cannot be eliminated by letting it off into the air or water. There are only two possibilities: either to throw burning-hot materials overboard and this is not very convenient. How hot can this material be? 3000 or 4000 degrees—though this is an under-estimate. Or to release it in the form of radiation. I once calculated the expanse of the radiating surface needed. Well, it appears that about one acre would be needed. This means that an atomic energy driven space-craft which is used only once but for space flights must have a tail as big as an acre. This acre will then grow very hot, as hot as is possible, about a thousand degrees; this tail of a thousand degrees will then irradiate the superfluous thermal energy released. Well, this is not at all easy to put into practice. Did I answer your question?

Q: Oh yes and thank you very much. I'm afraid that today's session must have exhausted you, so you might prefer to continue our talk tomorrow. I hope this is convenient to you.

A: This is very considerate of you. Thank you very much.

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Q: Professor Wigner, if it suits you we can continue where we broke off yesterday. In our days the term scientific and technological revolution has become a hackneyed phrase and since people employ the two words jointly one might ask: what can be called science within this? Where are the frontiers between science and technological development or technological knowledge? Does such a critical point exist?

A: There is one thing I strongly object to: the view that science and technology progress at a faster rate in our time than earlier. I believe that the significance of earlier inventions was greater for mankind than that of the new inventions. The invention of the steam engine, the bed, the wheel, the carriage and the wheelbarrow and the domestication of wheat were of greater importance for mankind than present discoveries. The inventions of our times provide welfare and a more care-free life and these are good things but less significant than when we were released from sleeping on rocks. We are ready to forget how important these things were. But you would like me to answer the other question for it interests you more. Well, I think it is difficult to draw a line between science and technological development and/or knowledge. Nuclear physics is a science for it aims at throwing light on what nuclei are, on the structure of atomic nuclei, on their behaviour under certain circumstances, how they can be transformed and so on. The build-up of atomic reactors does not belong to the sphere of science. It harnesses the results of science—let us hope for the benefit of mankind. But as I have said it is almost as impossible to draw a clear-cut line between the two as it is to determine who is kin to me and who is not.

It is quite certain that my aunt is a relation of mine but it is disputable whether the cousin of my aunt is related to me. In the same way the boundary between science and technology is somewhat blurred.

This problem is perhaps also interesting because it affects the status of people. A number of people work in scientific research institutes who directly further scientific research through their work, although they themselves do not do scientific work.

Much team-work is done at present and certain members of the team do technical work and not research work. I don't know what view to take of this. They feel that they work for the cause of science, and that is true. On the other hand, their work is of a rather technical nature...

Q: Scores of scientific concepts and/or concepts employed in science survived from ancient Greeks whom I do not know how to classify. The question now is whether these concepts and hypotheses, this knowledge, can be included in the domain of science and whether the beginnings of science can be traced back to ancient Greeks?

A: I think the answer is in the affirmative. Perhaps to an even earlier period. The Babylonians already knew much. What I admire in these men is that they were the first to realize that the human mind is able to discover regularities and new ideas. The greatest discovery was that discoveries are possible at all. This was the great discovery. But then the Greeks really discovered fantastic things.

Q: Why then is chemistry considered a science since Dalton only, or physics since Newton—to mention but two examples?

A: This can be traced back to the concept called profit by economists, meaning that what was derived from science was of greater value than the investment made. Archimedes invented a kind of catapult. This probably was profitable. But, generally speaking, Aristotle and Plato were luxury. After Newton science was not considered luxury anymore but profitable activity. Maybe that is why it has been considered to be science since then. I hold a different view.

Q: It is then only an encounter through social practice that turns knowledge into science?

A: This is difficult to say. I for my part also consider what Plato and Aristotle said to be science. I admire them and I think that one could learn much from them even today. They were the first to declare that there are three aspects to the mind: intelligence, feeling and will. This should be kept in mind even today.

Q: Do you think that there is a connection between the visible changes which took place on the surface of the earth in agriculture, industry and in other social activities as a result of human work and the fact that these changes took place in the most recent 300 years?

A: I think that these changes started somewhat earlier though not in America. In America the immigrants transformed nature. However, throughout Europe—in Hungary as well—the soil was cultivated everywhere, that is, other kinds of plants grow there now than would grow if nature had its way. I believe that this development dates back to times earlier than the 300–400 years when we speak of science. Is it so?

Q: It certainly is.

A: It is.

Q: Now let me ask a question Professor, which sounds perhaps a commonplace one although every scholar is concerned with it. To what extent are man's view of life and the development of his moral frame in harmony with man's present hold on nature?

A: The phrase that science corrupts mankind has become a fashionable expression in our time. For example, that science enables murder to a degree that never occured before. I hold an opposite view knowing that, for example, American tribes did not object to the massacre of other tribes, this was not considered a crime. To commit a murder within the tribe was a capital offence. This was so also in Africa until quite recently.

To wipe out another tribe was not a crime. At present it is considered a crime by the whole world. If a nation is wiped out in our times—and these things happen even today—it is at least considered a crime. This is due to science. This certainly is a beneficial effect of science.

Q: Thus, in your view hitherto existing human behaviour became a crime as a result of changes in moral concepts. This is in fact a step forward.

A: This I consider as a matter of fact a great stride ahead.

Q: It would of course be desirable if we were to keep abreast in practical life with this moral precept.

A: This would certainly be most desirable. We also know how many people perished in the Second World War. I do not want to reiterate figures because it rouses unpleasant memories. At the same time it is also known that Germany's population declined to a third in the Thirty Years' War. None of the belligerent countries was inflicted with such heavy losses in either the First or the Second World War. One can therefore say that technical progress did not produce a change for the worse in this respect either.

Q: Thus the fault is not the tool's but that of the man who uses it.

A: You have put that very nicely and correctly: in fact not the tool is responsible but the one who uses it. And not the scientist is to be blamed who invents a new kind of arrow but the man who avails himself of it.

Q: Professor, you wrote on scientific cognition and its limitations that the process of human cognition is infinite and limited at the same time. How is this to be understood?

A: Today it is galling to speak about this matter. Weizsäcker, a colleague of mine, said in one of his lectures that a physicist of a hundred years ago knew everything about physics. When he, Weizsäcker, went to school, five physicists were needed to accumulate the knowledge of physics as such. And it is bitter that thirty years ago I knew a far greater part of physics than I do today. This shows the limits of the development of science and at the same time restricts its attractiveness. Learning one twentyfifths of physics has not the appeal of learning most of it. This will, to a certain extent, spoil and decrease the delight of people in science. I for my part would like it if science would extend over a wider area. We know far less about human life and animals than we ought to know.

Q: Volumes and volumes have been published in recent years and decades about the role of computers in science and in the organization of science as well as in the storage and supply of information. The theory called superstructure of science, which was mentioned in your book, created an international stir. Kindly tell us something about this theory.

A: If science is to continue existence as an integral unit it is necessary that the general public as well as scientists should know that there are no inconsistencies between the different parts. It must not occur that if these 25 people who know physics between them met to discuss scientific problems it becomes clear that one of them believes that the magnetism of iron derives from the movement of electrons while another thinks that it derives from the spin of electrons. However wrong it may be, the fact is that everybody only knows his special field in science, and it would therefore be desirable if a kind of superstructure could be brought about consisting of scholars who in the main are informed about the expert opinions of four or five physicists on certain special questions. This function of these scholars would be to bring to light, and eliminate, possible inconsistencies between the views of these say five physicists. It may happen that these scholars who try to reconcile differing views consult a further scholar—let us call him philosopher—whose function would be to clear up differences of opinion between the summarizers. I do not know how many such stages are needed. My rough estimate once was that it was three, as far as

I can remember. Computers might have an important role in establishing this.

Q: In this case the task of the computer is to establish unambiguity.

A: I think the computer will carry out this task successfully. I once had to make 25 variants of a very complicated calculation. Hence I adopted the following working method: I calculated three variants myself on very many sheets of paper whereafter I fed the data of all 25 cases into the computer. If it tallied with the results I obtained in three cases, it could be expected that the solution in the other 22 cases also was correct. Of course, the computer does not know what it does and it happened that absurd intermediary results were given and the computer did not notice this. For example, if the result I obtained was zero and then another three zeros were followed by a three-digit number, I at once knew that things went the wrong way and I ought to have worked it out differently. The computer, however, does not become aware of this.

Q: Thus the saying is true that the computer is a stupid mathematician.

A: The computer is not much of a mathematician but this might be improved. One has to learn to use scientific instruments, whatever they are. So far the computer has mainly been employed for the assembling and supply of data and we have not gained sufficient experience yet to apply it to other purposes; maybe we shall learn this in a few years.

Q: You spoke about "little science" meaning that kind of science or knowledge many people—who are not engaged in science as a profession—are in command of. Can "little science" join this system by means of computers?

A: Computers might perhaps be helpful in making them acquainted with the results of great science sooner and more skilfully. They are perhaps suitable for this purpose. I for one can hardly imagine how I would tackle a computer if I were a "little scientist". This, however, is perhaps ascribable to the fact that I did not grow up in the computer age, and when one gets older, it is not so easy to make new "friends".

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Q: Although we have already overtaxed your patience may I ask you to speak by way of conclusion about your personal friend and one-time schoolmate.

A: There is no doubt in my mind that you are referring to John von Neumann. To speak about him affords me great pleasure. But I don't know how to begin. It would perhaps be best to mention as a preliminary that I knew very many people, Einstein, Planck and many more. I also know the younger generation. But not one of my acquaintances was as quick-witted, had such a retentive memory and the talent of entering so deeply into details as John von Neumann. Do not think that I am exaggerating, I speak from conviction. Everybody's knowledge and comprehension has limits: this holds good for von Neumann as well. But I never knew anybody who had such a lucid mind and was as sharp as Neumann. It happened that I wanted to find out something from "Jancsi" and asked him to kindly explain let us say Warring's law. Whereupon he asked me: do you know Hilbert's third proposition?—No, I don't think I do.—Well do you know D'Alembert's theorem?—I think I know it.—Then he went on to ask three or four more questions and he started to explain Warring's law only afterwards, avoiding Hilbert's third proposition, which I was not familiar with, but employing D'Alembert's theorem, he found a circuitous path leading to the core of the matter which he then explained without difficulty. He was extremely clever and understood problems in their complexity and not only one or another aspect of them. This is not to be dismissed lightly.

Q: The Chairman of the American Atomic Energy Commission is said to have declared that if von Neumann took a definite stand on a question, the dispute was settled.

A: He expressed himself in the following way: if Neumann had analysed a question further discussion is unnecessary for it was clear what had to be done. At first he was interested in mathematical logic and was under Hilbert's influence. Hilbert's axiomatic school made a great impression on him; he hoped to solve the great question of mathematical logic on this basis. However, he failed to do so, I remember well when the right solution was found he at once recognized that this was the real thing. He was hurt to a certain degree but gave it up. Soon after Hilbert's space aroused his interest, rather the application of it in quantum mechanics. This was a question of capital importance and very dear to him till the end of his life. He expounded the results of his investigations first in a book he wrote jointly with Hilbert and later in his work on the mathematical bases of quantum mechanics. The next thing he was interested in was, as far as I can remember, the theory of games. The essence of the theory of games can be explained by a game of cards, I know my cards but don't know yours. The question to be solved is whether there exists a most effective method of how to play this particular game. Von Neumann showed conclusively, by mathematical means, that such a method existed. He demonstrated in far more complicated matters as well that there is an optimum method and this also is highly important from the point of view of mathematics. This does not surprise a non-professional, however, it is very significant to establish a mathematical basis. To the best of my recollection his subsequent field of interest was connected with the bases of the theory of groups; he was particularly concerned with what is called non-compact groups. There were only two fields in mathematics: topology and the theory of numbers, that he did not contribute to—although he was well versed in number theory. Warring's law—I referred to earlier—is, for example, a proposition within the theory of numbers. Towards the end of his life he was very interested in other questions as well, in economics for example. In this field he also did work of prime importance. He wrote a book in collaboration with his friend Morgenstern in which his ideas on the theory of games played a considerable role. He investigated the role of profits, what benefit derives from competition between various enterprises and the best method of developing the economy.

These are extremely difficult questions. I do not quite see eye to eye with his view that the economy can grow exponentially, that is, that in line with increasing consumption, demand grows more and more. I am afraid that this is not so. The requirements of people as well as the demands of the economy are limited. It is, however, possible—and this is what he said—that demand is unlimited and that the more is produced, the more is consumed, then still more is produced and still more is consumed and so on.

Q: Was he interested in other fields, in the arts line for instance?

A: He was interested in history. He knew the history of the Renaissance as thoroughly as a professional historian and he was also well versed in Greek history. He spoke five languages. There is still something I would like to tell you about him. Hungarians love jokes. Nobody knew more funny stories than von Neumann. He could coin a joke on every occasion. He was a splendid man and very good company.

Q: Unfortunatly he died young.

A: Yes, he came to an untimely end. It was appalling to see him in agony. In this respect von Neumann and Fermi were two opposite poles. Fermi told me two weeks before his death: I hope it won't last long. He became reconciled to what was unavoidable.

Q: And von Neumann?

A: No, von Neumann was not reconciled to his fate, I am sorry that we end our conversation with this sad story, but tragic events always happen.

GYÖRGY HÁMOS

A PRIZE PUPIL OF THE FASOR GIMNÁZIUM

At first it seemed that this prize pupil might suffer stage-fright when answering the scholarly questions put by István Kardos on television. However, it does not take long and it becomes clear that the problem is not whether he has or hasn't done his homework in physics, philosophy or humanism. Perhaps he lacked the time to go too deeply into questions of style. But let us not be too severe with one who left Hungary fifty years ago. One has every reason to feel astonishment, after the conversation went on for a few minutes his sentences became more rounded and the intonation more in tune with Hungarian ears as if the fifty years had suddenly melted away. The audience not only took delight in the niceties of his speech and his ease, but also in the joy in his eyes showing how happy he was to have so quickly found his way home. Perhaps he even failed to notice that he expressed himself in the same way as boys at a *Gimnázium* spoke in Budapest early this century. "I am particularly grateful to the Protestant *Gimnázium* of the Lutheran Persuasion which used to be in the *Fasor*, and where I learnt so much, not only science and scholarship but also human things such as commitment to science, knowledge and teaching." It appears that he felt qualms of conscience for half a century, excusing himself for having, together with his classmates, amused himself behind Professor Mikola's back and at his expense. "Sándor Mikola was the author of an outstanding text-book of physics. He was somewhat odd and his behaviour and absent-mindedness made the class laugh. But we were attached to him and respected him; smiling at someone's foibles does not mean one does not love or respect that person... And another thing, the teacher I liked best and from whom I profited most was László Rátz. He did everything he could to awaken an interest in mathematics on the part of the *Gimnázium* and secondary school pupils. He really did a terrible lot." We are glad that Jenő Wigner, Nobel Prize laureate in Physics finally told us—for we had probably forgotten it long ago—how much László Rátz did to awaken the interest of pupils in mathematics and that he started the Secondary School Mathematical Papers besides writing a book about mathematical problems which can be solved by elementary common sense and that Jenő Wigner enjoys reading these books even today.

It is probable that the same teachers (Professors Mikola and Rátz) endeared mathematics to John von Neumann—who was at school with Eugene Wigner—to such a degree that von Neumann was able to contribute to the mathematical foundations of quantum mechanics and to establish the theory of games. It is a pleasure to listen to Professor Wigner speaking with appreciation and affection of "Jancsi" his one-time schoolmate in the Fasor *Gimnázium* (of whom the President of the American Atomic Commission once said: further discussion is unnecessary if von Neumann declares his position on a question). "He was a genius"—says Jenő Wigner about von Neumann who died at fifty-four. "I met a great many people in my life. I knew Einstein, Planck and Laue—I can't even enumerate them all. I knew everybody. Do I have to point out that Dirac is my brother-in-law and Heisenberg a good friend of mine. But I know of no one who had a mind as quick and acute as John von Neumann's. And I mean what I say. I do not only tell you this, I told my brother-in-law Dirac as well..." Can't one feel the

This review of Eugene Wigner's television interview (see p. 141 of this issue) was published in No. 24, 1973 of the literary weekly *Élet és Irodalom*. György Hámos is the regular television-critic of the weekly.

oppressive greatness and comforting smallness of this world in this charming outburst? Wigner, as we heard, told not only István Kardos, a senior staff member of television that the late John von Neumann was an unmatched mathematician but he also told Dirac his brother-in-law. He did indeed. (Dirac, one of the creators of quantum electrodynamics, was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics at the age of thirty-one, in 1933.)

The video recording of this conversation in Trieste was a highly praiseworthy performance by Hungarian television. Did the audience understand every detail of it? It would be absurd to claim that. However, the turning-point mankind has reached became even clearer in what we did not understand: whether the neutron "this wee bit of a particle" will do away with this teeny-weeny Earth or whether a wee bit more happiness will fall to the share of its inhabitants. On listening to Wigner I understood, perhaps for the first time, how physics, the most exact of sciences, turned into philosophy. This vast quantity of knowledge, the knowledge of the hidden laws of nature, can only be carried with humility. Being accustomed to the cocksure statements of those concerned with Hungarian experiments in art, which are far less significant than nuclear ones, we are surprised at Wigner's modesty which, however, is not the modesty of good manners only. It is not even the modesty of a great scientist who wants to smooth out the great difference in the standard of knowledge separating him from his audience. It is perhaps not even modesty any more but rather self-defence against the pangs of his conscience. Of all those who had something to do with atomic force the very ones with the purest and most humane intellect are loath to be referred to as the creators of a new era, the "atomic age". They themselves do not know yet what is hidden in the womb of the atomic age, whether its creators will be blessed or cursed. Because of the scarcely endurable responsibility they speak as philosophers and humanists. There is no doubt that at present they know most about the world.

This is why Jenő Wigner's "self-defence" against greatness—covered with veneers of charm, lovability and even naïvety—was a delightful experience. The interviewer told him, quite moved: "Professor, you took part in what might be called the most exciting event in the history of science in the twentieth century, in the setting up of the first atomic reactor." But Wigner does not assume a proud air nor does he smile with a satisfaction feigning modesty; Wigner wonders which atomic reactor the interviewer could possibly mean, perhaps the one "Fermi had built in Chicago?" When the question which atomic reactor was meant, was finally cleared up—one largely planned by Wigner himself—he said about the great turning-point of science and history; "Yes indeed, a most interesting event though not from the point of view of physics but rather from a psychological aspect. You see all of us knew beforehand what was going to happen and what happened was neither theatrical nor striking. A huge graphite pile was heaped up and even Fermi himself who devised the whole thing carried graphite parts and columns and assembled them. When we arrived there all this was already built up and there was a large control rod in it to stop the reaction... When the control rod was pulled out the recorder started to tick. But as soon as it started to tick the pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat died down... I was lucky, I had studied chemical engineering, so I had an idea that corrosion must be prevented and knew that all potentials must be examined from every angle. So it proved to be easy to calculate when the atomic reaction would happen."

Professor Wigner said all this with so much charm and it came so naturally to him that the viewer in front of the television screen had to feel ashamed: how was it possible that the idea of a nuclear reaction had not occured to him earlier. One only has

to prevent corrosion and try to find out what will happen here and there. (I do hope that many of the Hungarian critics—to whom some of the Hungarian films are more mystical and incomprehensible than an atomic reaction was for Wigner—listened to the interview.) Of course, Wigner as well was glad that it proved possible to regulate the nuclear reaction: "When the control rod was replaced and the nuclear reaction stopped once again I produced the bottle of Chianti I bought in Princeton six months before for this occasion and we toasted the event wishing that the nuclear reaction should turn the life of man happier and more pleasant, and that men should become less prejudiced. For we knew that every invention can be employed for both good and evil"... I was very glad to hear this for I remembered him saying at the beginning of the interview that he acquired from his teachers in the Fasor Secondary School, Sándor Mikola and László Rátz, not only erudition and knowledge but human things as well. It seems that he has not forgotten these either. But whoever remembers Professor Mikola and Professor Rátz (the late successors of the Bolyais) who "did a terrible lot" to awake an interest in mathematics? Who knows where they are turning to dust and ashes, little suspecting that they as well had a role to play in the creation of a new age for mankind.

MIHÁLY ZAFIR

CONSUMPTION BY THE POPULATION (1945–1970)

In the quarter of a century since the end of the Second World War tremendous changes have taken place in Hungary, not least in the consumption by the population. This latter is a highly expressive index for the standard of living, as it reflects the development of material well-being and as the structure of consumption reveals a great deal about the changing way of life. Consumption thus expresses much more than the simple quantitative relationship of people and goods and for that reason it deserves thorough analysis.

I divide the past quarter of a century into two periods from the point of view of the subject under review. The first began in 1945 and closed in the middle of the fifties, while the second is now being replaced by a third phase. The correct perception and appreciation of the first two should enable us to understand better the third period, which is now beginning.

I

The Second World War left the country in ruins and plundered.* There was a quick

* The Hungarian Handbook of Statistics (published by the Central Office of Statistics) for 1970 says on this question:

"The value of war damage exceeded 22,000 million pengős, which is 4–5 times the 1938 national income.

As a result of the war, industry and transport became crippled. Almost 90 per cent of industrial enterprises were injured. The factory buildings were damaged, a significant part of the machinery and installations was destroyed or taken to the West. The rail rolling stock suffered an 80–90

recovery from this catastrophic situation. The consumption of the population reached the level that it had been before the liberation a mere four years after the end of the war and in 1950 exceeded it by 8 per cent. The mistakes of the economic policy during the first years of the fifties led to a temporary fall in the standard of living, but in 1954 and 1955 a dynamic development began and on its higher, stabilized level in 1955 the volume of consumption per head was roughly 25 per cent higher than in 1938. This level —although 25 per cent does not represent a particularly great advance—contained many important elements beyond the fact of stabilization. It is important to point out that as compared to the situation before the Second World War, within the average consumption there was a far smaller proportion of those who either fell significantly behind or those who had much more. The elimination of the great social inequalities is an achievement that ensures greater satisfaction of needs even in the case of identical averages.

Another important qualitative factor is that with the general widening of social security the health provision of the population improved. The number of pupils in the school system increased in every branch, and as a result of the endeavours to bring culture to the masses the turnover of theatres and cinemas significantly increased. It is mainly in connection with these factors that the volume of services exceeded the level of 1938 by 46 per cent. A further characteristic feature of the development is that the consumption of high calory foodstuffs—such as cereals, fats and sugar—greatly increased. This fact, together with the elimination of the very great inequalities of income that were characteristic before the liberation, brought about a caloric (in other words, quantitative rather than qualitative) sufficiency that applied more or less to the whole population. By comparison, the consumption of clothing grew more modestly, only exceeding the pre-war level by a few percentage points.

The volume of consumption per head in 1955
1938 = 100

Foodstuffs	117
Pleasure articles	122
Clothing	107
Heating, domestic energy	118
Durable consumer goods	139
Other industrial goods	146
Services	146
Total	125

II

In the second period, which began in the middle of the fifties, the volume of consumption per inhabitant doubled in 15 years. One can evaluate this development by examining: (a) whether it was in harmony with the general economic development, (b) whether it accorded with the international environment, and (c) whether it answered the system of needs of the inner consistency of the development of consumption.

1. The relationship of consumption and the general economic development is expressed most comprehensively by a comparison of the rate of consumption and of the development of the national income.

In the course of the fifteen-year period under discussion the national income per head increased by 2.1–2.2 times, while con-

per cent loss, the car and bus stock an almost 90 per cent loss. Most of the bridges were destroyed, among them all the bridges on the Danube and Tisza.

Of the livestock, 1.3 million cattle and 2.2 million pigs were either taken away or destroyed. The loss as regards historic monuments and collections is incalculable. Most of the historic monuments were either destroyed or damaged."

A loss greater than any of these is represented by the fact that over 600,000 Hungarians lost their lives during the Second World War.

sumption doubled. In other words, there was hardly any difference between them and this is true not only of the fifteen years as a whole but even as regards shorter periods within it.

In a compilation like this, in the nature of an overview, it is naturally impossible to discuss every substantial question; I cannot undertake an evaluation of the relationship of consumption and national income, the proportion of consumption and accumulation, etc. Yet the fact in itself that in Hungary during the past fifteen years the national income and consumption were essentially synchronized, that no gap developed between them in either direction, is at any rate a noteworthy, positive achievement.

2. The main results of a comparison with the international environment over a longer period can be summed up by stating that the rate of development of consumption in Hungary is roughly the same as in the capitalist countries at a similar level of economic development, and considerably exceeds the growth rate of the most developed capitalist countries. The rate of development kept pace with that of the capitalist countries at a similar stage of economic development and brought Hungary nearer to more developed countries.

3. Inner consistency requires the realization of several requirements.

(a) As regards the rate of development there are two important requirements: consumption must increase steadily and its increase must be on a perceptible scale.

The 1955–70 figures permit one to draw the conclusion that during this fifteen-year

The development of personal consumption in some capitalist countries and in Hungary
(On the basis of prices expressed in national currencies, in percentages)

Countries[a]	Yearly rate of growth				1969 as percentage of 1955
	1955–60	1960–65	1965–69	1955–69	
United States	1.2	3.2	3.2	2.4	140
Canada	1.4	3.1	2.8[b]	2.4[c]	139
United Kingdom	2.4	2.2	1.1	2.0	132
Sweden	1.9	4.2	2.2[b]	3.0[c]	149[d]
Switzerland	2.3	3.4	2.5	2.7	145
Belgium	1.7	3.3	4.2	3.0	152
Netherlands	2.3	4.9	3.9	3.8	168
Federal Republic of Germany	5.2	4.2	3.4	4.3	180
Austria	5.0	4.3	3.2	4.2	178
Italy	3.9	4.6	5.1	4.5	185
Spain	1.4	7.5	5.7	4.8	192
Greece	4.5	7.0	5.7	5.7	218
Hungary	5.7	3.0	4.9	4.5	185

[a] The capitalist countries are listed in order of their level of economic development.
[b] 1965–68 data.
[c] 1955–68 data.
[d] Of this the rate for 1969 is an estimated figure.

period the rate of growth—with the exception of four years: 1958, 1961, 1962 and 1965—was in the 4–8 per cent band; this band means that—at least as regards global consumption—the yearly rate of growth was sufficiently great to be perceptible. (According to one survey the threshold of perception is 3 per cent for the population; a lesser increase is perceived as stagnation or even as a decrease.)

(b) As regards the spread of consumption, the requirement is that none of the major strata of the population be left out of the increase in consumption and that this increase should also serve in making the proportions between the strata more just. It can be regarded as the realization of this goal that in the last few years there has been a strong process of equalization in consumption.

Consumption is most equalized between the strata as regards clothing, pleasure articles and foodstuffs. This means that consumption per head of these articles is roughly the same in peasant families and in worker families and consumption in the white-collar stratum is not significantly higher either. It has to be remarked, however, in this connection that this equality applies to value rather than quality: the white-collar stratum consumes more high quality and processed foodstuffs while the peasantry consumes what are from several points of view excessive quantities of less valuable foodstuffs.

As regards the totals and the proportions of the consumption of the different strata, the differences are concentrated in the field of services and—among consumer goods—durables. The differences derive from occupation, way of life, place of habitation and the patterns of consumption which have developed in connection with these. Among these the place of habitation (town or village) is especially important.

These characteristic features are reflected by the following table:

The value of consumption in the case of the main strata, as percentage of the consumption by the workers
(1970)

Type of household	Foodstuffs	Pleasure articles	Consumer industry products	Services	Total
White collar	112	117	137	172	130
Worker	100	100	100	100	100
of these: urban	106	107	108	124	109
rural	94	93	92	74	90
Dual income	103	119	105	70	101
Peasant	113	117	90	61	98

(c) The requirement as regards the harmony between the different components of material well-being—earnings, incomes, consumption, savings—is that there should be as great a scope as possible for spending incomes according to inclination. In Hungary the population devotes 88 per cent of its income to consumption and 6 per cent to the building of flats. Six per cent is kept primarily in savings accounts, and also to a lesser extent in the form of cash. It is worth remarking that the proportion of sav-

ings in 1960 was only 2 per cent and it has risen since to the figure mentioned above.

The rising proportion of savings to some extent automatically follows the rise in the level of incomes. But a part was also no doubt played by a certain forced saving which is primarily connected with the housing shortage and the fact that the demand for cars is not fully met.

(d) As regards the structure of consumption, the main direction of change is indicated by the slower growth in the turnover in foodstuffs and a faster one in manufactured goods and services. These tendencies coincide with international experience.

The dynamics and structure of consumption per head
(in 1968 prices)

Title	1970 as percentage of 1955	Distribution, per cent			
		1955	1960	1965	1970
Foodstuffs	149	45.3	40.6	37.7	34.1
Pleasure articles	231	12.3	12.4	12.8	14.3
Clothing	202	10.8	12.0	11.0	11.0
Heating, domestic energy	208	3.4	3.1	3.5	3.6
Durable consumer goods	633	2.1	3.8	4.6	6.9
Other industrial goods	293	5.9	7.0	7.9	8.8
Services	209	20.2	21.1	22.5	21.3
Total	198	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

In the past few years especially fast and also qualitative changes have taken place in the consumption of the population. This can be convincingly demonstrated by a comparison of the figures for the five years before and the five years since the 1967 reform of economic management. Of foodstuffs, the consumption of the more valuable types, primarily meat and eggs, has grown significantly. The consumption of fruit has also developed well, which is reflected by the data regarding consumption per inhabitant.

The widening use of durable consumer goods greatly influences the way of life. The

Per capita consumption	1962	1967	1972
Meat and fish, kgs	52	54	64
Eggs, each	159	202	260
Fruit, kgs	64	71	73
Of these: tropical fruit, kgs	2.8	3.3	6.0

following figures reflect well the effect these have on life styles if one remembers that these quantities have been purchased in Hungary, where 3.3 million families live.

Private Consumption of durable consumer goods

1,000 items

	1963–67	1968–72
	total	
Refrigerators	392	1,022
Vacuum cleaners	413	650
Motorcars	68	170
Motor bicycles, moped, scooters	213	392
Radios, transistors	880	2,620
Television sets	859	1,177
Paraffin heaters	125	1,200

In the past quarter of a century a level of consumption has been achieved in Hungary which makes it possible for the overwhelming majority of the population to satisfy their basic needs. This is shown by all the facts enumerated so far and by the following.

Of foodstuffs at present it is only in the consumption of milk that Hungary lags behind the industrially most developed countries. The consumption of every other foodstuff is perfectly satisfactory and in some cases excessive. It follows from this that only a small increase in the consumption of foodstuffs could be regarded as a positive development (a small and differentiated increase which would involve greater consumption of meat and milk and a significant decrease in the consumption of cereals). On the other hand, any further rapid development of food consumption would be harmful from the biological and the economic points of view.

The situation is similar as regards alcoholic beverages and tobacco. Their consumption is high both in absolute terms and especially compared to Hungarian economic development.

Consumption of foodstuffs per head

(kg)

	Hungary			Netherlands	Sweden	Austria	Italy
	1934–38	1955	1972	1970			
Meat and fish	34	38	64	65	72	73	56
Milk and milk products	102	87	114	248	264	199	144
Eggs	5	6	14	14	13	15	10
Fats	17	22	27	27	20	25	22
Cereals	147	152	127	67	61	92	129
Potatoes	130	102	70	89	86	70	47
Sugar	11	24	35	50	42	34	27
Fruit and vegetables	95	121	158	174	136	172	254

The consumption of beverages and tobacco articles per head

	Hungary			Nether-lands	Sweden	Austria	Italy
	1934–38	1955	1972	1967*			
Coffee, kgs	0.2	0.1	2.1	8.4	13.2	3.1	2.9
Tea, dkgs	3	3	7	110	20	10	10
Wine, l	32	19	40	4	5	32	113
Beer, l	3	24	59	44	45	103	10
Spirits (50°), l	3.3	3.3	6.0	3.3	5.4	4.0	3.4
Alcohol, total (100°), l	5.5	4.5	9.7	4.4	5.0	11.0	13.5
Tobacco, kgs	1.1	1.6	2.4	—	—	—	—

* Coffee and tea 1969.

As regards durable consumer goods their consumption in many cases has reached a level which approaches or will soon reach a level of relative saturation. At the end of 1972 almost half of all households possessed refrigerators (in 1967 only 15 per cent), over 60 per cent washing machines and televisions (in 1967, 46 and 37 per cent), while one family in five owns a motorcycle, which is a remarkable figure. The stock of cars is relatively small in comparison with the developed capitalist countries: roughly 10 per cent of households possess a car, while the figure in 1967 was only 4.5 per cent.

III

I have already said that in Hungary it is now that a new phase in the development in consumption is beginning, the third since the end of the Second World War. The beginning of this period is defined by the relative satisfaction of the basic needs of the population. This has been achieved side by side with the equalization of the levels of consumption of the main strata of the population. The data surveyed so far leads unequivocally to this conclusion.

The task now is to ensure that this period should be characterized by a qualitative improvement in consumption, which means primarily the avoidance of certain pitfalls. I refer to the unnecessarily high quantitative consumption and the scramble for self-directed, prestige-oriented possessions.

If, for example, the present rate of increase in the consumption of foodstuffs continues, then the over-consumption of cereals and fats will lead to an excessive, unhealthy calory level. But even in the case of such a qualitative element of consumption as meat, the extrapolation of the present rate of increase would lead to a blind alley. The consumption of meat and fish at present amounts to approximately 64 kilograms per head. The rate of increase has been 2 kilograms per year in recent years. This rate of growth, if continued, would soon reach an unnecessarily high level. In some developed countries (such as the United States, France, etc.) this has already happened, while in others (such as Sweden, Netherlands, etc.) consumption stabilized at a sensible level, which is roughly the same as that reached in Hungary now. It is good that there are such favourable examples too.

It is obvious that it would not be healthy in the case of pleasure articles either if the

increase in consumption experienced in the last few years were to continue at the same rate or even accelerate.

It follows from what has been said so far that it would be desirable to put a break on the increase in the rate of consumption of foodstuffs and pleasure articles (which naturally assumes price increases that would create strong resentment). At the same time it is necessary to accelerate the rate of increase in the consumption of goods and services. This also raises several questions.

One of the foundations at hand for accelerating consumption is the improvement in the supply of cars. I would, however, question very strongly the suggestion that by 1985 there should be 1.5 million cars in Hungary, since at present even with the stock of cars at only a quarter of that figure the negative features are becoming almost unbearable: the necessary restrictions on pedestrian traffic, air pollution, the insufficiency of the road network in relation to the number of cars, as well as the inadequacy of the network of garages and service stations.

The further elements of the increase in consumption are composed of demands which are brought about by the spread of higher standards in housing, services and the fact of more leisure time. These are realistic requirements, whose supply is a factor of the qualitative improvement of the goods available. The realization of this is no small task.

At the same time one must not ignore the problems of the infrastructure of consumption, i.e. the supply of flats, the network of shops and services, public transport, etc. All these—and if one may select from among them, then the supply of flats most importantly—are no less important components of the standard of living than current consumption. Current consumption, the rate of increase in consumption and the infrastructure of consumption are indivisible. They are also indivisible as regards the evaluations by the consumers, but they have a common source: the national income. For that reason in Hungary the planners increasingly treat the ideas regarding current consumption and the development of the infrastructure of consumption as an organic unity.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

THE USE OF WRITING

Pourquoi écrire?—what sense is there in writing?—it certainly seems a most topical question to all writers nowadays when we are beginning to understand the impact of the scientific-technical revolution. Time is evidently not working for us. The writers of the nineteenth century had some reason to more or less identify themselves with Sándor Petőfi the poet, who considered the poet as a kind of prophet: "Poets are pillars of fire foreordained by God to lead the people towards a new Canaan".

But what has remained of the conviction to our days? The present century has created, and is still creating, quite a number of magnificent new ideas. Like: "Let us reproduce the work of the sun on earth!" This new flaming torch however was not ignited by a poet, but by a physicist pronouncing the words of a new message: $E = mc^2 \ldots$ Or: "Let us cultivate the stars!" Another idea worth a poet's imagination—the conquest of space—is the result of the common effort of mathematicians and physicists and experts of other scientific and technological disciplines. The economists who lead the people towards a new consumers' Canaan are not in the least lyrical, they are investigating the trends of production and consumption with the help of computers and of highly trained mathematicians. Well, then: *Pourquoi écrire?*

The position of writers is made still worse by the fact that the channels they use for conveying their information to the public seem to be hopelessly out of date. Once we stated proudly that literature has a formative effect on man and his society, and we professed that human thought and emotional patterns are deeply influenced by the written word. None of us can deny at present the overwhelming influence of the mass media. They are much more efficient in carrying news all over the world, and they are influencing the viewers and listeners almost viscerally. We have to admit that the mass media can predetermine feelings and resolutions, instead of convincing, they can manipulate the audience. What can the written word attain with its obsolete and clumsy way of communication, with its pedagogic subtleties as against the pace of sound and picture travelling with the velocity of light? You also are familiar with that gloomy prophecy which is a bit naïve in its excessiveness, but may after all contain a grain of truth, namely that the tiresome physical activity of writing will be rendered unnecessary as soon as the electronic era comes into its rights and finishes off the Gutenberg-period completely. In addition to these mournful prophecies we have the still more dismal statistics which record the

Text of an address delivered at the round table conference *Pourquoi écrire*, organised by the International PEN Club in Piran (Jugoslavia).

fluctuations of the book market and reveal a significant and steadily decreasing tendency as regards works of fiction, that is what was called belles-lettres in a more contemplative age. All this seems to indicate that mankind —not that of tomorrow, but already that of today—is more and more interested in science and less and less in poetry.

Let us confess: as yet we have but half-hearted counter-arguments against these sombre theories and grim statistics. Above all we say rather resentfully that literary work cannot be bracketed with ordinary exchange of information; the reading of a book, of a novel, of a poem in all its intimate closeness between reader and writer conveys such meanings and effects that cannot be supplied by the mass media.

Nevertheless it is unquestionable that a literary work is also a kind of information, a sort of news service: it carries messages which the writer feels to be important, even decisive, although he might have put it in a casual way, and disguised it in a fictional form. Even the most ethereal lyric poem gives information about the mental and emotional state of the poet, and *this* is the very wonder of poetry that at the same time it informs the reader about the general state and the feelings of the world. In fact, I may even venture to say that because of the universality of a good poem it gives the most valid informations concerning the world. Though a reader might think that the elements of a poem are put together in a haphazard way and ruled by personal motifs, that is not the case. Lyric can give an incomparably more concise situation report than all the up-to-date wonders of telecommunication. Lyrical expression owes this quality to its very peculiar coding which ensures that even what is left unsaid can carry a meaning, not to speak of the music of words and its overtones.

I am aware, of course, that much of this is just wishful thinking. Still I wish that as long as the world stands there should always be people who want to read poetry. We encourage ourselves by referring to those specific mental and emotional responses which reading alone can procure: the silence around us, the light of the reading lamp, the intimacy, the easy closeness between the unknown author and the reader and simultaneously a closeness to our own selves. No machine can compete with these effects. True enough, but only according to the standards of present-day techniques. And do we have any guarantees at all that the human being of tomorrow will show the same psychological leanings as the humans of today? Will that man of the future have any demand for being left alone with his own self? We have learnt by now that in the long run we can, and must even, take into account the possibility of influencing mental capacity by various drugs; the chances of direct feeding in of information to the mind, and we have a vague foreboding that the nervous system might eventually be joined to a computer. What is the guarantee for it that interferences of such kind won't result in a basic transformation of the mind, won't change that mental and psychological structure of humanity. On the other hand: who knows whether in times to come the same complex of intellectual and emotional responses, which is produced by certain lyric poems in our days, would not immediately be brought about by, let us say, various electric stimulators?

There is, perhaps, no need to go on. *Exegi monumentum aere perennius*—said once the poet. Quite so, were it not for the fact that this monument, which he thought to be more enduring than any bronze or metal, could last only while there was some person willing to read his words. It does not matter whether it is a real or a potential reader should a brave new world be once realized, in which electronics were to take the place of letters, then the last poet would write all over his last page of paper in the hope that maybe after millions or billions of years an expedition will be due to arrive from a far-off planet, and then his

last message might be found and read by some intelligent creatures.

In short: why do we write? Because we reckon to prolong our existence through our works, and thus search for a way to deny the limited nature of our existence, since the more we are compelled to face the fact of our transience, the greater the challenge to revolt against it. But we have to recognize that the "eternity" we may have won rests with the human beings of the future. If we had not put our hope in them, that is in the possibility of the continual reappearance of such human beings in whose mind the writer could survive, then writing were to become nearly senseless.

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Nevertheless—in spite of the dubious perspectives of our age—I should guess that within reasonable time we have not to fear the danger of being left without readers. I base my optimism on a simple fact. Namely the activity of the writer and that of the reader are but two complementary aspects of a fundamentally identic human interest, and though it may happen that some future changes will arise in the character of this activity as well as in the notions related to it, the type of man expressing his own self in works of art cannot get extinct.

Pourquoi écrire? The answer is very simple indeed, if we approach it from the angle of the creative writer instead of that of sociology. The writer writes, because he feels that he has to do so... In the last resort this is the basic motif of the writer's work.

Milán Füst, the Hungarian writer, who died in the middle sixties, made some attempts in his *Aesthetics* to describe the functioning of the writer's psychology. He wrote: "Having put the question, where does art spring from, we ventured some remarks about its double origin. Partly man has a preconception of his coming expriences, partly he wants to correct them afterwards... We don't get satisfaction from our lives, consequently we are in need of these corrections. What happens to us may depend upon a moment. If I miss to choose the right moment to tell a woman that I love her, it may be too late next day. If I don't cuff somebody when I feel like it, I have let the chance go by. You need spontaneity for smacking someone's face, if you postpone it to a later date, you only make yourself ridiculous. But as we know paper is a different matter. Haven't I found the right answer to somebody? I correct it on paper. Is it not good enough yet? Well, I correct it again, since paper is long-suffering and does not require any quick-wittedness, moreover it bears whatever amount of the corrections of corrections..." And so on.

In the view of Milán Füst the writer acts out of self-defence against the world and out of some naïve desire to improve on it. Maybe he acts out of an elemental urge to express himself, being placed in and against the world. I suppose that we have to reckon here with a fundamental quality of the human psyche. The creature called man seems to have developed a system of nerve cells which—in its present structure—responds in this specific way of self-expression to the facts of the world. We don't know why it is so, we can only study its functioning.

The student of material systems is fascinated by that peculiar quality of organized structures that they preserve themselves against their surroundings. The atomic structure stubbornly resists the influences of the outside world; the crystal builds up its own self imperturbably; while the same readiness for self-preservation is so obvious in the living organism that for centuries the existence of a peculiar *vis vitalis* or *entelecheia* was suspected by the unsophisticated beholder.

Well, the human psyche, with its organon of the nervous system, is likewise a structure which endeavours to uphold itself against a changing world. It certainly is an artful combination to adapt ourselves to our sur-

roundings and to keep up our own autonomy at the same time. As I guess: the obstinate instinct to manifest ourselves, and within it the compulsion of the writer to give expression to his own ego, fulfils this role, that is of keeping intact the innermost structure.

Man is undoubtedly the most adaptable being of the universe. He adapted himself to the physical conditions of our planet, although the earth is teeming with creatures much more stronger than man, not to mention the process of changing energies which are incomparably bigger than human endowments. Yet by the main tool of his adaptability, by his reason, man has gradually attained a level where he is able to interfere with and to exercise control upon these processes. He can master even the weather, and where his physiological adaptability fails him ultimately, he simply takes with himself his own microclimate, as it is proved by recent space flights.

It is quite easy to imagine that by means of his fantastic adaptive faculties, which he owes to his reason, man will be able to establish small settlements on other planets and that these colonies will have a dispersive capacity. Why not? Of course there is no doubt about it that those space conditions will eventually be very unlike the circumstances of earthly life, so that they are bound to change the bio-physiological and psychological nature of the erstwhile human race. And how long can man be called man?

There is hardly an answer to this, but one criterion can be given. Were he to grow eight limbs, like a polyp, should he have his eyes on the end of tentacles, like a snail, this creature of the future must be called, in my opinion, a man, as long as he will preserve the most fundamental trait of his mind, the need of self-expression.

However luxurious and prodigal an activity art and writing may seem, they both serve to maintain man's innate structure. Self-expression qualifies man and him alone on earth: no electronic computer will—of itself—ever feel a demand for it.

LAJOS MARÓTI

PROSE VARIATIONS FOR FOUR GENRES

TIBOR DÉRY: *A napok hordaléka* (Driftsand of my Days). Szépirodalmi, Budapest, 1972, 441 pp.
ISTVÁN CSURKA and GERGELY RÁKOSY: *Így, ahogy vagytok!* (Just as You Are). Magvető, Budapest, 1972, 351 pp.
OTTÓ ORBÁN: *Ablak a földre* (Window on the Land). Magvető, Budapest, 1973, 387 pp.
GYÖRGY GERA: *Terelőút* (Bypass), Magvető, Budapest, 1972, 163 pp.

Every genre is good providing it is not boring. The prose of the 20th century can offer a wide range of works from the novel to the autobiography and from the short story to the essay to verify Voltaire's aphorism. These four volumes represent four different prose genres, but their value is certainly not determined by their respective genres. Both their strengths and weaknesses depend the talent of their respective authors.

Readers of *The N.H.Q.* are probably acquainted with the writings of Tibor Déry. His most recent volume is a collection of journal notes written between 1964 and 1972. His subjects, which are held together by his comments, range widely, but by and

large within two intellectual fields: the civilization of our times, and the writer's craft. Déry views the scientific and technological miracles of this modern era with suspicion, abhorring the machine-centred attitude of our times. To justify this abhorrence, he does not merely cite present-day examples of the anomalies of our technical civilization, but also calls on witnesses from the past. A most interesting chain of his ideas is linked to *Erewhon*, Samuel Butler's novel. It is, of course, not the romantic hostility to technology that stimulates Déry, but rather Butler's fear which he shares: "He is afraid of a reversal of roles. He is worried that the machine will grow more and more sophisticated and powerful, and men ever weaker and more defenceless, that the supposed master will become servant and the servant lord. And if things go on like this, the servant will need the master more than the master his menial."

Déry has other fears as well: he is afraid that the technological possibilities will make inhuman methods universal. He has already referred to "Animal Machines," these sad products of large-scale animal husbandry in other writings, Déry associates Buchenwald with the alleged expediency of keeping animals crowded together in a small pen in sharp artificial light, denying them all aspects of life which do not promote their weight gain. An exaggeration? Quite clearly, but still, it is difficult to deny the similarity in approach between the "rationally" working extermination camps and the industrial plans inspired by the modern technocratic rationale.

Triumphant civilization will hardly retreat in fear of Déry's humanitarian arguments, and, of course, Déry is fully aware of this. He closes the subject with a genre-picture bright with self-irony: the writer loves weeds as creatures of nature, and for this reason refuses to help his family tear them out. "I resort to a sit-in under the pretext of writing", he writes.

The other underlying theme of the volume is connected with the craft and vocation of writing. The basic tone is definitely sceptical and self-ironical: "Who or what profits from the fact that I write? I myself? (Disregarding, of course, the fact that I make my living from writing.) Does anyone else profit by it?" These are the opening words of a chapter which is a piece of self-analysis and methodological examination on the non-birth of a short story. The writer, resting in his garden, cannot help looking at the landscape around him and the people in his field of vision as the raw materials of writing. His imagination, set into motion, is already seeking for connections, for composing what he sees into a story, but the doubt, the question of who profits by his writing, checks his momentum. At this point, however, doubt itself develops into a theme which the writer tries to shoo away. In this way the story of the non-writing of a short story develops into a brilliant essay before our very eyes. He sums up for himself the technology of prose in the following words: "Prose is of a finalistic nature. Even if we saw that it was revolving around its own axis, we could bet a hundred to one that it was chasing its own tail at least."

Despite such witty aphorisms suggesting completeness and a definite position, the dominant mood of the book is interrogatory. Déry believes that the writer must be a questioning man, his mission is to awaken the conscience and to stimulate thought, and his duty is to doubt and examine the validity of commonplace truths. And since he not only preaches this programme but also manages to realize it, his "Drift-sand of my Days" has the force of a homogeneous and unified work, for the journal notes are integrated by the power of the writer's personality.

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István Csurka and Gergely Rákosy's book is a peculiar and highly original undertaking: it is a pamphlet about horseracing. It is unusual for two writers of such different charac-

ter and personality to collaborate on a book (See more on Rákosy in *The N.H.Q.* No. 48 and Csurka in No. 50). Their way of shaping this material, which seems so remote from art, into a literary work is certainly most interesting. The volume can be called a pamphlet because of its emotional charge, though some of the chapters approach the subject from different aspects. The volume is made up of reports, sociological essays, pieces which might be termed short stories and even a brief paper on the anatomy of horses. The title refers to a yell of encouragement often heard at the races: when the position of the horses during the run is advantageous for the punter, he yells the "magic" phrase: "Just as you are!"

Csurka and Rákosy are both mad about racing, according to their own admission they miss a day at the races only in cases of emergency—and this enthusiasm lends authenticity to their work. As to the emotional charge, that comes readily from the present state of horse-racing in Hungary. The fact is that racing is deeply suspected by Hungarian society today. It is tolerated because it is profitable—though not very profitable—but as a once aristocratic hobby it is regarded as alien to the socialist system. In consequence, the state company responsible for the organization of races does not get a state subsidy but has to maintain itself as well as breed and run the horses entirely from profits derived from the totalisator. This means that they can only afford to race mediocre horses, and the races they arrange are not exactly outstanding for their sportsmanship. Fraud and manipulation are not alien to the turf today. This closes the circle: racing, despised, becomes, indeed, worthy of suspicion and mockery.

The two writers were game enough to be stimulated to action by the sad plight of the object of their passion, and they have rallied all their writing skill to make their pamphlet a success. Their sociological study of the races demonstrates, for instance, that horse-racing is self-supporting and therefore it has no reason to feel ashamed; it also shows the interconnection between the financial and moral anomalies. "For what is the interest of the public? Superficial thinking equates the interests of the public with winning. Accordingly, the public's only interest is having the chance to win. This is, however, an absurdity. If the public did in fact generally win, the perpetuum mobile would have been invented. There is only one thing that is in the interest of the public: not to be deceived, not to be tricked, not to have anyone else gain illegal financial advantages for their money. Because that is immoral. And this is something both sides will have to admit, but have not admitted so far."

It is a cliché to say about the turf that all strata of society can be studied there. Csurka and Rákosy are much more interested in the metamorphosis which causes people from many different walks of life to become a single-faced being: a gambler. This is not exactly a face to inspire confidence. It is perhaps best described by a dentist's quip: the gambler is toothless—he prefers to spend his dentist's fee on racing. The unimpassioned sociological study (at least it is intended to be objective!) eventually gives place to satire where the authors examine their own role. (They have good reason for self-mockery: the sum which they regularly lose on horses and with which they as well contribute to the maintenance of horse-racing in Hungary, at whatever level.) They tease each other, after all, they both deserve it, but because of the essential sameness of their situation this humour never becomes murderous. They register the hits, but have no intention of knocking out the other. "There are many who, when they see that their opponent is faltering, give it to him quick, like lightning, they can see in their opponent's eyes that he is finished, and this makes their own eyes gleam. A fast one to the solar plexus, one to sit on the chest, one to the face and a hook to the jaw. This has never been P.'s way. G. thought this

was just great; and if anyone takes the trouble to look about in life, he will easily realize that it is in fact a great thing."

The psychology of the gambler, of the punter, is best expressed in the chapter which is a short story. The ending provides an incisive character portrayal. The hero is on his way home, still dizzy from the chaos of betting and dismayed by his losses, when, already in front of the building in which he lives he notices a lorry approaching in the distance and a taxi trying to overtake it. The disheartened and beaten gambler suddenly rises to the occasion, no loss can silence his instincts, and he suddenly races the two vehicles: "he staked all his possessions, his present and future, boldly and with complete resolution on the truck which had hardly any chance of arriving first at his house—the imaginary finish."

The anger with which the co-authors lash out at the discouraging state of Hungarian horse-racing, the almost poetic idiom in which they defend the hobby which, despite everything, they accept as a passion, will not convince even in this concentration anyone who is indifferent to the subject. As a literary work, however, the book is definitely convincing and justifies its existence. This is probably the reason why the chapter on the anatomy of horses and the history of racing appears forced. It may be accurate from a scholarly viewpoint and even humorous, but it is too detailed and consequently boring for the lay reader. In this particular instance, the urge to say all has raced ahead of the author's sense of proportion.

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Travel-books are generally regarded as something for entertainment, and usually the author makes it obvious that he intends primarily to give the reader a pleasant piece of reading.

Otto Orbán's *Window on the Land* is a rare exception: it is a literary work whose theme is India, and whose genre just happens to be a travel book. Orbán is a poet and translator, an interpreter of Allan Ginsberg, Robert Lowell, Yeats, Blake and Chaucer among others. (On his work as a poet see *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, No. 46, 1972, and for his poems see Nos. 33, 37 and 46.)

The basic experience which prompted Orbán to write the book was a few weeks' travel in India, as part of the cultural exchange agreement between the two countries. He was able to visit only a few places in that country: Delhi, Bangalore, Kerala, Bombay, and the principal architectural monuments of Hindu and Moslem culture. The poet is always present, no matter which place he writes about: he observes not only this distant and strange world, but also his own mirror image reflected in it. Thus he remains the Central European intellectual who is forced to hold a self-examination under the impact of an alien civilization. In this way he is able to avoid the repetition of commonplaces, although they are, as a matter of fact, rather tempting in connection with India. One can sense from his words that he writes only about things with which he was able to establish a personal relationship. When he visited the Taj Mahal, for instance, he discovered the tiny blemish which impaired for him the architectural perfection of the magnificent monument, namely the slight matter that defeats the alleged aim of the Taj: a ruler had the marble masterpiece erected as an expression of his never abetting grief over the death of his great and True Love—only while the splendid edifice was going up, he found so much consolation with his remaining few hundred concubines that his realm almost disintegrated. Amongst the dazzling glamour one cannot fail to notice, nor can one remain indifferent to, the immense poverty throughout India. Orbán, too, was deeply shaken by what he saw, but he was quite aware of the fact that neither his sympathy nor his pity could mean anything to the host country. "The Indian mendicant does not ask for sympathy. All he asks is the money

which he is entitled to, and which he has to lure out of my pocket or else he starves. The only possible relationship between us is an economic one. I am the subject of taxation and he is the tax-collector. I can take home my shock. India is a tough country, I was told in Delhi. I have to admit that it is, and pay my tribute."

Orbán's observations make one think, and they are interesting because they are personal, and because his style is light, casual and witty. If he regards something as unpleasing, he is able to make fun of it even in the guise of unimpassioned observation. His scorn does not bypass even the evidence of his own bias. He comes out with adjectives and metaphors which are very much to the point when he wants to suggest the character of unusual landscapes and customs and also to express his own awkwardness. All in all, it is not the monuments, the artifacts and landscapes, but man that his book finds really worth exploring. Having spent the night on a plane, he approached the sunrise saying: "Getting ready for something splendid to stir my senses, I must admit that I was just a bit disappointed to find that lighting a fire in the sky is not very different from lighting it in an iron stove." The only criticism that one can make of Orbán's book is that it is somewhat overwritten, occasionally verbose and—like other European travellers—he tends to get too involved in the analysis of the contradictory feelings this country of contradictions evoked in him.

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György Gera, the author of the fourth volume reviewed here is a very versatile man: writer, translator, editor of the periodical *Hungarian Book Review*, essayist, formerly a film critic and dramaturgist, and recently *Le Monde* correspondent in Budapest. He is fifty. His first volume of short stories, *Tisztuló Világ* (Brightening World) was published in 1950, and his first novel in 1956. He has translated Dürrenmatt, Ionesco, Ramuz and others from French, German, Rumanian and English, and has written papers on Thomas Mann and Apollinaire.

The Bypass is a novel. The fact that it qualifies as such is another indication of the fact that this genre has considerably widened. The story is written on three different levels. Fifteen years after his liberation from a concentration camp, a 38-year-old secondary school teacher from Budapest returns to the scene of the horror, a small German town. The first level is his own account written in the first person about the visit, the second is the series of associations reverting to the memory of the camp. The third level, printed in italics for typographical distinction, is made up of chapters from the history of the Jews, written by a fictional chronicler whose style is always that of the period. Interestingly, the very fact that the writer emphatically separates this third level from the previous two accentuates the essential unity of the novel, because this third plane is very strongly linked as a psychological and historical background to the story.

During the fifteen years which have passed, the teacher has done everything possible to detach himself from the hurtful past. He wants to live a well-adjusted life and to this end he never admits to his Jewish origin. "What have I to do with Jewry? What is the meaning of Jewish? A historical phantom, an intellectual fossile. Two and a half million Jews in Israel. Ancient rites. A separate burial league. Skip it."

But this journey proves that it is not so easy to erase the past from the memory, and the past is able to survive in the present. It is a mere accident that he reaches the vicinity of the camp. A bypass, an inevitable detour, takes him off the *Autobahn* to the little town from which the barbed wire fence of the concentration camp separated him fifteen years ago. Tormented by the reawakening of his memories, he starts to do some detective work: he searches for the past in the consciousness of contemporary Austrians.

The result is uniform: no one knows anything. Obviously that camp did not even exist, and "at any rate, why stir up the whole business." But not only the human beings, the objects also keep their secret: only a few pieces of stone, blind and deaf fragments of what was once a wall, recall the one-time extermination camp. This lack of success makes the schoolmaster obstinate, he tries to trace the escaping past with growing fanaticism, even accepting and admitting his Jewishness in order to provoke the active or passive witnesses to the horrors into a confession.

What finally stops his desperate search is that he meets the relentless Avenger, a physician who has devoted his entire life to collecting evidence. The teacher finds himself horrified by the maniacal hatred which directs every action of the doctor. He is not interested in anythinge else, and in fact his only source of joy is to find proof of someone's guilt. Considering himself Providence, he wants to mete out and execute punishment himself. This endless hatred raised into a life-goal seems inhuman to the teacher, and he realizes that it is alien from his nature: "I haven't got any fangs." But at the same time he has to give up his own carefully structured style of life: "If I don't accept myself, no one will accept me." The story closes, but without attempting to suggest a single conclusion. This novel has not one lesson to offer, but many.

LÁSZLÓ VARGA

OPTIMISM AND DESPAIR

A Reader's Diary

Nathalie Sarraute's latest novel *Vous les entendez?* has been celebrated by almost all French critics as her most important work, the culmination of her art.

This is certainly true in one respect. Since in 1939, in the book named after them, she discovered "tropisms", those minute quivers in the soul set off by some apparently insignificant momentum, which, however, are important from the point of view of the individual psyche and cause unforeseen repercussions in the soul, she has explored this psychological phenomenon in her sequence of novels with admirable artistic stubbornness, increasingly eliminating the story from her novels and concentrating on these motions of the soul, exploring their various manifestations with the aid of more and more words. This novel is undoubtedly the culmination of this artistic attitude, following, describing, opening up and exploring for over two hundred pages a transitory quiver in the soul and all its associational possibilities.

The opening situation of the novel is a banal one. Two elderly friends, art lovers, are sitting together in a house that belongs to one of them admiring a primitive animal sculpture, the family heirloom of the host. The children have also taken part in this pious idolatry, but after the rite they prefer to retreat to their own quarters. Once they are in their room upstairs, the house resounds with their unrestrained laughter. The host is irritated by the hilarity, he feels that there is some secret, latent meaning behind it, and

the novel is but a recording or description of his feelings, thoughts and emotions stimulated by the incident. The reader never finds out whether all that is contained between the covers of the book is the condensed emotional and ideational content of a few moments (as I think it is), or the registration of the silent contemplations of an entire evening.

Once one has accepted the writer's principles and artistic attitude, one can have nothing but admiration for Sarraute's craftsmanship. This book—which I call a novel only with great caution and definite reservations—is in the style of the artistic use of the language which characterizes French literature; it is a crystal-clear formulation of the innate chaos of the soul, a language which boldly bridges the gap between prose and poetry, and does so with graceful ease; which shows a sureness of composition and design, lightly and apparently spontaneously weaving arabesques which never slide out of the writer's grip, and despite their seemingly labyrinthine aimlessness do point in some direction after all.

Whoever considers literature as merely a building-toy technique of fitting words and sentences into structurally fine patterns of composition, will find this novel an artistic feat—and, as a matter of fact, in this respect it is just that. But someone who expects a little more or something different from literature, will find the book tedious, will get increasingly tired and prone to be bored, for he will find himself deceived and tricked. The many well-chosen words attractively strung together, the subtle spiritual stirrings the orbits of association tangent on past and future surround a kind of vast vacuum, a big gap, both covering up and exposing the lack of whatever the reader expects of a novel even today, feeling, if it is not there, tricked and shortchanged despite the most dazzling fireworks of style and idiom. This is the very thing Antal Szerb, the brilliant Hungarian essayist between the wars, was referring to when he wittily said that the reader of a novel wants to read about love and death, and for the sake of reading about these fundamentals will allow the writer to bore him with a lot of other things. In other words, we are still expecting a deeper or symbolic meaning from a work of art, or if you prefer, an outspoken message or a basic idea, expressed through the writer's emotions.

This story is certainly meagre fare in the light of such postulations. Few readers will remain absorbed throughout an entire novel in the problems of a father who is tormented by the feeling that the laughter of the young people is *at* them, the old people; moreover their juniors are ridiculing them not only because they are "oldsters", but primarily because they are connoisseurs and enthusiastic admirers of art, something from which they, the children, have come a long way, for they are more barbarous—or just healthier—their joys and pleasures are more vulgar or animalistic, and what fills the life of their elders is for them mere twaddle. Despite all their efforts, the two generations are living side by side in contempt of each other's scales of values, and if the young people pay a single word of homage to whatever is treasured by the father, this is a sacrifice, indeed, on their part, an offering laid at the altar of the incomprehensible weaknesses of an old man.

Although this content or meaning pervades the entire work, it is not easy to extract it. The difficulty lies in the first place in the fact that, with her dazzling play of words and thoughts, Sarraute does just as much to cover up as to reveal the gist of her message, and also in the circumstance that —one does not know whether intentionally or just succumbing to fashion—she leaves the human relations of the characters very obscure throughout the book. About the mirthful youngsters, for instance, we never discover just who and what they are and what their true attitude is towards the old man, just as we fail to discover anything more about the two old people than that they are elderly, they are friends, and their

friendship is based on a mutual appreciation of art.

I think one can never get away from assessing any work against one's own experiences, and one's acceptance or rejection of any piece of writing depends in the first place on one's ability to respond—on the basis of one's own emotions and experiences—to the feelings and observations which are expressed, or the reader thinks are expressed, in the book. In this sense Sartre is certainly right when he says that every work is written by two people: the author and the reader. And if I read Nathalie Sarraute's novel with growing antipathy despite all its artistic merit and stylistic perfection, this is, I think, primarily because my own life-experience does not happen to coincide with what she describes. The young people I happen to know are not nearly so alienated from the artistic values of the past, nor so uncomprehending of them as the group she describes. And this is true not only of the Hungarian young people of my acquaintance or teaching experience but also of the French.

But can I really reject Nathalie Sarraute's experience and her subjective truth merely on the basis of my own observations? While I was reading the book, I thought yes, I could and should and in fact as I progressed this conviction continued to grow but since then I have read something that has rather shaken me in this conviction.

In Bluebeard's Castle

is the title of a series of broadcast talks, by George Steiner which appeared in the March–April 1971 issues of the *Listener*, and have been published in book form since. These lectures once more demonstrate that he has rare qualifications to be a man of letters and an even rarer sense of intellectual responsibility.

His train of thought starts with the truly fundamental question: how is it possible that people and communities in possession of thousands of years of Hellenic and Christian culture would commit in this century a series of atrocities which had appeared impossible among civilized societies since the eighteenth century. After a lengthy and exceptionally stimulating argument he finally arrives at the conclusion that present-day European civilization is only a post-culture working for its own destruction. Analysing the activities and avant-garde-type communities of young people—hippies and Maoists—in this context, he sees in their striving above all the destructive rejection and annihilation of just those values which have meant a great deal to earlier generations.

"Do you hear them?" Nathalie Sarraute asks, and the question—which he could not have heard at the time of writing his lectures—is answered in a bitter and definite affirmative by George Steiner. *In Bluebeard's Castle* asserts that European man is now in the position of the famous opera's Judith. First it was Jacques Monod, the Nobel Prize winning French biologist, who asserted in a widely acclaimed book that one of the basic tenets of Hellenic-Christian culture has been found wrong: research and pursuing problems to the final conclusions are not always and unconditionally worth doing, the last door must not be opened... Now Steiner, quoting Monod, but using his own evidence, arrives at the same conclusions.

Cultural pessimism? The question is asked by Steiner himself and is answered substantially in the affirmative. Once the ideas of culture and progress become separated, the outcome can be called a post-culture, "Bluebeard's Castle", or whatever we please, but it becomes essentially a negation of the entire Hellenic-Christian tradition. This is expressed—according to Steiner—in the attitude of youth, and he finds it characteristic that they react to problems only instinctively grasped on an aggressive-emotional, and not on a logical-rational plane. Though I found an internal accord between Sarraute's novel and Steiner's book,

and even though with its erudition and firm logic the latter made me reconsider whether there was not after all more to Nathalie Sarraute's problematology than I found on first reading, this erudition and firm logic still failed to convince me of the need to follow Steiner on the path of cultural pessimism. It is a fact that man has come into, or is approaching, the possession of awesome forces and even more fantastic possibilities, but this can hardly be a reason for deterring him from opening further doors of knowledge, though it can be a reason for making man strive to ensure that these doors be opened only by people who are aware of their responsibility for humanity and never by creatures blinded by vested interests. It is no mere accident that this problem is not raised anywhere in Steiner's splendidly written work.

There is devilish logic in the fact that when scientific thought reaches the negation of further thinking, we also witness in literature the conquest of a manner where "the art of the novelist with a keen scent becomes sheer acrobatics, we read the tortuously meaningless texts written by people who have nothing to say; as today when sterile games are raised into dogmas about which hair-splitting mock-discussions are conducted", as it was recently described by a reviewer in the *Quinzaine Littéraire*. At any rate I cannot help it, but on reconsideration I still think that Sarraute's last novel belongs to this category.

Fortunately, just as the young cannot be reduced to the minority who aggressively reject culture though one must be aware of this minority as well by the same token literature cannot be reduced to sterile games—although many of its craftsmen and their fans would like to see literature in just this light. There is, however, literature which has a different approach and different views and which is at the same time the best of its kind. Let me cite again an example from my recent reading, one which stimulated and pleased me.

A Winter in the Hills

Approaching fifty, John Wain is no longer a young writer. He began his literary career as a member of the group of "angry young men", but by now he is no more identified with the group than the other original members. From the beginning his gifts seemed to extend in two directions. As an essayist and critic he may have won his laurels sooner, but he also attained rapid renown as a writer of fiction. Although —thanks to a peculiar combination of chance events—I followed his literary development, I had mixed feelings about it, thinking more highly of his talent than of his achievements. His recent novel *A Winter in the Hills* has, however, completely won me over both as a reader and as a critic—for it was able to give me the very thing for which I have been gasping for years, the *tertium datur*, the third way between verbal arabesques for their own sake and commercialized best-sellers—a real novel, a true piece of fiction, written in an exactingly artistic manner and based on a genuinely lifelike and interesting plot.

Ever since his first collection of short stories, published in 1960, and especially since his short novel *Nuncle*, it has been obvious that Wain is a writer of a type rare today, who likes to tell a story and enjoys telling it in an enjoyable manner. *A Winter in the Hills* shows that he not only enjoys telling a story, but also knows how to tell it. This novel combines aspects of a thriller, a love story, a description of a period and of a society and even an "Erziehungsroman", a novel of personal development. Wain is able to combine all this, easily and naturally, seemingly just telling a story for its own sake. He employs practically all the means of modern epic writing, but without the slightest posing or self-ostentation, subordinating his own approach as a writer to the story and to the message which develops naturally from the plot and the characters.

The plot, though not over-simple, is fairly easily told. Roger Furnival, a forty

year-old English philologist, arrives at Caerfenai, a small town in North Wales, to learn Welsh and so ensure a better livelihood for himself. This aim is, however, merely a rationalization covering up deeper emotions and motives: Roger is in fact escaping from his own earlier life; before starting something new, he would transfer himself, under the pretext of professional expediency, to a kind of no-man's-land. He has just buried his brother Geoffrey, with whom he was sharing a room, when toward the end of the war, a V-2 smashed the roof over them killing their parents and leaving Geoffrey crazed with injury and shock, an insane man. Roger looked after his brother for twenty-four years, shutting himself away from the world and from real adult human relationships.

He arrives in Wales starved for sexual and meaningful emotional relationships. He bungles his new beginning with a series of mishaps. An American girl, a tourist, instead of the expected easy intercourse, forces him to take an interminable walk in the pouring autumn rain, without a mac. Rhiannon, the beautiful receptionist at the Caerfenai hotel, lets him down so badly that afterwards he is unable to be a man with her. Jenny Twyford, the wife of a careerist professor at the nearby university, although attracted to him, finds herself unable either to give up her marriage to which she is tied by her children and her entire previous life, or to start an affair with him. Thus, sexually, Roger is an anti-Casanova—at least in the first half or two-thirds of the novel—and he is only able to rise above his defeats through his sense of humour, his intelligence and vitality.

His first unsuccessful affair brings Roger into contact with Gareth, the owner of a one-man bus company serving a mountain village, and through him with Welsh reality. For Gareth is a symbol: he is the only rebel in the community, a man who resists tooth and nail Dic Sharp, the local entrepreneur, the shark who swallows all the small bus contractors to sell them at a high profit to the big bus company wishing to monopolize the business. His only trouble is that the big company set a deadline; they refuse to talk business with him until he has all the local small contractors under his control. And he still has not got Gareth's. Roger—partly out of a sense of guilt because he has unwittingly caused the man harm—becomes a volunteer conductor on Gareth's bus, and in this way gets involved in the entire local social and economic situation.

The "intruder" from England gradually becomes a local citizen, he keeps travelling the road between Caerfenai and Llancrwys and—without special heroism but with British obstinacy—keeps resisting the rather dangerous "persuasion" of Dic Sharp and his petty gangsters. (This is the thriller side of the story.) Eventually real friendship develops between him and Gareth, who at first was suspicious and very reserved. The local community grows to accept and even help him, and he finds a true life-companion in Jenny, who leaves her husband for him. He is also instrumental in Gareth's victory. Dic Sharp cannot meet the deadline and is forced to sell back the buses and the licences to the former owners.

Wain tells this story with rare literary economy, rich sensitivity and sureness of touch. There are no redundant characters, sooner or later everyone—even those who seem to represent only local colour—takes an active part in the plot, and the fine landscape descriptions are always humanized: the portrayals of the objective world and its changes always resonate with a state of mind, motivating or illustrating changes in mood, and through all this, the local story of an individual life gains universal meaning.

As I said, this is among other things an "Erziehungsroman", a story of development, the story of Roger becoming a responsible adult who in the course of the events—and a a result of them—achieves sufficient maturity to establish lasting human relationships, who amidst the hardships and pleasures of a

winter, learns to become the member of a community, even while seeing its defects and petty absurdities.

On another plane this is a social novel. The small worlds of Caerfenai and Llancrwys are miniature copies of English society; the conflict between Gareth and Dic Sharp, the small businessman toiling for a livelihood and the big entrepreneur fighting for a profit is taking place in contemporary Britain. Roger and Jenny (and especially Jenny's husband) establish links with the world at large via the University, TV and other mass media.

This mini-world in North Wales has another side, the Welsh "freedom struggle", whose heroes include not only Mado, the bard, but also Mario, the Italian ex-prisoner of war who turned into a Welsh nationalist. This aspect of the novel is a pathetic-grotesque comment on the liberation movements of the oppressed minorities, such as the Celts, the Bretons, the Irish, the Scotch and the French-Canadians. It is a particularly interesting feature of the book that although it regards these neo-nationalist movements with great sympathy, it views them critically, clearly seeing their grotesque anachronism.

In its social aspects, this novel—if I read it correctly—is about two kinds of people living in the world today: those who swim with the current, striving for a career, alienated from the real values of life, unconcerned about the values destroyed by the "progress" they represent; and the other kind, who are attached to the natural beauties of life, to the unpolluted landscape, and who believe that life has values which cannot be expressed in terms of money. In this novel Dic Sharp, Twyford and Donald Fisher are the representatives of the former attitude, whereas the local people, especially Gareth, stand for the latter. Roger's development means among other things that as the novel progresses he comes to recognize the deeper dimensions of his instinctive choice.

It probably derives from the author's own life and his choice of a hero that in this antimony he depicts the academic versions of alienation with more subtlety and a fresher disgust than the business version. On the other hand, it praises his instincts as a writer, and his maturity as a thinker, that he does not for a moment lose his foothold on this slippery ground. He never becomes, even in tendency, a reactionary. A good example is the way he depicts the bus business. Roger supports Gareth in the struggle against Dic Sharp, but he is fully aware of the fact that the small private lines are obsolete, they will be nationalized in a couple of years and will be better for nationalization. As he says most suggestively in one place, it is not indifferent to the sardine whether it is swallowed up by a shark which is later put into an aquarium, or put directly into an aquarium, where there are no sharks.

I believe that this work is a novel of today not merely because it is set in 1968, or because the human attitudes, relations, bonds and thoughts portrayed in it bear the imprint of the times and of the society which they depict, but in the first place because in its own specific way it answers the same question to which Sarraute and Steiner are also seeking answers. Wain's answer is more optimistic than theirs. He has faith in human nature, in the perspectives of human life, in the preservation and improvement of the accumulated human values. He never expresses this in so many words, but suggests it with the warm, intimate atmosphere of the work, with the literary message—or tendency, if you like—which, while latent, is nonetheless clearly decipherable, the characters and the literary approach he uses. And the reason why I myself was filled with optimism by the novel is that I found in its author a writer who believes in man and exemplifies through his work that significant and even excellent literature can spring forth from the soil of this faith.

PÉTER NAGY

CZÓBEL, CSÁKY, VÖRÖS

Books on Hungarian Artists in Paris

CLARISSE PHILIPP: *Czóbel.* Corvina, Budapest, 1971.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Hungarian painters, as well as the Hungarian public, accepted as their artistic and national model the academism of Munich. The historical and genre paintings of the period, out of date even at their first appearance, were intended to serve the ideas of Hungarian independence, separate statehood and national existence; the composition, therefore, was dictated not by artistic problems inherent within the subject, but by the allegorical meaning which the painter wished to convey by means of the events presented. Painters did not create ideals, but rather, idealized naively, quoting from an inventory of motifs without reference to painterly concerns. There were great talents who fell victim to this style: in the age of Delacroix and Manet, one cannot choose Rahl and Piloty as one's ideals with impunity.

Simon Hollósy was the first to come home from Paris; his artists' colony at Nagybánya, which soon became Hungarian painting's most important workshop, put an end to showy imitations from literature and cheap grandeur, and established a plein-air style which blended the aesthetics of Realism and Impressionism. In the pictures of the Nagybánya painters the forms do not dissolve into colours; the figures preserve their physical reality, the composition its balance and design. The young painters who studied at Nagybánya in the opening years of the twentieth century were not long in finding their way to modern, i.e. Parisian, experiments.

Béla Czóbel—whose work, a short time after his retrospective exhibition at the Budapest Art Gallery in June 1971, was introduced by Corvina Press in an album which far exceeds their previous ones—also travelled from Nagybánya to Paris, and had barely spent a year at Julian's Academy when his work was already being exhibited at the Salon d'Automne, the gallery of the Fauvists, beside the work of Braque, Derain, Van Dongen and Vlaminck.

When I looked at his pictures in the Musée d'Art Moderne and in the still more enchanting smaller galleries, I found nothing other than the marks of unmistakable originality, that seemed strange, nothing particularly Hungarian; the painter was one of the first members of the Fauvist movement, the masters of the Paris school who gave a free and independent life to colour. Czóbel himself, however, warned of the difference: "Braque is inspired not by nature, but by art; he too will paint an apple or a pitcher, but without wanting to arouse a feeling of the object. His planes, colours and marvellous arabesques are like spiritual signs which the painter himself forms from his emotional and intellectual world. They are beautiful, often enchanting, yet I still feel them to be without perspective and not dynamically alive, but rather objects tied to one place. They cannot be continued, only varied. Braque can make them, because he is Braque, but painters cannot paint in this way. The picture I paint is mine, and can only be what I am myself." In Czóbel's pictures the bodies and objects have weight, because the colors which conjure them up before us are in thickly painted oils which shine, projecting light from within, giving a sense of space and mass as well as of tone. From 1903 onward even Czóbel's variations do not vary: he progresses always in one direction, toward a more complete, more mature self.

Although he learned in Paris all there was to learn, Czóbel never became as artistic, as elegant, as deliberate as the French. He feels deeply, emotionally about man and

nature, and this feeling is just as evident in the early works of the students of the Nagybánya school as it is in the canvases of the nearly ninety years old master. His unpretentious emotional universe expresses itself in a tense drama of form and colour, but also in a profound serenity: the colours glow in one another's incandescence, and the forms nestle closely together. His still-lives, bathed in autumn light, show an affectionate regard for his material and are filled with a sensuous, pagan joy.

What is the secret of this universal effectiveness, the natural authenticity found in the works done both in Paris and at home? The explanation may be that Czóbel is "only" a painter, not a Teacher or a Prophet. His subjects are simple and unpretentious—figures, still-lives, parts of the studio, streets and landscapes—but never incidental. In painter's language, using a painter's means, his pictures argue in favour of the everyday existence which the art of our time has to such a great extent forgotten: with browns, blues and reds illuminated by a mysterious source of light and a thick, serpentine motion of the brush that, in spite of its complexity, creates lucid order on the canvas. His paintings radiate a cheerfulness which springs not from resignation but from understanding, and their devotion to nature and the human world derives from the joy of possession.

JÓZSEF CSÁKY: Reminiscences from the Great Decade of Modern Art, 1904–1914 *(Emlékek a modern művészet nagy évtizedéből)*. Corvina, Budapest, 1972.

Czóbel is equally well-known from exhibitions in Paris and in Hungary, but the name of József Csáky rings unfamiliar both at home and also, unfortunately, in the French capital. Michel Seuphor, in his book on twentieth century sculpture, barely mentions him, and Herbert Read mentions him not at all: this in spite of the fact that not only his memoirs, but also his works bear witness to the important role Csáky played in the development of Cubism and later, of abstract sculpture. However, with the passing of the heroic age, and especially after the death of his art dealer, Leonce Rosenberg, the "conspiracy of silence" shut him away from the public and forced him—as one reads in a remorseful French obituary—into seclusion and deprivation.

In 1908, dissatisfied with the Munich style as taught at the School of Industrial Arts, Csáky went to Paris with only forty francs in his pocket in order to see, at last, the statues of Rodin. He was disappointed. Without a master, paying heed to his instincts alone, he began to work in the Ruche studio, the famous "Beehive", which has been written about almost as frequently as the Bateau Lavoir. For months he ate nothing but bread and liver paste, which cost only three sous, but in 1910, his first Cubist statues were exhibited in the Salon d'Automne beside the work of Archipenko, Fauconnier, Léger, Metzinger and Modigliani. The origin of Cubism has been explained differently by various persons, but Csáky's sketch is among the most witty: "Derain, one fine day, made a statue, a standing figure. The framework was weak and the head fell off. But why should everything depend on that? Taking a Negro mask from the wall, he put it on the clay statue and waited for the response. Soon after Picasso showed up. The moment he caught sight of the Negro mask on Derain's statue, the concept of the Negro era was born."

Csáky tells the story as though he doubted it himself, but the story is less important than the excuse it gives him to talk about Derain, of whom he was sincerely fond. The real heroes of his memoirs are his old friends; he himself humbly accepts the role of sounding-board. His portraits in miniature remind one of pencil sketches committed to paper with a single brisk movement, or of photographs which preserve not some solemn moment, a pose destined for immortality,

but a gesture which, though ordinary, yet expresses the essence. In his reminiscences of Rousseau, he passes over the usual anecdotes and relates instead what the "Douanier", standing in the studio in front of a half-completed picture, said about his method of painting: "First I paint what is most distant, that is, the blue sky. Then I paint in the clouds and those forms which stand farthest away. Moving along in the same fashion, I arrive at the lowest level. I never return to what I have already painted. I finish the parts immediately. In this way I achieve a balance of my colour values. One might almost say that I put only finished objects on my canvases. I stick them on, if I may use that expression, at the various levels. The strongest colours come at the very bottom." And shaking his head, he began to speak with quiet anger of the impossible Delauney, who had painted the Eiffel Tower as if it were broken in pieces.

Even after fifty years, Csáky could still be amused by Delauney's stubborness, and he quotes with pleasure Delauney's conversation with Léger, which he heard in the editorial office of *Montjoie:*

"You know, Robert, if you apply black next to white..."

Delauney broke in:

"I never put white next to black."

"That's fine, but let's assume... So. If you apply black next to white..."

"I never put black next to white."

"Of course. I realize you don't even use black, but still, let's assume you've put black next to white..."

"I never put black next to white."

Realizing that he could get nowhere with Delauney, Léger made a deprecatory gesture. The devil with you, he said, and put an end to the conversation."

It was a happy time, when nothing could bring about a conflict between two painters but the preference for a shade or contrast of colour. "Life was beautiful before August 1914," writes Csáky in an outburst of nostalgia. "People knew how to laugh and to live merrily, carelessly. Although I had to struggle with many difficulties to acquire the bare essentials, I was never sad or burdened with care. Whenever I hear the words 'the joy of living' I think of life in pre-war Paris. When the war broke out, it was as if everything had fallen apart, as though everything had been destroyed."

His life after 1918 was filled with nothing but tragedy and disappointment. But the more often he suffered the blows of fate, the more harmonious his statues became. Having no other weapon, he defended himself against the world by moulding graceful, finely-countoured, carefully composed female figures. In the last years of his life he lived on what were essentially charitable purchases by friends, and wrote his memoirs. Escaping from the present into the past, he relived what had been beautiful in his life.

His fate is almost symbolic of post-war Hungarian art. After the First World War, and again at the beginning of the thirties, the Hungarian fine arts suffered an exodus which carried abroad the first acknowledged, or at least the first known, Hungarian artists. The first wave of emigration consisted of those from the circles of the periodicals *Nyugat* and *Ma* and the Group of the Eight, who were forced to flee because of their role in the 1919 revolution. The second wave swept abroad chiefly the young: expelled college students and anonymous beginners who had hardly done anything to deserve punishment, but who fled all the same. Many of them became wasted talents, although a few of their names may be found in museums, in fashionable galleries and on the title-pages of astronomically priced albums.

IVÁN DÉVÉNYI–FERENC GALAMBOS–LAJOS NÉMETH: *Béla Vörös.* (Introduction by Helène Parmelin.) Corvina, Budapest, 1973. (Also in French.)

To judge from the finer biographical details of his life, Béla Vörös would seem to

belong to this group—although this is to ignore the essential shadings. He has, indeed, taken part in exhibitions of rank, but the Hungarian tourist who happily discovers in the Musée d'Art Moderne the names of a few compatriots—such as Kemény, Hajdú, Schöffer, Szenes and Vasarely—looks in vain for Vörös's work. Books and periodicals hardly mention him; one can, however, infer his place in French art and Parisian artistic life from the few lines in which he offers his thanks to Helène Parmelin, who wrote the preface to the Corvina album which introduces his work: "It is a great honour for me that Helène Parmelin, one of Picasso's closest friends and a noted connoisseur of his work, should consider my work worthy to be introduced to the Hungarian and the French public." There is not, however, much to be thankful for. We learn from the vapidly poetic text that "in Vörös's art one finds every element which the modern era has made possible for the searching artist... we find in it the thousands upon thousands of abstractions, the light touch which have left their mark on our time; but all this with him does not become rigid." It is a classically bad method, lacking in the rationalism customarily said to characterize the French spirit. The writer, painter, sculptor or musician has not yet been born who could crowd into his work all the elements of his age. Fortunately, to judge from his work, Béla Vörös has no intention of trying to realize this Surrealistic fantasy. When the writer of the introduction has bestowed on the painter this dubious praise, she contentedly goes on without characterizing a single one of these elements—not to mention the thousands upon thousands of abstractions. Helène Parmelin does, indeed, prefer the high-sounding generality to the concrete statement: we learn from her that when Vörös works "his ideas are in a state of ferment", but she also informs us that "in art the material means so little". When one reads the preface, the work does not seem to be worth much either.

The studies by Dévényi, Galambos and Németh are vastly different. All three write clearly and simply about Vörös's life and art, and give reliable analyses of the characteristic feature of his work: the affection and feeling toward the material which has such an enormous significance in his art, especially the sculpture. They do, however, draw the circle a bit more tightly around him than a fair evaluation would demand; although they emphasize the Cubist origins of Vörös's production, they refrain from any attempt to discover his place in the movement.

True, in 1925, when Vörös arrived in Paris, the Cubist revolution had settled down to become a style; the Gabon masks and Congo statues had become popularized as decorations. This was the Paris of the mad years, of Negro dancing girls and American jazz orchestras. In place of the experimentation of the pioneering masters, everyone was busy exploiting the experiments already done, and it was natural that Vörös should follow this example rather than the road leading to it. Of the Cubists, he was influenced most by those whose search had never distanced them from a geometrically realistic interpretation of the figure: his jazz orchestra is like a variation of a La Fresnaye painting done in relief. The strongest influence, however, was Brâncuşi: the formal elements and design of his statue "Grace", done in 1927, recall the Maiastra, in that the simplification and abstraction from the model is carried about halfway.

Vörös never became unfaithful to the most important subject of his novice years: the female nude. The torsos and limbs of his standing and sitting female figures, simplified into geometrical forms, create an indissolubly unified and closed mass; the general perspective, informed by Cubism, is served by a marvellous plastic sense, a knowledge of craft and familiarity with the material. The figures live, expressing triumphant womanhood with the tautness of that energy which maintains human existence

and continues its struggle. Nothing could illustrate Vörös's *ars poetica* better than this: "Since my childhood I have always been the defenceless object of social injustice. The worrisome years I spent in emigration increased my feeling of being in a minority, and shook my confidence in the social order and its unnatural, mechanized art and way of life, choked off from every human feeling. I have always judged my work in the interests of social development, with the most stringent self-criticism, and its basis has always been the effective expression of humane sympathy. The greatest acknowledgement I could ask for would be to be able to conjure up with the creations introduced in this book the fragrance of the earth from which I derive, and the struggles and hopes of my social class as it fights for its daily bread—the class which has had such a strong role in the formation of my character and perspective on the world."

In Vörös's more recent figures, with their thin, carefully composed lines, the humane sensitivity and social programme are less active. The figures attempt to express merely a single light, melodic rhythm, but neither the subject nor the resolution is important enough to turn bric-à-brac into sculpture. Vörös often becomes uncertain when, instead of a subject suitable to his experience and instincts, he chooses something else, and especially when he undertakes an intellectual task. His "Rocket of Peace" is a cone on legs; on the tip of the cone a female figure provides counterpoise. But the rocket is four times as big as the figure, a gigantic pedestal on which the young woman waving her kerchief becomes dwarfed and insignificant. Nor is the idea expressed by the title capable of suppressing the unintentional comedy in the conception and its resolution.

Vörös succeeds in finding expression for an abstract idea when the subject provides a framework for his temperament, the humane sensitivity described in his statement. In his composition "In Prison", an arc, broken by bars and symbolizing a prison wall, encloses a figure who makes yet one more decided gesture to draw attention to his situation. A mask which faithfully conveys the forcefulness of Negro plasticity has been given the title "The Death of Poesy". In the consoling examples provided by art history the death of poesy is always followed by the rebirth of poetry; in Vörös's work the poetry is in his Cubistic female figures. And these stand closest to the traditions of Hungarian sculpture; in them is expressed the real, true worth of Vörös's art.

If one wants to answer the always carefully approached question, Is there a universal value to Hungarian fine art? one must turn not only to the artists at home, but also to those who broke away. The task was never more timely than it is now, and Corvina deserves credit for being the first publishing house to undertake it.

CSABA SÍK

FOR YOUR BOOKSHELF

Some works by Hungarian authors recently published in translation

FICTION, PLAYS, POETRY

Arion VI.—an anthology of poems, Corvina Press, Budapest

DÉRY, Tibor: *Kein Urteil* ("No Verdict"), S. Fischer, Frankfurt/Main

KARDOS G., György: *De zeven Dagen van Abraham Bogatir* ("The Seven Days of Avraham Bogatir") Wereldbibliother N. V. Amsterdam–Antwerp; also in German, Rowohlt Taschenbuchvlg, Reinbek bei Hamburg

KARINTHY, Frigyes: *Ich weiss nicht, meine Frau ist mir aber verdächtig* (Selected short stories), Rütten und Loening, Berlin

KUN, Béláné (Mrs): *Béla Kun*, in Japanese, Gakugei Shorin, Tokyo

ILLYÉS, Gyula: *Sándor Petőfi*, in German, Corvina Press, joint edition with Aufbau-Verlag, Berlin

LENGYEL, Péter: *Der zweite Planet der Ogg* ("The second Planet of Ogg") Marion v. Schröder, Hamburg–Düsseldorf

MESTERHÁZI, Lajos: *Some steps from the frontier*, in Japanese, Shin Nihon Suppansa, Tokyo

PASSUTH, László: *In Ravenna wurde Rom begraben* ("Rome was buried in Ravenna") Corvina Press joint edition with Prisma-Verlag, Leipzig

PETŐFI, Sándor: *Rebel or Revolutionary*, an anthology, ed. B. Köpeczi, also in French and German, Corvina Press, Budapest

SZABÓ, Magda: *Familjefresken* ("Fresquoes") Almqvist and Wiksell, Stockholm

SZABÓ, Magda: *Calle Katalin* ("Katalin Street") Monte Avila, Caracas

SZÁSZ, Imre: *Der Sommer mit meiner Tochter* ("Summer with my daughter") Paul Zsolnay, Wien

SZERB, Antal: *Oliver VII*, Eulenspiegel, Berlin

VÉSZI, Endre: *Statistik* ("Statistics") Evangelische Verlags-Anstalt, Berlin

THE ARTS, ARCHEOLOGY

BODROGI, Tibor: *Art of Indonesia* Corvina Press, Budapest, joint edition with Graphic Society Ltd, New York; also in French with Cercle d'art, Paris, and German, with Schroll Verlag, Wien–München; Seemann Verlag, Leipzig

BOGNÁR-KUTZIÁN, Ida: *The Early Copper Age Tiszapolgár Culture in the Carpathian Basin*, Archeologica Hungarica, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest

CSILLÉRY, Klára: *Hungarian Village Furniture*, also in French and German, Corvina Press, Budapest

ÉRI, István: *Veszprém*, also in French and German, Corvina Press, Budapest

GENTHON, István: *From Romanticism to Post-Impressionism*, also in French and German, Corvina Press, Budapest

GRANASZTÓI, Pál: *Budapest Through the Eyes of an Architect*, also in French, Corvina Press, Budapest

HARASZTI-TAKÁCS, Marianne: *Rubens and His Age*, also in French and German, Corvina Press, Budapest

MANGA, János: *Herdsmen's Art in Hungary*, also in French and German, Corvina Press, Budapest

NAGY, Domokos, Imre: *Hunting in Art*, also in French and German, Corvina Press, Budapest

SZÁSZ, Imre: *Wild, Wald, Weidwerk* ("Game, Forest, Hunting") Corvina Press, Budapest, joint edition with Dausien Verlag, Hanan

VÉGH, János: *Sixteenth Century German Panel Paintings*, also in French and German, Corvina Press, Budapest

LITERATURE, LINGUISTICS, SOCIAL SCIENCES

ACZÉL, György: *Cultura e Democrazia socialista*, collected addresses and papers, Editori Riuniti, Roma

ANDICS, Erzsébet: *Metternich und die Frage Ungarns* ("Metternich and the Hungarian Question"), Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest

BENKŐ, IMRE; ed.: *The Hungarian Language*, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, joint edition with Mouton et Co., The Hague

DIENES, István: *The Hungarians Cross the Carpathians*, also in French and German, Corvina Press, Budapest

EGRI, Péter: *Avantgardism and Modernity*, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, joint edition with University of Tulsa, Oklahoma

FÖLDES–MÉSZÁROS, ed.: *Comenius and Hungary*, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest

LUKÁCS, György: *Lenin*, in French, Denoel-Gonthier, Paris–Geneve; in Finnish, Tammi, Helsinki

LUKÁCS, György: *Ästhetik* I–II–III–IV ("Aesthetics"), Luchterhand, Neuwied

LUKÁCS, György: *Political Writings, 1919–1929*, New Left Books, London

LUKÁCS, György: *Le roman historique* ("The historical novel"), Payot, Paris

LUKÁCS, György: *Arte e società* I–II ("Art and society"), Riuniti, Roma

LUKÁCS, György: *Teoria del Romanzo*, 2nd ed., ("Theory of the novel"), Sugar Editore, Milano

LUKÁCS, György: *Schriften zur Literatursoziologie* ("Sociology of Literature"), Luchterhand, Neuwied

LUKÁCS, György: *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Dialektik* ("On the history of dialectics"), in Italian, Laterza, Roma

MAKAI, Mária: *The Dialectics of Moral Consciousness*, Studia Philosophica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae 14, Budapest

SZABÓ, Miklós: *The Celtic Heritage in Hungary*, also in French and German, Corvina

ECONOMICS, INDUSTRY

AUSCH, Sándor: *Theory and Practice of CMEA Cooperation*, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest

FARKASFALVY, Ervin, ed.: *Handbook of Hungarian Foreign Trade*, also in French and German, Corvina Press, Budapest

GADÓ, Ottó ed.: *Reform of the Economic Mechanism in Hungary. Developments 1968–71*, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest

JÁNOSSY, Ferenc: *La fin des miracles économiques* ("The end of economic miracles"), Du Seuil, Paris

KORNAI, János: *Anti-Equilibrium*, North-Holland, Amsterdam

GUIDE BOOKS

FEKETE, Gyula: *Hungary*, also in French, German and Russian, Corvina Press, Hungary

HALÁSZ, Zoltán, ed.: *Budapest*, also in German, Italian, Spanish, Serbo-Croat, Russian, Corvina Press, Budapest

MESTERHÁZI, Lajos: *Budapest*, also in French, German, Italian, Russian, Serbo-Croat, Corvina Press, Budapest

TARR, László, ed.: *Lake Balaton*, also in French, Corvina Press, Budapest

VAJKAI, Aurél: *Il lago Balaton* ("Lake Balaton"), Corvina Press, Budapest

ZÁKONYI, Ferenc: *Balaton*, also in French, German and Serbo-Croat, Corvina Press, Budapest

NATURAL SCIENCES

BALOGH, János: *The Oribatid Genera of the World*, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest

BENEDEK, LÁSZLÓ: *Les bases scientifiques du génie chimique* ("Scientific bases of chemical engineering"), Dunod, Paris

DÉSI, Illés: *Das geheimnisvolle Gehirn* ("The mysterious brain"), Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest

GÁBOR, Mihály: *The Anti-Inflammatory Action of Flavonoids*, with a foreword by Albert Szent-Györgyi, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest

JORDÁN, Károly: *Chapters on the Classical Calculus of Probability*, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest

KOVÁCS–PAPP, ed.: *XIIth European Conference on Animal Blood Groups and Biochemical Polymorphism*, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, joint edition with Dr. W. Junk N.V., Hague

LÁNG, Lajos ed.: *Absorption Spectra in the Ultraviolet and Visible Region, XVI, XVII*, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, joint edition with Academic Press, New York

MATOLCSI, János; ed.: *Research into the Domestication of Animals*, also in French and German, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest

QUITTNER, Péter: *Gamma-Ray Spectroscopy with Particular Reference to Detector and Computer Evaluation Techniques*, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, joint edition with Adam Hilger Ltd., London

SARKADI–VINCZE: *Mathematical Methods of Statistical Quality Control*, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest

SZÁNTÓ–HÖNIG–SZÉKELY ed.: *Traumatic Shock*, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest

VARIOUS

BÁN, Jenő: *The Tactics of End-Games*, Corvina Press, Budapest

CSANÁDI, Árpád: *Soccer*, Corvina Press, Budapest

GUNDEL, Károly: *Hungarian Cookery Book*, also in French, Corvina Press, Budapest

HAMBURGER, Klára: *Liszt*, Corvina Press, Budapest

KAJÁN, Tibor: *Apropos*, Eulenspiegel, Berlin

KAILICH–PAPP–SUBERT ed.: *Olympic Games 1896–1972*, also in German, Corvina Press, Budapest

LIEBNER, János: *Mozart on the Stage*, Calder and Boyars, London

RADÓ, Sándor: *Deckname Dora* ("Dora Calling") Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, Stuttgart, also in French, Juillard, Paris, in Swedish, Forum, Stockholm, in Italian, La Pietra, Milano

VAS-ZOLTÁN, Péter: *United Nations Technical Assistance*, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest

Á. Sz.

ARTS

PAINTINGS, MOSAICS, TEXTILES

Works by Piroska Szántó, Mária Tury, Gabriella Hajnal, Zizi Makrisz, Lili Ország, László Drégely, Ilona Keserü

No major exhibition was held in the first quarter of 1973 but there were some remarkable one-man shows; they did not present new names but new works by known artists.

Piroska Szántó* showed new drawings at the Helikon Gallery. They are at the same time illustrative, literary and calligraphic, they seem to be a revival of the medieval *danse macabre:* formally they are on the borderline of painting and graphic art. Her themes look morbid at the first glance: skeletons lying in their grave in the pose of love-making, skeleton arms embracing each other, and tangled-up lines expressing their congress. These drawings evoke the thanatophilia of Mexican art rather than that of the Middle Ages—though in their case the presence of the skull and the skeleton convey the warning of *memento mori*, Piroska Szántó uses them as symbols of the invincibility of love. The congress of two people triumphing over death, the image of love which death cannot tear asunder transcends morbidity and the throbbing tangled-up lines fill her drawings with graphic and calligraphic excitement. This calligraphic rhythm brings her work close to the web of lines of the modern style. Piroska Szántó is a sovereign master of line—her fluency is sometimes dangerous and her inventiveness is threatened by routine.

Mária Tury showed her series of small enamels in the Helikon Gallery as well. Her first show was in 1955. At that time she followed the loose style of the Post-Impressionists. The structural elements, i.e. a decorative adaptation of structural elements, became more and more prevalent in her pictures. Her real genre is figurative-decorative art, halfway between the fine arts and applied arts. Her gobelins, glass-windows, mosaics and ceramic walls have enjoyed considerable success earlier and several of them decorate public buildings. Her small enamels combine picturesque colours with decorative elements. Her figures are schematized signs halfway between the pure plastic sign and the imitative form.

Mária Tury had started as a painter and combined her art later with elements of the applied arts; Gabriella Hajnal had always looked for the possibility of merging the two. She designs—or rather paints—gobelins and tapestries. Despite this her gobelins are not woven pictures but rather painting-like tapestries. Noémi Ferenczy,* was her Hungarian forerunner**. She had remained within the limits determined by woven materials, but at the same time put a richer meaning into her work than is customary in merely ornamental and decorative work. Noémi Ferenczy had created her own individual homogeneous style—the themes and style of

* See also No. 35 of *The N.H.Q.*

* See No. 9 of *The N.H.Q.*

** On Noémi Ferenczy see Éva Kovács's article in No. 9 of *The N.H.Q.*

Gabriella Hajnal's works are extremely varied. She experiments from abstract, geometrical work to Surrealist compositions with mythological themes. Unity in her work is achieved by mastery over her material, the love for her art, the richness of her colour schemes and variety of form rather than by a consistent notion of style and form. Her colours are very different from those of her predecessor, Noémi Ferenczy, whose gobelins had a peculiar colour harmony of pastel hues. Gabriella Hajnal's colours are glowing and saturated, but never gaudy. She experimented with a revival of long-forgotten techniques of embroidery as well.

Zizi Makrisz has also moved in the direction of decoration. She showed her new work in the Csók Gallery. Zizi Makrisz is the wife of Agamemnon Makrisz, an outstanding sculptor of Greek birth who lives in Hungary; she herself was born in Yugoslavia, and has spent a number of years in Paris. She came to Hungary twenty years ago and her art has been closely linked with this country though she has preserved much of her original artistic education and outlook. She started by exhibiting lino-cuts and then a growing number of monumental decorative works, mainly mosaics. Her designs for mosaics are the finest pieces of her present exhibition. Her dynamic colour schemes are the most praiseworthy aspect of her art.

In recent months a number of fine exhibitions were arranged outside Budapest. The most interesting material was presented in Dunaújváros: in March the new art gallery of the town showed a good selection of Lili Ország's new works, and in April paintings and aluminium work by László Drégely.

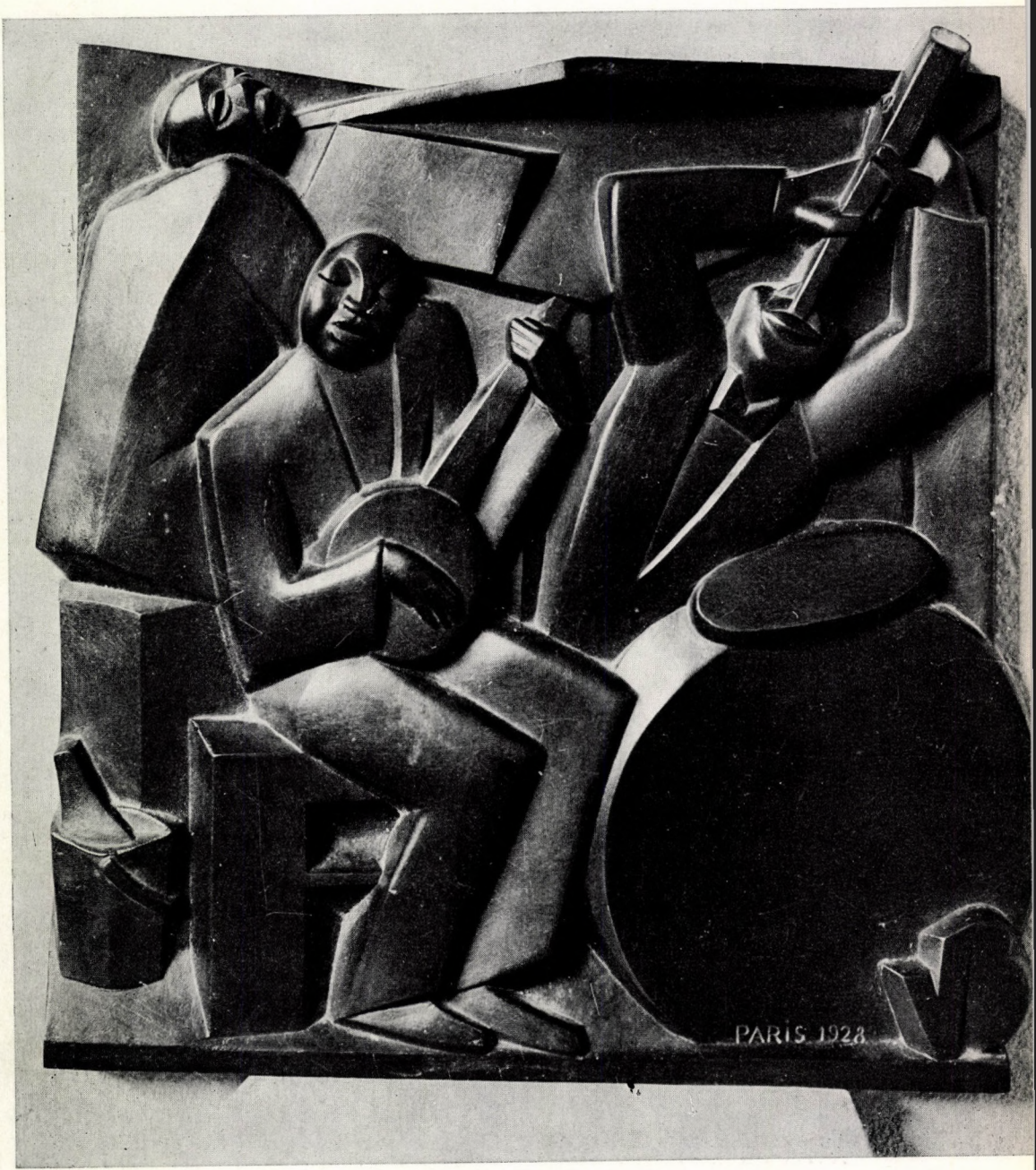
Lili Ország* has gone through several artistic periods. Her early work was Surrealistic, replete with cities in ruins and stone walls, her later paintings were on the border of the figurative and abstract, then she showed a preference for signs carved in stone, for writing, for ancient Mesopotamian, Hebrew and Coptic script. Her next step consisted of transforming these characters into architectonic elements. The dynamic contrast of the massive wall and the organic, blazing script and papyrus forms has become the main element in the structure of her work.

Her works of the middle 60s showed a longing for the myths of the Near-East cultures, her new works the influence of her Italian experiences, particularly those of her visits to Pompeii. Human figures appear often on these pictures as a signal or as the mark of human scale—the Christ on the vesicas in Romanesque churches or the Mother-Child motif, an iconostasis with a new meaning—but these pictures, contrary to those of her early Surrealist period, have no symbolic or absurd Surrealist meaning, they are just structural elements like characters in a strange script.

The main characteristic of Lili Ország's paintings is the richness of the different levels of meaning. The time-space correlation, the emotional possibilities hidden in the evocation of experiences lived and guessed, the constant combining of the levels of history, the longing for myths, the discovery of the picturesque beauty of time-ravaged walls, lyrical sensitivity, the defiance of time, the nervous decorativeness of calligraphy, the contrast of the organic structure of the picture with the accidental elements in the brushwork build up the various levels of meanings in her paintings which have a closed world of their own, with themes and forms determined by an extraordinary inner discipline.

László Drégely, a stage designer of Hungarian Television, also showed his works in the Gallery of Dunaújváros. He has had a number of earlier exhibitions in Hungary and abroad. His pictures reveal the stage designer, he interprets space as a scene, his figures are often placed on an imaginary stage and his motives which suggest symbols —clock, knife, mannequin, rope, various machines—also seem to be the props of a

* See No. 30 of *The N.H.Q.*

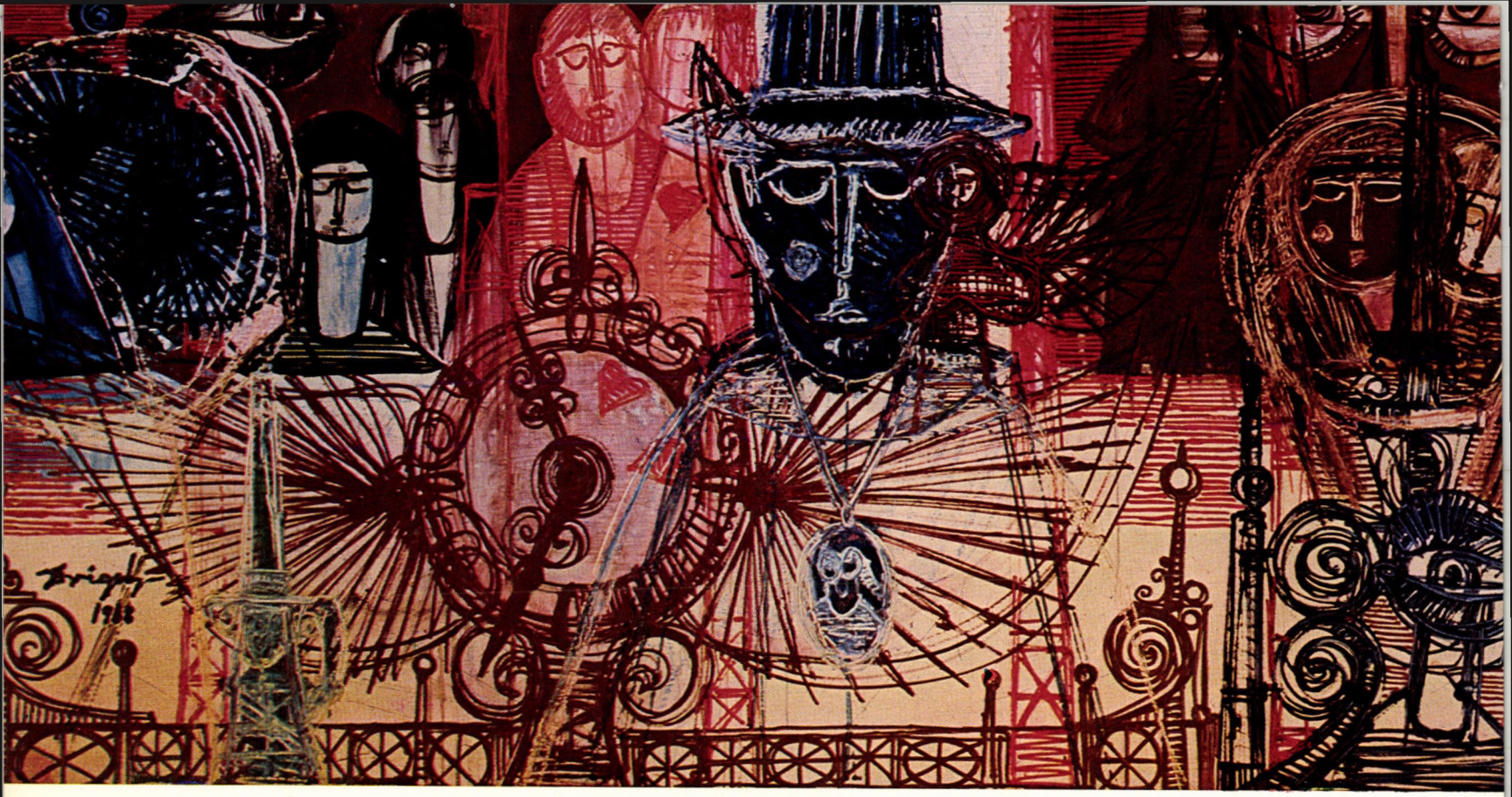


GÉZA VÖRÖS: JAZZ ORCHESTRA (BRONZE, 37×66,5 CMS, 1928)

József Csáky: Dancer (aluminium welding), 1959

László Drégely: Duet (78×108 cms, 1968)

Photo: Péter Korniss



László Drégely: Solitary Life (oil, 125×250 cms, 1968)

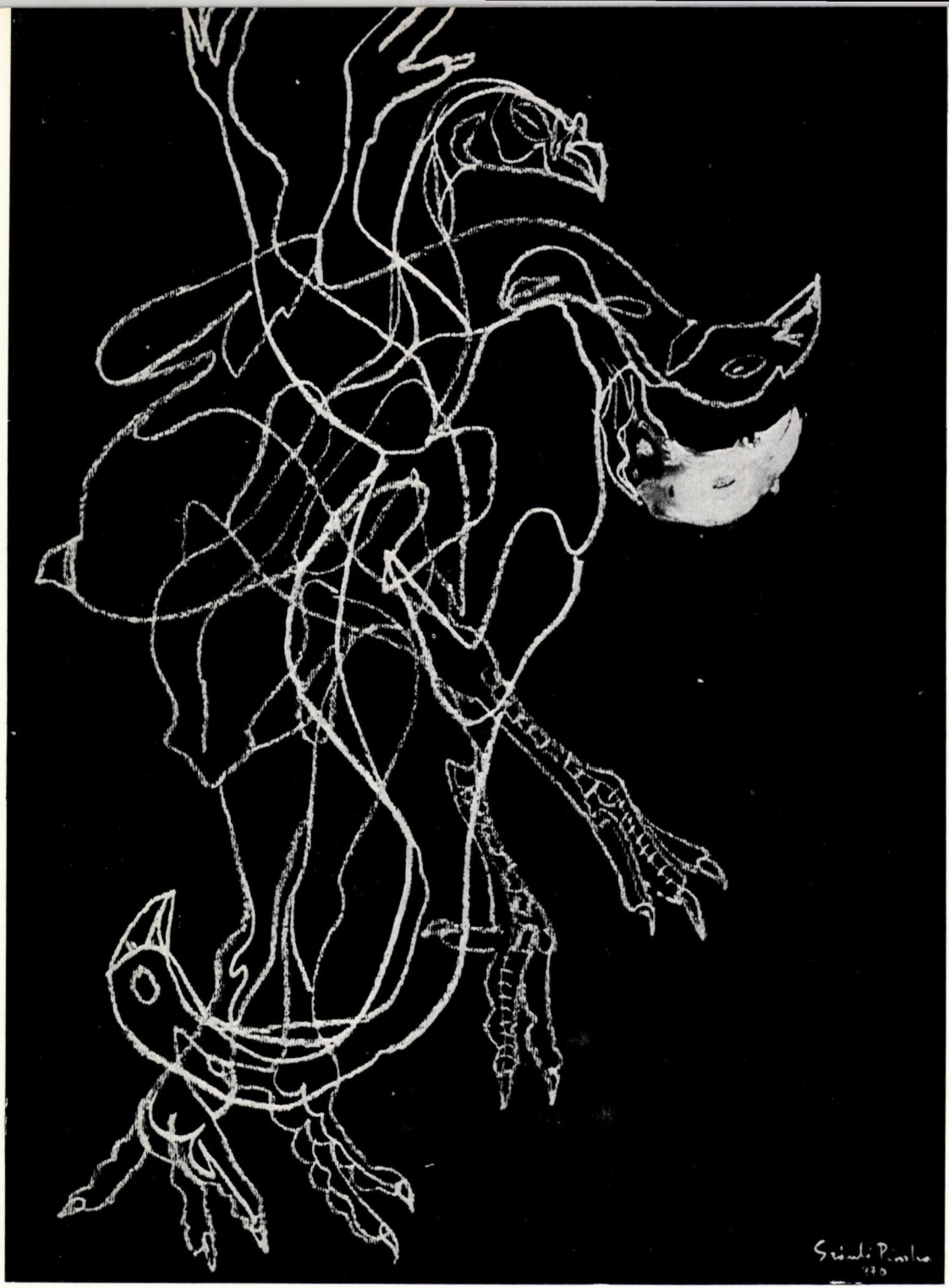
Photo: Péter Korniss

Lili Ország: Papyrus (oil, 40×60 cms, 1970)

Photo: Károly Szelényi

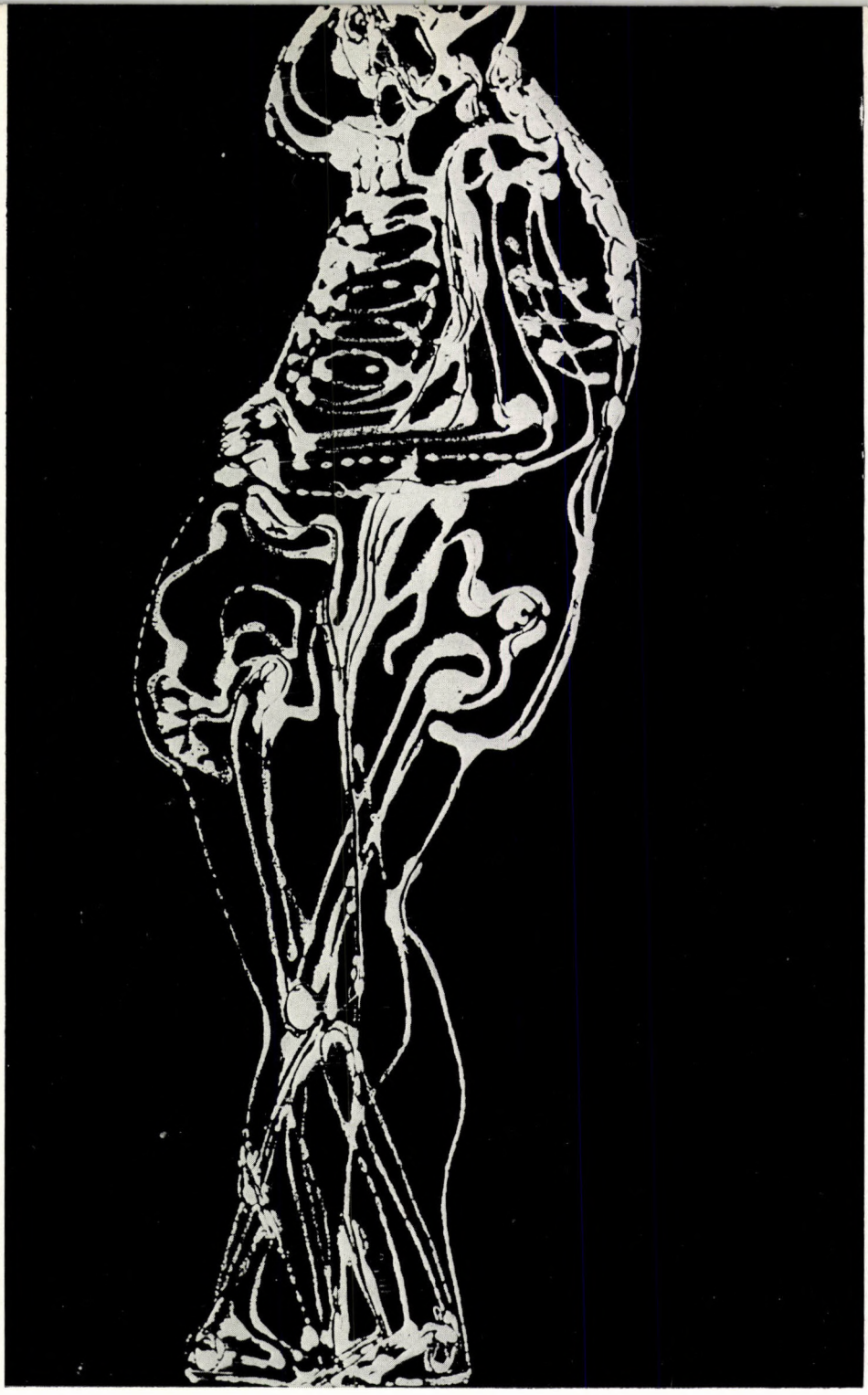
Lili Ország: Romanesque Christ (oil, 50 × 80 cms, 1969)

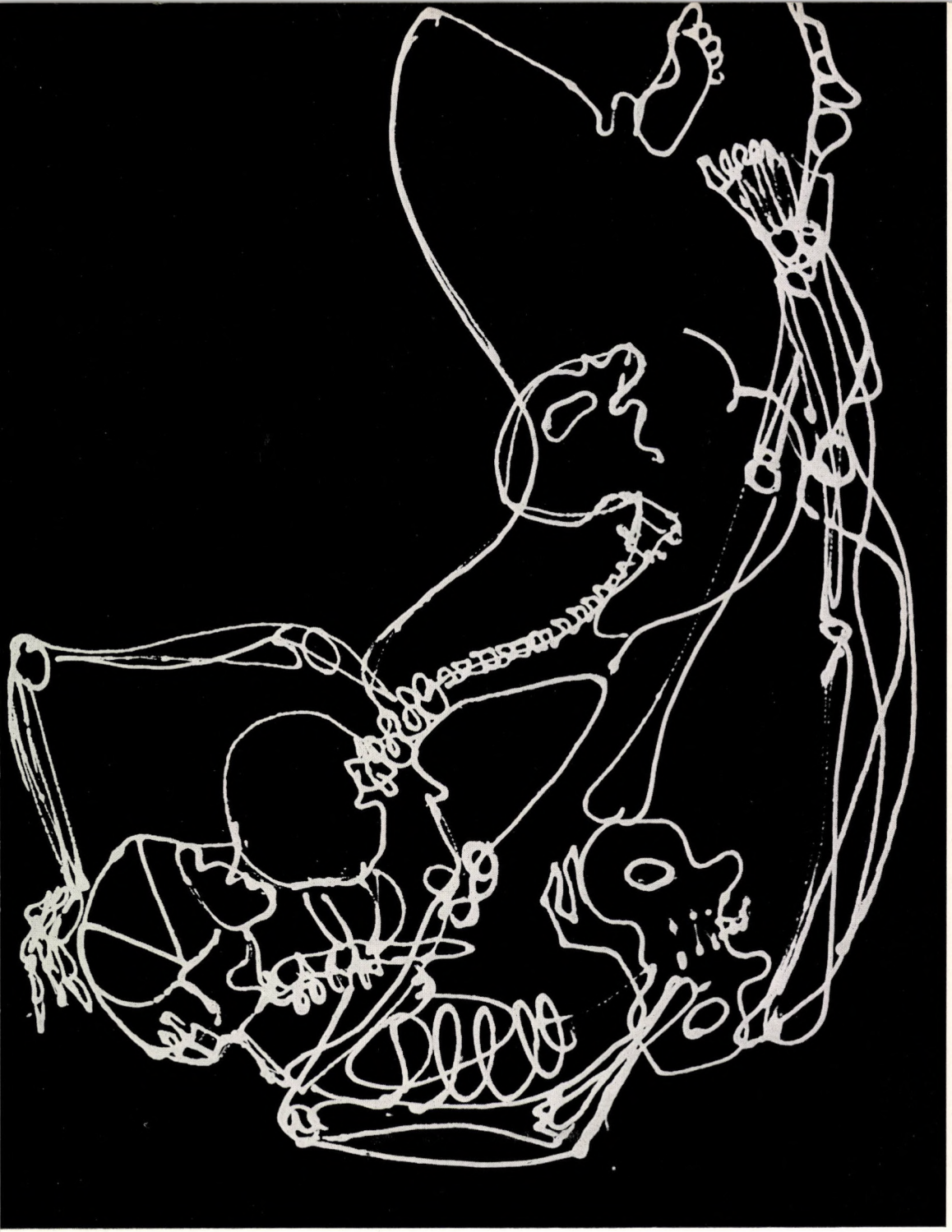
Photo: Károly Szelényi

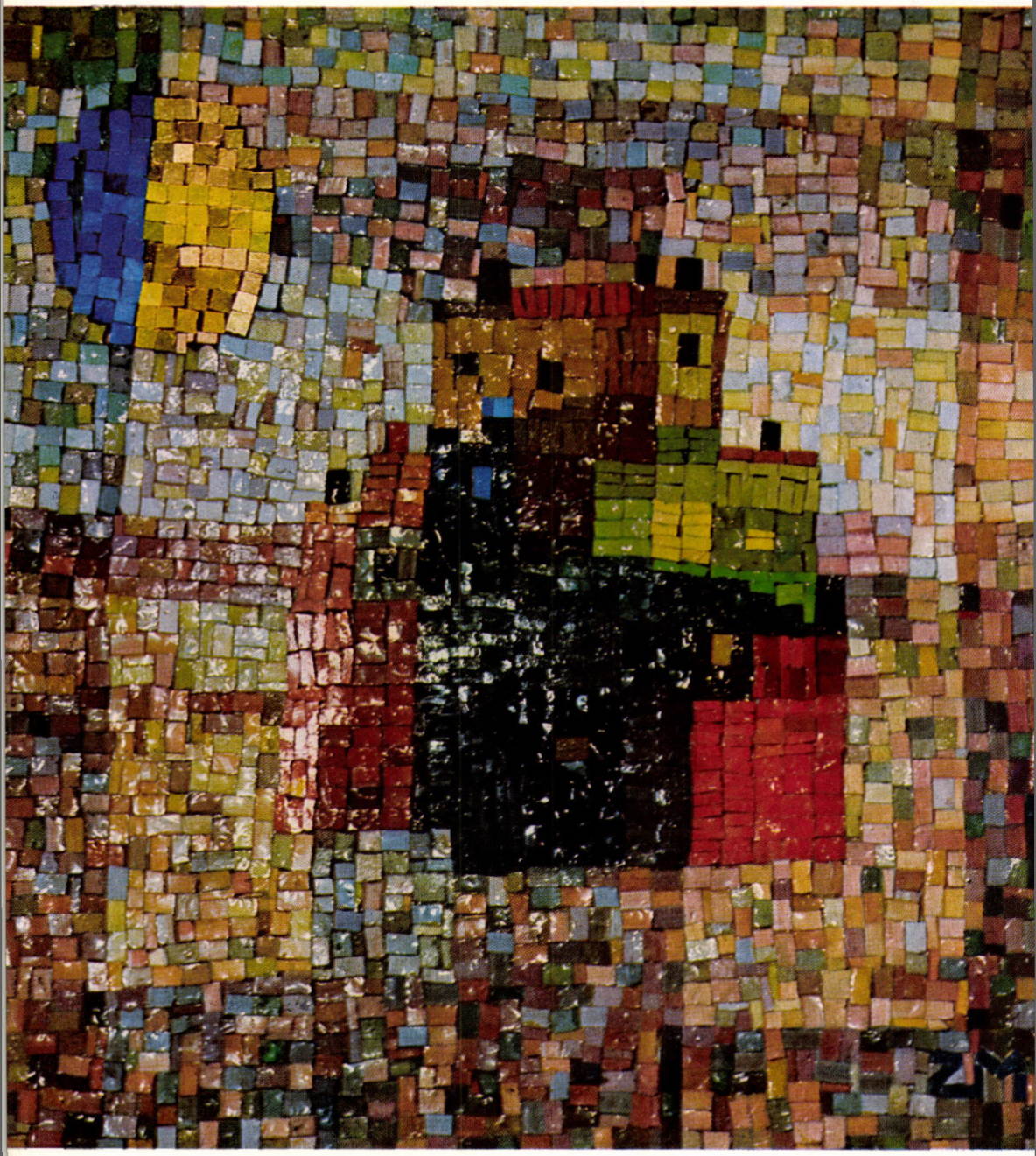


Piroska Szántó: Danse macabre (I–III) (Designs, 1970)

Photo: Márta Rédner







Zizi Makrisz: Mosaic

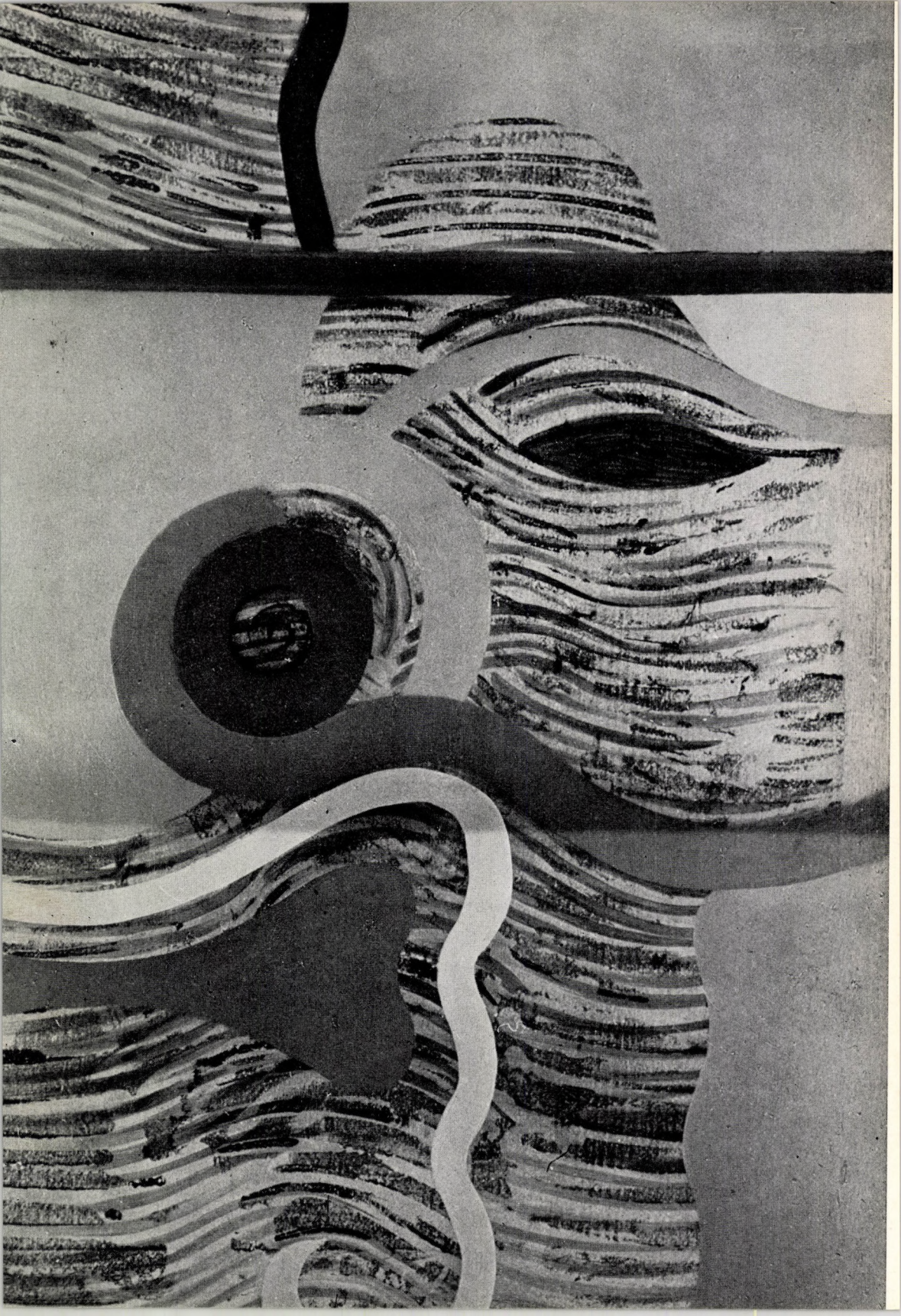
Photo: Margit Nádor

ZIZI MAKRISZ: IN GAOL (DRAWING)

JENŐ MEDVECZKY: THE SPIRES OF SZENTENDRE (OIL AND TEMPERA ON WOOD-FIBRE)

Photo: József Horvai

ILONA KESERÜ: DESING



MÁRIA TURY: GIRL IN THE GARDEN (ENAMEL, 40×30 CMS, 1967)

Photo: Károly Szelényi

Miklós Borsos: Etching

WALL DECORATED BY CUFIC CHARACTERS IN THE CELLA TRICHORA AT PÉCS

Photo: József Karát

Surrealist stage. Linear elements are the dominant features of his pictures, although he sometimes outweighs their dominant role with accentuated picturesque elements. His themes and motives contain many constant elements and he shows a certain kinship with the spirit of science-fiction without any concrete influence or creating the impression of illustrations. Nevertheless, his recurring winged figure, odd machines and desolate, lifeless spaces border on the fantastic, their meaning is symbolic and Surrealistic even if they keep to an earthly scale. His pictures convey no creepy feeling, the artist seems rather to marvel at the cosmic world he disclosed. This is perhaps the reason for a much-used element: a wide-open human eye. His art is inspired by Romanticism, it is linked with the contemporary Neo-Romantic wave.

Ilona Keserü* also planned a number of new, modern *décors* in recent years. They were exhibited in March in the Csepel Art Gallery. The hall is small and the exhibition, open for three weeks, was rehung every week. The exhibits included paintings, peasant-style embroideries, knotted string, spatial figures, with two prevalent concepts: op art and pop art, alternately taken in by the artist who, in a sovereign manner, employed these opposing tendencies. Notwithstanding her technique and concepts, Ilona Keserü is in the first place a lyric artist and her works are dominated by refined colour schemes, by the magic harmony of lilac-orange and rose. Her knotted compositions are unique: she disciplines the chance nature of the technique by a deliberate selection of colours. Ilona Keserü applies many elements of a number of modern trends, Hungarian tradition being one of her sources as well. She links the forms of her graphic art to that of provincial Baroque sepulchral sculpture art, and her knotted pictures preserve something precious found in the embroideries and handwoven works of the Renaissance. Ilona Keserü is a sensitive artist with her own autonomous style who interprets in her own way the problems of modern art. She does not keep rigidly to old genres, materials and techniques, but transforms them in accord with her own sensibility.

* See No. 43 of *The N.H.Q.*

LAJOS NÉMETH

CONTEMPLATING THE "MONA LISA"

Time and years make me turn inwards more and more. The world of exhibitions and public appearances has changed so much that it has hardly any importance for me any more, for no one can follow the many exhibitions opening day by day, week after week. This happens throughout the world. Novelty-hunting appears to have put an end to beauty, and at the same time to its own role as well. I turn toward the same unchangeable values I once started with. This revives my past. From a large Verona chest that holds everything, I take out early self-portraits done in Florence, sketches of a street or a square, and fading reproductions of great masters. In this past the very

Introductory words spoken by the sculptor Miklós Borsos at an evening organized by the Hungarian PEN Club on the occasion of the publication of his autobiography.

Bartók violin piece is still present that I learnt thirty-five years ago and which has become even more beautiful since. I take out the old, first stone sculptures, the ones I made a good twenty years ago. Quite a few of them appear to be new. The many "isms" that have appeared and disappeared and all the work that has become meaningless: what a fascinating subject for a book.

Fate took me to Florence, the city of the early Renaissance, at such an early age that I could never break away from this kind of art. It defined my future as an artist. Later on other trips abroad I never found anything more attractive than the beginning of a great era. I committed myself and have since remained faithful to this world of art not only in sculpture and painting but also in music.

This is obviously the way I am made, but the richness of the art I got to know so early, drove that amount of self-delusion out of me which is so necessary for any intention to innovate. What and who I could learn from: that is what I have always sought, and I have, in my time, decorated my walls and shelves with such works of art.

The subject of this piece is what the closeness of a masterpiece can mean. It is about a painting which I have been meditating on since I was eighteen: Leonardo's *Mona Lisa*.

The painting is well-known, many commonplaces have been attached to it, romantic stories have taken wing telling of the circumstances of its origin. It was often forgotten, and then reappeared on advertisements, on the boxes of various cosmetics. I myself have heard from travellers returning from Paris that the Mona Lisa was a disappointment. It is quite natural, they could not see the Mona Lisa, in the middle of such a crowd, above so many heads, over the cacophony of guides shouting in different languages, in the flashing of bulbs and the clicking of shutters the Mona Lisa does not reveal her beauty. In one of the most elegant shopping streets of Paris, set in green cloth in a shop-window in the Faubourg Saint Honoré I saw the Mona Lisa in a three-fourth size reproduction with a moustache made of real hair, stuck on by a sensation-hunting lack of taste. The designer was: Maestro Dali. But I will not go on with the story of this painting, I want to tell you what this painting means to me today.

In October I stayed in Tihany on my own, a solitude full of life, birds, colours, things to see and do, which turns it into something that is not a solitude. One day after I had finished playing the violin, standing in my attic window not long after the early sunset, I was looking at the last rose-purple lights which at that hour show the garden and the world in a different hue day after day. The well-known facts of evening had passed, crows had taken wing at Sajkód and were slowly heading east. The gaggle of wild-geese was the only sound, the small birds had quietened down; one or two only hopped from one bush to another. At that moment I felt utterly lonely. I don't remember anything like it for I always do something or have something moving around me. It was an unfamiliar, thoughtless moment, and in order to break it, I glanced at my book-shelf where, in the evening twilight, Mona Lisa was looking down at me from the cover of a book. I hadn't seen her for years. I probably never felt so close to this painting, to the person shown on this truly unfinishable masterpiece. Unfinishable like Creation itself. The passage of time altered her later as well, she not only stayed alive after Leonardo died, but she changed. This face, this look flooded me and comforted me. The smile was present not only around her lips, but also in her eyes, on her whole face; but for a moment it seemed as if, in the right corner of her lips, the smile looked more indulgent. The smile that was not for me. As if she were brooding over the question why this man is working on this painting so much. Because the painting, according to the custom of the times, was a commissioned piece at the start. Leonardo spent another three years in

Florence between 1503 and 1506. His major work there were the frescoes of the Battle of Anghiar. It was only as something additional that he was working on the portrait of this woman. And he never finished it. Leonardo was over fifty, the woman over thirty.

Leonardo was then the greatest master not only of Italy but of his whole age as such. There was something extraordinary in his appearance. He was a quiet man, a person of aristocratic mien; with a penchant for criticism rather than innovation. He was meditative rather than creative, inclined to be sceptical rather than excited by ideas. What did he find in this woman portrait? Something that he did not find in his technical research, architectural and mechanical structures or in any other experiments. The timeless moment of life and beauty. This is what he wanted to carry to perfection as far as his circumstances permitted. It meant only three years. It is certain that during this period the woman's presence was unlikely to have been frequent and, in Leonardo's case, it was far from being a necessary condition for work.

Now I am looking at the painting here in my attic in Zárda utca, since that autumn evening in Tihany she has been my regular afternoon guest. I have a three-fourth size reproduction of the painting in a narrow golden frame on dark moss-green velvet which is also framed under glass. The effect and charm of the painting fill my small workroom which has a high, beautiful ceiling, carved roof-beams—and my six slender windows are not common either. In the late afternoon dusk, casting long shadows, the morning work in progress of my activity as a sculptor can hardly be seen, nor can the tools and the inevitable dust. The picture is turned to the wall during the day, I could not work in front of her, just as I could not work listening to the music of great masters either. The afternoon brings the time when my guest can turn to me with her indulgent smile and its total tranquillity. I cannot describe her magic, I can only try to tell what I see. And I start with what cannot be seen.

The act of painting cannot be seen. Not because of the smooth surface usual in its time, but because every part of it is full of warmth and life. The conception and the composition of the painting are not different from what was usual at the time either. A portrait with a landscape background. But what Leonardo made of it! He presented what he saw in this woman together with what he had inside himself. The painting is very high with the sitting figure of the woman almost pressed into it. The figure is framed by the well-known Leonardo-triangle which is closed by the two forearms and the gently, directly, beautifully painted hands. He lets only enough architecture be visible to separate what is to open up behind the figure from the landscape. They are two worlds. One of them is the real Mona Lisa—La Gioconda, the woman of the commissioned painting. The other is the natural world expressing the universe as well. The landscape, while containing mystical and fantastic elements, is still familiar. I gaze at the winding river on the right with small children playing in its shallow, yellow clayey-sandy bed; the three-span, small bridge is also an old acquaintance—how many times the wanderer must have walked over that three-span bridge over the winding river, in the Arno valley. High mountains rise above the groves and low hills of Tuscany where the Arno winds its way to the sea. In the painting they are all present in a transfigured manner. The sea is only suggested, together with the lights illuminating the background hills belonging to a different crystalline order as they are shining down from the greenish-yellow sky in a spring or autumn sunset. He painted everything that he was searching for in his drawings and in his notes looking for a system of mountains into this landscape. His meditative, searching nature as well produced a synthesis in the painting of this landscape. He very likely would have

gone on working on it, more lines could be added, changes could be made for ever, and when someone was in the possession of this ability, and Leonardo certainly was, why shouldn't he have used it? The figure of the woman has the famous "sfumata chiaroscure" of Leonardo's, something that can be translated as "semi-shadow", but this does not really express the Italian term, just as "dolce" in music is not "sweet". That barely sensed tremor of colour or shade that all the same dominates the whole picture is magnificently rich in all its details.

The tranquil face, expressing calm peace, is divided in the middle by the gently flowing, freely let down and symmetrically parted hair. It is soft, dark-brown, covered by a thin, transparent black veil coming down from the gentle, clear forehead. It is almost like the one Italian women wear even today, when going to mass. Only the curls reaching the breasts are left completely free. Her dress is not ornamented. There is some embroidery in the trimming of that dress with its deep cut reaching down to the breasts and on the inextricably dense folds, but it is hardly visible and very modest. The sleeves are wrinkled into dense, sharp folds, it seems to be yellow-brown silk—and the two hands, resting on each other, are a vision of the glorified beauty of a woman's hands. Thick and heavy hair flows over her left shoulder, on the right a scarf dominates, closing a semi-arch in the wide-arch triangular composition.

Is that all that can be found in this masterpiece? No! The depths of the painting hide much more. It is in vain that I know every corner, every rock of this painting, I vainly wander in its winding bays or stop to stand on the small stone bridge—it seems as if I could see the hair, robe or scarf of the sitting figure of the woman. I vainly follow the magically beautiful folds of the silk sleeves, her womanly breasts, her hair. There is more in this painting, much more. The emotional reflection is so intensive that it makes the hour, the afternoon, solemn by its presence. Her charmed magic with its indescribable softness looks down at... whom? At Leonardo. Her smile is not directed at us, it is as if I were robbing her. This look, this smile—which became so indulgent in three years—was the personal, intimate world the two of them shared which bequeathed the portrait of the woman to us. A single, unique fact never to happen again. No matter if millions of cars do not sound their horns. The chapel of Creation and of the Last Judgement is loud with noise. Only in this painting there is silence.

What does this painting, Mona Lisa's presence mean to me in my afternoon hours? It means stillness, calmness. The sounds of the outer world fade away and become alien; the branches of trees melt into the dark sky, and here in the chiaroscuro of long shadows and tiny little flashes of light, in the soft quietness, she is reflecting harmony, pureness, exquisite spirit with her face smiling for another man. Even like this, indirectly. The situation of the original painting became trivial, but after closing-time, one day, I would love to sneak in, to meet once again what cannot be described.

MIKLÓS BORSOS

THE JENŐ MEDVECZKY MEMORIAL EXHIBITION

The Hungarian National Gallery presented a retrospective of the painter Jenő Medveczky, who died in 1969, in its series of exhibitions of prominent twentieth-century Hungarian painters. 120 paintings and 250 drawings were shown by this artist of great individuality who rarely appeared before the public during the last two decades.

Medveczky was born in 1902. He studied at the College of Art under János Vaszary. Artistic success first came his way in the second half of the twenties. In 1927 he won the Travel Scholarship of the Szinyei Society and in 1930 the Szinyei Award. These awards enabled him to continue his studies in Paris and Rome.

He drew attention to his work in 1929 with his Neo-Classicist pictures, which were in harmony with a popular trend in that period. He painted still-lifes and landscapes, as well a vast fresco-like compositions. In these pictures the artist's calm, constructive temperament connected spatial presentation, laying emphasis on linear perspective, with the relief-like representation of bodies.

In the late twenties and the early thirties a whole score of gifted young artists lived at the *Collegium Hungaricum* in Rome as scholarship-holders at the same time as Medveczky. Some of them were almost untouched by the artistic impressions they gained there, and they continued on their own way. With others, becoming acquainted with the Italian old masters and with the *Novecento* was the turning-point in their careers, or, at least, as in Medveczky's case, it reinforced their earlier endeavours and became a decisive experience. On their return, the former scholarship-holders presented their works painted in Rome, and largely influenced by the *Novecento*, at group exhibitions, and they became known as the "Roman School". Medveczky protested in vain against the appellation in a lecture in 1944, by then it was too late: "They call me a Neo-Classicist and a Roman," he said. "Together—just like that, although I actually spent but two months in Rome. It was before my stay in Rome and not afterwards that I had been engaged in Classicism from an art historical point of view. I believe in the redeeming strength of forms and this is how I work, provided I can be my own man. I am a Classicist in this sense, and it is hard for me not to enliven this pattern and make it easier to understand."

He soon got over the direct influence of the *Novecento;* he kept, however, all his life to one of its stylistic characteristics, i.e. the omission or minimizing of the form-building shade. Indeed, in 1932 it seemed that he abandoned his former classicizing, monumental pictures. In that year he exhibited a series of compositions which were abstract even in their titles—Atmospheric Dynamics, Structural Mountains, Horizontal Forms. He analysed problems of form in these. Though this period did not last long, it came at the right moment because the problems of the French avantgarde effectively counterbalanced the one-sided influence of Novecentist Classicism. In the years that followed, the principles of form derived from the Italian old masters, medieval panel paintings and Michelangelo, intertwined in Medveczky's art with a restrained application of the Cubist analyses of space and plane. He produced many large-scale compositions at this time on church and lay commissions. Medveczky painted the decorations of the Hungarian Pavilion at the Paris World Exhibition in 1937, under the title "The Fertility of the Hungarian Soil", and later the panel paintings of the Milan Triennial. His activity was rewarded by the most important art awards of the period.

After 1945 he lived in Pécs for a year and a half, and that is where he held his first independent exhibition. After a lengthy voluntary retirement he became active again in the 1960s. He gave a one-man show in 1962, and then devoted all his energies to the painting of the frontal fresco of the National Gallery, and to the illustration of the *Iliad*. The latter was shown at a posthumous exhibition in 1969. He was awarded the Munkácsy Prize for his work.

Medveczky preserved, even in the second half of his career, his opposition to the Impressionist point of view, the insistence on form creating that he inherited from the classics. He abandoned, however, the sombre style of his *Consolation*, painted in 1940, and found new artistic forms to give expression to his love of life. He started out from direct experience in his pictures but created a new mythology out of them. In his paintings the young women became the Sisters Three, and the horses of Nagymaros turned into the thoroughbreds of Roman reliefs. Accordingly, his interpretation is cool, ethereal; he knows no passion, only the rational approach. His unmixed colours, clearer, more disciplined than reality, are framed by strong contours, and set in the *a priori* order of a carefully weighed composition. "I paint in an inverse order," the artist once declared. "Instead of attempting to create illusionist images of movement, I turn abstract structures into Nature. I am not afraid of simplicity, that is why I have worked out my method of mapping out what I want to paint on the plane with patches of colour. For this I need expressive spatial formations and colours that play an identical role."

Medveczky's elegant, spiritual art reached its apex and full justification on the frontal fresco of the *Műcsarnok* Gallery in Budapest. The old classicizing fresco painted by Lajos Deák Ébner at the end of the last century on the occasion of Hungary's millennial anniversary mostly perished during the war. Medveczky adapted himself to the remaining fragments and the building itself in creating the new fresco. Apollo, accompanied by the Muses, appears on the façade as an *ephebos*, uniting antique and modern traits. The painter avoided in a masterly way the pitfalls in the theme, he painted the classic motif without any archaizing stiltedness, or mannerism. The colours and lines, which in his other paintings are surrounded by the coolness of studio speculation, are here perfectly in place.

He completed his *Iliad* series in the last months of his life. He worked on it for about fifteen years and drew countless preliminary studies for its 49 pages. The black and white wash-drawings are characterized by a profound knowledge of the text and an inspired recreation of the world of Homer. The muscular warriors, beautiful goddesses, the fine arms, chariots and ships that appear in his drawings remind one of the forms of Greek vases. The gliding lines against the black and white background, the stylized balance of the movements are reminiscent of the style of drawing popular in the 20s and 30s, whose most successful examples are Picasso's illustrations of Ovid. Medveczky, however, did not approach the classic prefigurations from the side of light virtuosity but rather from that of complex composition, movements that balance each other, thus often burdening the classic purity and serenity with an intellectual elaborateness. His lines, therefore, are sometimes rigid and his patches rather calculated, reflecting solitude and isolation. This was the price he had to pay for seeking the laws of the classics in our age of speed.

ZOLTÁN NAGY

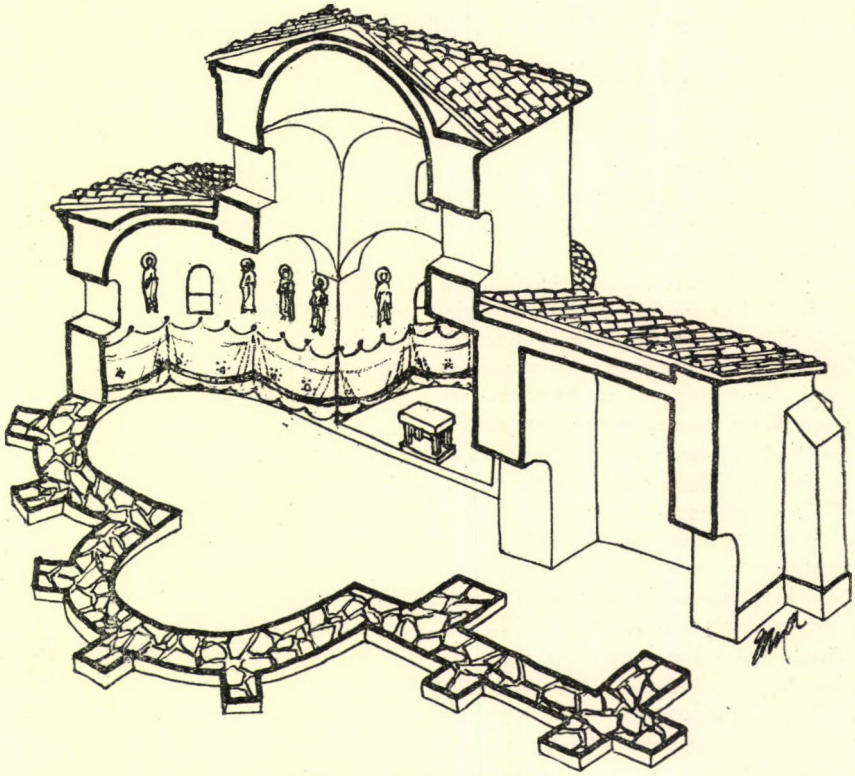
THE SURVIVAL OF AN EARLY CHRISTIAN CHAPEL AT PÉCS

The readers of this journal are already acquainted with the large scale archeological researches that have been carried out in the last fifteen or twenty years at Pécs, once the ancient Roman Sopianae. Since our last account *(The N.H.Q. 39)*, the archeologists have completed their evaluation of the material and it throws an entirely new light on the Roman town and the trefoiled chapel which figured dominantly in its cemetery. We believe that a detailed presentation of this small building deserves some attention, as its architectural history has bearings on one of the most stimulating questions of modern Hungarian—and even international—archeological research, namely, the fate of towns, their inhabitants and buildings after the fall of the Roman Empire, and the life that evolved during the stormy period of the Great Migration of the Peoples. To place this Early Christian chapel into the context of its setting both in time and place, we have to recall the major events in the history of Sopianae.

Sopianae is mentioned in a Roman road itinerary as lying in the angle formed by the Danube and the Dráva rivers. It was situated where the important strategic and commercial routes connecting Byzantium and Augusta Treverorum, the eastern and western parts of the ancient Roman Empire met in Pannonia. On the basis of archeological finds, cemetery constructions and burial vaults, the city was identified with the Roman ruins dug up in Pécs, and even named as Sopianae, in a book published as early as 1780. The Roman town was situated under the Inner City of modern Pécs. Its centre was found in 1903–1904 during the construction of the big Post Office Building. Later, in the course of our excavations between 1961 and 1969, the remnants of large buildings suggesting a one-time urban centre were unearthed. The cemeteries stretched to the north and east of the town, and they climbed up as far as the site of the present Cathedral at the top of the hill. The development of the Roman town probably took place in the first half of the second century A.D., and it was destroyed during a hostile assault at the time of the Marcomann Samite wars which began around 167 A.D., Sopianae underwent reconstruction after 293 when it was made the administrative and proconsular seat of Valeria, one of the four parts of the Province of Pannonia which was divided under the Emperor Diocletian. Unusual building activity sprang up in this period in the city, and the rich store of finds indicates the prosperity of the local population during the fourth century.

Several inscribed relics which were parts of shrines devoted to Roman divinities have been excavated from the site of the city. Altar-stones of the gods of the Eastern religions have also been excavated. Some paying tribute to the Sun-god Sol and to Mithras, the Persian god of light, can still be clearly distinguished. Christianity, which was one of the eastern religions, became established in the city during the early fourth century. The large-scale spread of Christianity started in Pannonia under the Emperor Constantine the Great, who permitted Christians to practise their religion freely. By the middle of the fourth century there was already a fairly large Early Christian population in Sopianae.

By the second half and last third of the fourth century ornate Early Christian tombs were erected in the Early Christian cemetery in the neighbourhood of the present Cathedral, north of the city. Several of these burial constructions were decorated with biblical scenes modelled on the catacombs of Rome—probably by itinerant painters arriving in Pannonia from Italia and using pattern books from Rome.



Artist's reconstruction of the Pécs chapel

The cemetery buildings discovered in Sopianae include two Early Christian chapels. One of these is the seven-apse edifice of almost basilica size closely resembling the St. Gereon Basilica of Cologne, which has nine apses. The other one is the smaller Early Christian chapel which is the subject of our detailed discussion.

This smaller chapel consisted of a small oblong-shaped parvis, and the shrine opening from it, which was adjoined by an apse to the north, west and east. This is why we call this cemetery chapel a three-apse chapel—*cella trichora*. The axis of the building runs approximately in the north–south direction. The parvis was 430 by 283 cm in size, and the gate opened to the south. A walled-in gate can be distinguished between the chapel and the actual cell. This was once the entrance gate to the chapel proper whose length is 5.20 and width 4.60 m. The average thickness of the walls is 100 cm. There are the remnants of buttresses on the exterior of the building, suggesting *a)* that these walls must have been rather high, and *b)* that the central area of the chapel must have had a cupola over it.

The edifice has come down to us in a rather poor state of preservation. The height of the walls still standing is 1.30 m. The eastern apse is cut through by a high medieval wall, and the western apse is completely missing having been destroyed during the construction of the episcopal palace.

The date of building can be reliably fixed at the last third of the fourth century. During the excavation of the chapel in 1922, a grave was found under the floor of the

atrium. Another tomb later came to light in 1955. The floor of the eastern apse of the shrine is one step higher than the rest of the flooring, and on this step rests a huge oblong-shaped stone slab which, according to all the archeologists interested in the chapel, was most probably the base of the one-time altar, which thus stood in the eastern apse.

Two layers of murals are discernible on the badly damaged walls of the chapel. The lower layer consisted of black and white stripes, and can be made out only here and there. This black-and-white painting was done in the second half of the fourth century, at the time of the building of the chapel, and it must have been the base decoration for the murals.

In the north and east apse and close to the gate that admits one into the chapel, a layer of mortar was found on top of the first layer of murals, while the second layer of murals is plastered over by mortar of a poorer more crumbling quality, obviously mixed with some vegetable matter.

Although no thorough investigations had been made to date, some researchers had always held that the two layers of paintings originated from different periods. Recently the murals were subjected to penetrating chemical and physical analyses by Professor György Duma, Imre Lengyel, M.D., Dr. József Szava, and István Skofflek. It was found that the top layer contained grains of barley and large quantities of plant fragments from the grass family. It was likewise observed that the relative lime and sand contents of the two layers of mortar were significantly different. Thus both organic and inorganic chemical analyses proved that the materials used in the two strata were basically different. All this provided evidence for the earlier supposition that the two layers of murals were from two distinct periods, fairly remote from one another in time.

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The next question that arose in connection with the upper layer of plaster was where to look for the origin of the practice of mixing vegetable seeds and fibres into mortar, to provide a base for murals. Wall painting fragments attributable to the 11th century from the Parecclesion chapel of the Chora monastery (Kariye Camii) in Istambul also contain matter from wheat and barley ears, and stems, moreover the ratio of lime and sand in the composition of the mortar also tallies with the proportions found in the later layer of plaster on the Pécs chapel walls. S. Stawiczki, a Polish authority, remarks in an article on the techniques used in Byzantine Russian fresco painting that Balkan masters liked to use organic materials, straw, grass and even pig bristles in mortar. A 16th century handbook containing the formulae used by ancient Russian masters suggests that the lime paste used for the mural base should have an admixture of crushed birch bark, flour and barley, and this enriched paste should be cooked to provide a strong adhesive. The barley and dry grass contained in the second mural layer of the *cella trichora* at Pécs points to the ancient Byzantine practice.

Some authorities treating the second layer of murals of the Early Christian chapel at Pécs date this stratum from the middle of the ninth century, while others suggest that it is probably more accurate to date it as early 11th century. On the basis of the above analyses and the examination of some of the motifs in the murals, we believe we have been able to date this second layer of painting more accurately.

What has remained of the second layer of murals, and how can we reconstruct the interior decoration of the chapel as a whole on the basis of the fragments which have come down to us?

As was mentioned earlier, the walls above the flooring are 130 cm high and at their base are painted a curtain pattern closed with zig-zag lines. This motif was a favourite decoration for late Roman and early Byzan-

tine church interiors and continued to be so for centuries. It is still in evidence in the St. Maria Antiqua and the St. Clementine cathedrals in Rome, and also in a number of other places. The chapel at Pécs still bears the bottom part of this curtain pattern, with a garland design contoured by black arched lines. The top contour is a double line, and in the stripe between there is an ornamental design which resembles Arab Cufic characters. The draperies of the curtain above are indicated by yellowish-red and green stripes, with patches circled with black dots and leaves resembling triangular spearheads. The lower part of the curtain closes in an arc, with dark-grey or light-crimson stripes suggesting the contour.

The top part of the curtain pattern has perished. The archeologists conducting the excavations of 1922 already suspected that —as at the St. Maria Antiqua and in the St. Clementine cathedrals in Rome—the chapel walls at Pécs also bore a line of standing saints above the curtain pattern. When a re-examination was made recently of the material produced by the digs of 1922, it was found that some of the mural fragments revealed parts of a face, showing a left eye, with strongly marked brown-toned eyebrows. Moreover, a fragment with the ring- and little-fingers of a right hand also came to light. Other pieces included golden fragments of the halo glorifying the heads of saints, and several fragments of drapery, one of the latter depicting a fibula, a pin for holding together the folds of drapery. A piece of the wall bearing some Greek inscription was also found (according to the report from 1922 there were at that time two fragments of this kind, but apparently one of them was subsequently lost). From this fragment we expect to be able to determine the name of one of the standing saints, for it was the custom to write the names of the figures beside them.

Thus these fragments found at the Pécs chapel clearly suggest that a gallery of standing saints was painted above the curtain pattern. That is another reason, as was suggested in the introduction, that the outside buttresses indicate that, though the building was far from extensive it must have been high, for even if we suppose the figures above the curtain design to be only human-sized, the height of the little chapel must have been over four metres.

This figures again suggest that we have to look for the origin of the murals in Byzantine-Greek fesco art, as was indicated by the composition of the mortar as well.

To determine the age of the curtain pattern, we have to start with the ornamental motifs deriving from Arab Cufic writing, and find from where they could have originated and when these ornamental motifs could have been applied to the Pécs Chapel.

What is called Cufic, a forceful, lapidary form of the Arabic alphabet, appeared at the end of the seventh century A.D., and was used in inscriptions for monuments, for example, the quotations from the Koran on mosque walls, and also for copying Koran manuscripts. The spread of Cufic writing in Southern Europe was closely connected with the expansion of Arab influence, and its spread in to Greece, from where we derive the Pécs motif, and it is usually connected with the occupation of the Island of Crete by the arabs in 827. Towards the end of the ninth century and the beginning of the tenth century the Arab conquerors reached Thessalonica, one of the centres of Christianity in Greece. It was not until the second part of the tenth century, in 961, that the Byzantine Emperor Nikephoros Phokas, was able to recapture Crete. In about 1000 A.D. Arab masters working in Athens left some genuine Arabic inscriptions, but later these inscriptions became merely decorative elements used by the Greek masters for ornamental design to embellish the exteriors and interiors of churches. The use of the Cufic designs for ornamental purposes spread from Athens, its centre, to Central and Northern Greece, where it flourished probably in the 11th and 12th centuries. The application of

this motif cannot be found before the 11th century even in Greece, which was in direct contact with Arabic culture. This makes it most unlikely that the mural decorated with Cufic motifs in the Pécs chapel originates from the mid 9th century. The decorative motif obviously spread to Western Europe from Spain or Southern Italy. We suppose the route of the Pécs motif to have come from the south through Greece and Macedonia.

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According to the evidence of historical sources, the Hungarians who made their home in the Danube basin, were in close contact with the Byzantine Empire, with Greek and Byzantine culture. As Gyula Moravcsik suggested, two Hungarian chieftains, Bulcsu, and Gyula (Julius) of Transylvania were baptised in Byzantium as early as the middle of the tenth century. At this time even a bishop was sent to Hungary from Byzantium, probably to take charge of the converted. Since, however, Pécs was outside the radius of both Bulcsu's and Gyula's authority, conversion did not begin in this area, and so this period has to be excluded from among the probable dates when the motif could have been introduced here. Moreover, this period, when Crete was recaptured from the Arabs (961), was much too early and in fact preceded the spread of Cufic script even in Greece.

The reign of St. Stephen (1000–1038) was the next period in the development of close relations between the Byzantine Empire and Hungary. It was again Gyula Moravcsik who pointed out the fact that Stephen's son, Prince Imre married a Byzantine princess around 1015, and that the founding of the Veszprém Valley Nunnery at Veszprém was in all probability connected with this event. Under Stephen a number of Greek monasteries were founded in Hungary (Csanád, Tihany, Visegrád, etc.). At a time when direct contact was established between the Hungarian ruling dynasty and the imperial family of Byzantium, the renovation of the *Cella Trichorum* and its decoration with the curtain motif of Cufic symbols cannot be ruled out. In our opinion, however, even this period was too early, for in this case the Cufic design would have spread to Northern Pannonia, almost at the same time as it spread in Athens, a city which was in direct contact with Arabic culture.

In the eleventh century, under Kings Andrew I (1046–1060), Géza I (1074–1077) and St. Ladislas (1077–1095), relations were certainly very close between the Hungarian royal house and the court in Byzantium: King St. Ladislas's daughter, Irene, married the heir to the throne of Byzantium and, in fact, as wife to Emperor Ioannes Comnenos she became Byzantine Empress in 1118. In the last third of the 12th century from 1173–1196, while Béla III occupied the throne, Hungarian–Byzantine relations again became very close. Béla had been educated in Byzantium and for a while had aspired to the imperial throne. In fact, when he returned to Hungary, he was crowned by the Archbishop of Kalocsa instead of the Archbishop of Esztergom who should have officiated at the ceremony, for the latter refused to crown the "Greek Béla" king of Hungary. At the same time, however, the reign of Béla III marked a turning point in Hungarian–Byzantine relations, for Béla definitely resisted the expansionist ambitions of the Byzantine Empire. After the death of his first queen, Agnes of Chatillon (Anna) in 1186, Béla married a Western princess, Margaret Capet, daughter of King Louis VII of France. Already in 1179 he had established the Cistercian Order in Hungary, and so this date can be regarded as at least the symbolic beginning of the decline of the Greek monasteries in Hungary. In our opinion King Béla III's reign towards the end of the 12th century is the latest date when the mural motif deriving from Byzantine-Greek culture could have been introduced to Hungary.

But to what event could we definitely link the refurbishing and redecoration of the Early Christian chapel at Pécs?

Most interestingly, the first mention that has come down to us of the Pécs Cathedral is not from the period of St. Stephen when the Archbishopric of Pécs was founded, but from one of the chronicles dated from 1064. when the Cathedral and the large buildings in its vicinity were destroyed by a serious fire. According to the account of the chronicler even the bells fell from the cathedral belfry in this conflagration. It is reasonable to suppose then that the cathedral and the buildings in its neighbourhood—including the small Early Christian chapel lying at the foot of the western wall of the Cathedral —were rebuilt after the fire, in the last third of the 11th century or in the early 12th. Most likely the little chapel was damaged during the fire and needed renovation. Thus, in our opinion, the decoration of the small Early Christian chapel is most likely to have taken place simultaneously with the reconstruction of the Cathedral, in the last third of the eleventh century, or possibly in the first half of the twelfth and this was when the curtain motif decorated with the Arabic Cufic script was applied to the wall as an ornamental element.

Thus going back to our original premise, we can state that the Early Christian chapel built in the last third of the fourth century A.D. survived, if not undamaged, the ravages of the Migration of the Peoples up to the Hungarian Conquest, and was again used at the end of the eleventh century or at the beginning of the twelfth century following the burning of the Cathedral of Pécs in 1064. This means that the little cemetery chapel from Ancient Roman times at Pécs was revived again after some seven or eight hundred years of existence. Our excavations in 1955 supplied some data concerning the time of its destruction, too: this edifice of such historical interest disappeared in the second half of the 16th century during the Turkish occupation of Hungary.

FERENC FÜLEP

JAPANESE ART IN HUNGARY

Exhibition in The Hopp Ferenc Museum of East-Asian Art

The foundation of the East-Asian Museum of Art in Budapest is connected with the name of Ferenc Hopp. He came to Pest in the 1830s, as an optician's apprentice, attended a school of commerce and after graduating continued his studies in Vienna and New York. He became acquainted with the Japanese in New York in 1858, when he had occasion to see the ceremonial entry of the first Japanese embassy. In 1861 Hopp came back to Hungary and became an associate of Calderoni's, a well-known firm of opticians in Pest. Later he bought the firm. His expertise and hard work made him rich and highly respected in commercial circles. He read a great deal: his favourites were travel books. Already as a young man he had travelled widely in Europe, Scandinavia and Africa, and later he travelled round the world five times. He visited the Far East on several occasions. He was a great admirer of Japanese, Chinese and Indian monuments. The beauties of nature in Japan made an especially strong impression on him. The overwhelming part of his collection was purchased on these trips.

At first he only brought back souvenirs for his friends; later everything that could be of interest in Hungary concerning the

newly discovered East: minerals, plants, animals. A great part of this he donated immediately to the National Museum. His real passion was, however, the collection of works of art. Up to his last trip round the world—the material of which unfortunately could not be brought back to Hungary because of the outbreak of the First World War—he had built up a collection of 4,100 items, mostly of East-Asian works of art.

The Chinese carvings and snuff boxes of jade and other semi-precious stones, and the *cloisonné* enamels and *sang-de-boeuf* glazed porcelains are, from the artistic point of view, important parts of his collection. Hopp's favourites were, however, the works of Japanese applied art. He especially loved Japanese lacquer works, with their infinite variety of colours and patterns, *inro*-s, ivory carvings *(netsuke, okimono)*, old samurai swords and their accessories: the *tsuba*-s and *kozuka*-s artistically inlaid with gold and silver. A painted and gilded building ornament with a Buddhist theme is today in the Museum's library: its style reminds one of the famous Tokugawa temple in Nikko. Hopp kept his collection in his villa in Andrássy Avenue: its fame spread quickly, especially because of the small Japanese garden built in its courtyard with Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Indian stone monuments.

The East-Asian Museum

In his first will Hopp bequeathed his collection to the Museum of Fine Arts and to the Ethnographic Museum. But in 1919, at the time of the Hungarian Republic of Councils, the idea arose of establishing an East-Asian Museum in Budapest and Ferenc Hopp offered both his collection and his villa for this purpose. Consequently he changed his will and bequeathed everything to the Hungarian State, requesting that an East-Asian Museum should be established in his house which should also function as an East-Asian scientific institute. Accordingly his bequest became the basis for the East-Asian Museum of Art. The curator of the new Museum was Zoltán Felvinczi Takáts, who had been working in the Eastern Department of the Museum of Fine Arts and who had been Hopp's friend. It is due to his activities that, despite many difficulties, the original private collection developed into a real museum in the period between the two World Wars. Several collections and donations were transferred from the Museum of Applied Arts to the East-Asian Museum: Attila Szemere's collection of Japanese combs and important works of art and from India, Tibet and Nepal donated by Imre Schwaiger and from India by Tivadar Duka. In 1937 Jenő Zichy's Caucasian and South Siberian archaeological collection was transferred from the National Museum and in the 1950s Professor Vince Wartha's large collection of Japanese and Chinese ceramics and Ottó Fettick's Japanese art objects were also given to the East-Asian Museum. Zoltán Felvinczi Takáts and Tibor Horváth, the second director of the museum, who died in 1972, had both visited the Far East for lengthy periods of study and both enriched the museum with their own collections—Japanese, Chinese and Korean aquatint paintings, ceramics and small bronzes.

At present the Museum's collection consists of about 20,000 items: one-third of these are Japanese. Similarly to other Western collections, the overwhelming part of the objects are from the Tokugawa and Meiji epoch but there are also objects from the Kamakura and even from the Nara epoch. Since 1923 the Museum has organized over fifty Asian art exhibitions. In recent years three large exhibitions were organized where the finest Japanese items of the Museum were put on show. In 1967–68 art the of the Edo epoch (1603–1868), in the jubilee exhibition in 1969 pre-seventeenth century material (mainly Buddhist sculptures, including the dry lacquer Shaka Nyorai statue

and kakemonos), from the 8th century (Nara epoch), and quite recently works of fine art and applied art from the Meiji epoch (1868–1912).

Exhibition of Works of Art of the Meiji Epoch

The historical and critical evaluation of the art of the Meiji epoch, which brought decisive changes from the point of view of the development of modern Japan, has begun only recently. Beside becoming acquainted with Western styles and new techniques—such as oil painting, perspective and anatomy in art—artistic life became livelier during this period. A great part was played in this by the establishment of academies and art associations and of the many exhibition held.

Some of the traditional scroll paintings shown at the exhibition represent a new trend in their concept or in their way of handling old Japanese history. An outstanding example is the mythological painting of Kobayashi Kiyochika (1847–1915), the famous wood-engraver from Kyoto, which represents Kuni no Tokotachi no Mikoto, one of the three legendary primeval gods. Another fine work is Hirai Baisen's (born 1888) long horizontal scroll painting "The Downfall of the Heike Family". The artist's two original sketches prepared for the painting and his sketchbook are also exhibited. Araki Kampo's (1831–1915) very decorative and colourful silk painting, a peacock, won a silver medal at the Paris World Fair in 1900.

The largest part of the exhibition consists of objects of applied art. Most of these items are porcelains and ceramics. They can be divided into three categories: the later products of Arita, Satsuma and Kutani, already known in the Edo epoch; pieces by Kanazawa, Makuzu and Kyoto, produced aorund the turn of the century, and tea-sets and dinner-services produced with modern equipment for Western export.

The ivory and wood-plastics also show a certain duality of character. Besides traditional, Buddhist themes, such as a tender *okimono* depiciting a Kannon, there are also new themes and new styles. These include Yonehara Unkai's wood-carving, a statuette of a small boy with a young bird in his hat. Another exquisite piece is Okada's finely carved ivory bear.

The silks to be seen at the exhibition were bought by the Museum of Applied Arts at the Vienna World Fair in 1873. Besides the wood-engravings and lacquer objects, the Japanese silks created the greatest impression in Western countries and the silk-weaving workshops of the time, came up to every expectation. These silk brocades are not only made with technical perfection, they also show modern Japanese patterns that freed themselves from Chinese influence.

The lacquer works are more conservative both in technique and ornamentation but they also show some new hues and patterns. A very interesting piece is Miura Kenya's small *inro*, where the artist used as an ornament a water-bird carved in porcelain and set on a wooden base.

The *cloisonné* enamel vases offer a good illustration of the differences of these ornaments and colour schemes in China and in Japan: Japanese artists replaced the traditional Chinese blue backgrounds and patterns with a more nuanced colour scheme, and instead of geometrical patterns they applied more figurative ornaments. The *cloisonné* enamel vase with the snow-covered prune flowers was awarded a gold medal at the Paris World Fair of 1900.

Among the metal works mention should be made of the gold-inlaid iron dishes and commode made by Komai, a famous master who worked in Kyoto at the end of the nineteenth century.

Several small bronze plastics—*kotons*—a woman playing, a boy fishing, a girl reading, show both in their choice of topics and in their style the impact of European sculpture around the turn of the century.

LÁSZLÓ FERENCZY

THEATRE AND FILM

PETŐFI '73

A film by Ferenc Kardos

The Hungarian War of Independence of 1848–49 against the Hapsburgs also caused England some consternation, though not for long. Foreign Secretary Palmerston said in Parliament that Hungary's independence was a public disaster. And when the Russian ambassador in London announced that the Tsar had decided to send an army of 190,000 under the command of Prince Pashkievich to help the Hapsburgs against the Hungarian army fighing for the country's independence, Palmerston's only comment was: Make short work of it. In the diplomatic chess game—as seen from London—the Habsburg empire was an indispensable and doubly threatened bastion. The Vienna revolution had compelled the ruler and his all-powerful minister, Metternich, to flee; the Austrian empire, without outside help, would have collapsed like a house of cards. But the great powers succeeded in more or less maintaining the equilibrium on the chessboard of Europe until the First World War: thus the Hungarian War of Independence failed. The commander-in-chief surrendered at Világos before the enemy's numerical superiority. Kossuth, its political leader, emigrated. Thirteen of its generals were hanged by the Austrian general, Haynau, and Sándor Petőfi, the great poet of the revolution, fell in one of the last battles.

Petőfi was also one of the greatest lyrical poets of Hungarian literature. He was twenty-six when he died; his short career was a dazzling storm, and he himself was the very flame of revolutionary fire. He was the only one who—amidst all the tactical manoeuvring—consistently and without concessions upheld the aims of the bourgeois-plebeian revolution. He considered the War of Independence as the first and vital step in winning the people's freedom for the revolutionary transformation. This Saint-Justian exaltation, consistency, perspicacity and his soaring poetic vision made it impossible for him to wage the tactical manipulations required by the struggle. He stood alone, a towering figure, the symbol of revolution, not to be buried under the ruins of the War of Independence but to rise from history as a legendary figure in the consciousness of his people.

On the 150th anniversary of his death a film was made about Petőfi. The historical substance of the film is the last year and a half in Petőfi's brief, tempestuous life. Its real theme, however, is how the youth of today regard the poet. Ferenc Kardos, himself a young director, invited 600 pupils to a *Gimnázium* in Pápa (a town in West Hungary) once attended by Petőfi, and now bearing his name, to act out the dramatic turning-points in the major historical events. He wanted them to show by words and deeds, by their passion and sincerity what they had gained from Petőfi's poetry. He wanted to discover what this revolutionary lyricism meant for young

people today, what they thought and felt, beyond that learned in school, about Petőfi's ideas and the example of his life. Thus the interior structure of this film in colour might be defined as a psychodrama. Several hundred pupils prepare for performing a historical play within the framework of a school fête and they share out the fatal roles of the national drama of the War of Independence. They must show how they feel through the sensitivity and ardour of their acting, and react also in words to the historical conflicts as these are acted out in the dramatic situations. Naturally, they act without costumes, with sets made by themselves, with the spontaneous gestures that are characteristic of their age.

Their acting reveals more of their attitude than their words. The most exciting feature of the film is the way in which the Petőfi image created by their performance comes to life, shedding the empty theatricality and half-hearted pathos forced on it by national classicism. These youths are instinctively at home in the climate of revolution, they view even the past in terms of the contemporary popular revolutions, bringing the decorative elements of the latter—the posters and leaflets of the Paris student demonstrations of 1968, Che Guevara's picture—into the scenes depicting historical events from the last century. One is captivated by the adolescent gusto, playfulness, charm and youthful exhibitionism with which they shape —at least as regards outward appearances— history and its heroes in their own image; the desire for action and self-expression which makes them so susceptible to revolutionary romanticism.

Had the director not set himself an aim beyond the many-coloured, vivid representation of this youthful charm and enthusiasm, if only a school-play were involved, one could content oneself with those touching moments when the pupils try to harmonize their charming amateurish clumsiness with the weighty historical personages they had to portray, showing infinite tact in trying to act these figures with the necessary solemnity. In this case one could unreservedly praise this film, expressing one's pleasure at this cheerful-serious play, which evokes the perfume of spring, directed by Kardos with empathy, pictorial imagination and good rhythm. But the film aroused the expectation of original and exciting ideas worthy of the spectacle it offers.

The spectacle, however, though it often carries a meaning in itself, eventually overshadows the idea lurking behind it. The anachronistic mixing of period characteristics, such as decorations, though symbolic, nonetheless fails to transcend the level of good or less good school-boy pranks. The transgression of time failed to bring about a deep enough catharsis in these young people that would act as a revelation for the audience. They step to and fro between the present and the past too lightly, according to the requirements of the scenes to be filmed: sometimes performing a historical tableau, at other times preparing in the present for a forthcoming historical scene, their problems, however, mainly concern the props. The setting of the play is the same for the present and the past: the ancient building of the school and its surroundings: maize fields, sunflowers, open woodland with undergrowth. This is the scene of the dramatic episodes in Petőfi's life and also of the historical events of the War of Independence. This is also where the everyday life of the pupils takes place. The final words of a scene taking place in the present still echo in the next historical tableau and vice versa: the poet's powerful voice resounds in the present. One might expect that under the psychodramatic impact of the play the teenagers would begin to seethe with reflections. There is a lot to explain and to interpret: the revolution of youth in March 1848, triggered off by the news of the uprising by the people of Vienna, the poet's defeat at the first Parliamentary elections, the wavering of the editors of his own paper fearful of the consequences of the revolu-

tion; Petőfi's exclusion from the Debrecen National Assembly which dethroned the Hapsburgs, and his joining Bem's army just before the last battle. Many themes bearing on the War of Independence and the revolution, faithfulness to principles and human conduct, morals and psychology—are all excluded from the film. There were two reasons for this: firstly, and more seriously, the director intended to discuss these questions by the methods of the cinema-direct and thus he *a priori* excluded the possibility of the young actors discussing directly and spontaneously the feelings and thoughts evoked by the historical situations they had just acted and absorbed. In the cinema-direct parts they were overawed and expressed in faltering words only what they say frequently enough even without any historical play and psychodramatic experience: that they, too, would like to express themselves in something great, as their heroes did. But they could not put into words what that might be.

The other reason for this weakness was the inability of the script to raise, in the historical scenes, questions which are still vital and exciting today. Instead it operated on the model of school-plays; with big historical tableaux and did not rely enough on the feelings and imagination of the young actors. In other words, it failed to bring into question in a dramatic manner the historical and human conflicts of the past—even on the level of the individual actors—and thus the actors were reduced to merely illustrating the persons they played. Notwithstanding the sparkling love of acting which the youngsters displayed, this fact inevitably diminished the vitality of their ideas. This historical tableau style meant that in the historic scenes the heroes could never leave the zones which had been strictly allotted to them and they had to conform to the authentic texts out of history books which composed the overwhelming part of the dialogue. The solemnity of these words "cast in bronze" is alleviated somewhat by the youthful acting, where it is not overwhelmed by full-throated oration. There are some scenes which have the freshness of improvised school-boy pranks such as the unexpected marriage of Petőfi accompanied by the curses of his father-in-law, or the scene where the popular leader, Mihály Táncsics, is released from jail, i.e. from the coal-cellar of the school.

If only there were questions provoking debates in these tableaux, just some open issues among Petőfi's friends, a few unresolved conflicts, if we felt for a moment that Petőfi was not always the maker of brilliant slogans, that he had no ready recipe for everything but on the contrary—even if he had no doubts about his revolutionary ideals—he had all the more frequently agonizing days spent probing into the roots of events in the quickly changing historical situations, then the youngsters would have gained an intellectual base for their own thinking through their experiences in the film. As it happened, they could only give what was within their power. They played themselves heartily, with spontaneity and an absence of problems. Their gaiety and fire in acting out the historical storms of a school-play was captivating. They declaimed historical texts with enthusiastic seriousness and lent the War of Independence their most attractive qualities: their craving for romanticism, the passion of their youth. The tableau did not move them to delve deeper, and analyse themselves, their era, their own duties, or to see historical problems of the past and the present. Thus the colourful dynamism of playing is much more emphatic in the film than the intellectual contents: it offers beauty and joy to the senses, a sweeping succession of events merging the present and the past—it offers everything that a film can give in way of attractive and captivating spectacle and this should not be underestimated. It also offers the vision of the director, even if this time the conception itself was overmatched.

The young cameraman, János Kende,

also contributed to this result. His images and colours are dynamic, very plastic, their rhythmic movement and open spaces "involve" the spectator who becomes part of the events, of mass scenes, of races in open country, of monumental fires. It seems at the end that the rich and dynamic images arouse more thoughts in the spectator than the historical play did in the young actors themselves. Perhaps their interview by cinema-direct should have been postponed until they had been as spectators to see the film.

ZOLTÁN HEGEDÜS

MUSICALS, DOCUMENTARIES, SHAKESPEARE

Nemeskürty–Örkény: *The Silence of the Dead*; Déry: *Imaginary Report of an American Pop-Festival*; Hernádi: *Anti-Christ*; Shakespeare: *Measure for Measure*; Graham Greene: *The Quiet American*; Jerry Bock: *Fiddler on the Roof*

The theatre season in the second half of 1972–73 was rather mediocre, yet there is no question of stagnation or silence. There are heated debates in professional circles in connection with some overly pessimistic articles which have painted a grim picture of the backwardness of Hungarian theatre. There are performances which seem to justify this pessimism. Certain productions are worse than bad, lacking any inspiration or artistic *raison d'être*, their only justification is that, whatever happens, the curtain has to rise at seven. But there are evenings when the spectator is recompensed, when he feels that the creators have broken free from the depressing circuit of programming for safety and have had the courage to take risks. The smooth routine performance of a never-failing classic or of an imported problemless boulevard-play always guarantees a certain number of performances, while trying something out of the ordinary is like putting a message into a bottle: there is no telling whom it will reach or who will respond to it. The Budapest *Vígszínház* sent two such messages towards a hoped-for audience whose size and composition was a matter of guesswork. Although neither performance was wholly convincing, the courageous originality of the intention can in itself be regarded as a half-success in the long series of "safety first" presentations. Beyond this, however, both productions have certain remarkable virtues of their own.

István Nemeskürty's book, *Requiem for an Army*, caused a literary sensation in 1972. This was not the first sensation provoked by the author: he had proved a few years ago in his historical essay, *This Happened after Mohács**, written with all the excitement of a thriller and yet based on well-founded documentation, that the "disaster of Mohács" in 1526, which has always been considered as a major national catastrophe, had been no "disaster" at all, just one lost battle in the fight against the Turks. After Mohács the Hungarian ruling class had another 15 years to reorganize and put up a united front against the Turkish danger. The historic

* See No. 36 of *The N.H.Q.*

crime of the ruling class was that it squandered that precious time in party strife, thus ultimately becoming quartermasters for the foreign occupation which in fact only began in 1541 to last for a 150 years in the central part of the country. *Requiem for an Army* uses similar methods for analysing the history of the recent past and with an even more shocking effect because many of the participants in and witnesses to those horrible events, many of the victims' relatives are still among us. The requiem is for 150,000 Hungarian men, as yet unmourned. These were the dead of the 2nd Hungarian Army, deployed and senselessly sacrificed to cover the German retreat in Russia in 1943. Their death was hushed up at the time because the German losses were stressed and because those who sent them, although without scruples, knew that the stirring up of their historic crime would only add fuel to the fire, while after 1945 it seemed untimely to mourn for an army which had fought for foreign interests and had been defeated by the liberating Red Army. And yet, as the author writes in his foreword: "These men must be mourned some time because most of them were victims." This lament is again a fascinating large-scale detective work: the story of the army's organization, its sending to the front, its vicissitudes in Russia, its infernal sufferings, how it was left in the lurch, betrayed and sacrificed.

The author of this tragedy was life itself, with a gruesome respect for the rules of dramaturgy: the story had antecedents, an opening, a middle part and a horrible end; it contained crime and punishment; only at the time the perpetrators of the crime went unpunished. The price of the crime was paid by those after whom the play was named: the dead. Because Nemeskürty and the author of the stage version, István Örkény, changed the title into *The Silence of the Dead*. The scenery also recalls the dead: it consists of bare white wall panels with the interminable list of the names of those who fell. It was a daring idea to adapt the book, although also tempting, if we think of the worldwide fashion for documentary plays. Nemeskürty's book offered itself as a ready script for a documentary play. István Örkény, himself one of the few survivors of the catastrophe, identified with the task. He used his experience as a dramatist to select from the book the most suitable parts for a stage version and he supplemented them with some new, personal experiences and with a few excellent miniatures: the memories of some simple soldiers, and their small individual dramas. Zoltán Várkonyi, reputed for his spectacular, ingenious and clever staging, renounced his taste for show and gags, even refraining from the here obvious application of film projections, sound effects, diagrams, etc., thus leaving the interpretation of the authors' emotions to the text alone. He selected twelve excellent actors of impressive appearance and diction and—after careful organization, rhythm studies and effect analyses—distributed the text among them without allocating a permanent role to any of them, barring one exception: one of the actors always played the commander-in-chief, Gusztáv Jány, a characteristic combination of the military and the former Hungarian ruling class.

What is the performance like after all this? If the question is whether it was worth producing, the answer is definitely yes. This topic, this book is worth frequent and careful attention and it is good that people should confront its material twice and via two media.

We witnessed another interesting experiment at the *Vígszínház*, the stage version of Tibor Déry's book: *Imaginary Report of an American Pop-Festival*.* The aged master described the apocalyptic atmosphere of an American pop-festival as he imagined it, in a complex manner, with the utmost freedom in handling the dimensions of time and space. In the book he conveys by way of a network of free associations that bear the stamp of authenticity an idea of the tactics

* See No. 47 of *The N.H.Q.*

of bamboozling the masses, and certain tendencies towards violence in American society, which the author relates in a sense to Hungarian fascism. The stage version, written by Sándor Pós, is a bold venture and an ambitious and well-written piece of work but it cannot bridge the gap between the freedom of epic writing—and particularly of Déry's modern epics—and the limitations imposed by direct and sensorial stage representation. Déry might have had something to say about an American pop-festival, although he had never seen one, because his writer's intuition might have enabled him to grasp its essence. He could even voice in his novel universal thoughts and feelings, and allusions which are applicable to his own country. On the stage, however, a concrete American pop-festival is shown and the spectator is bound to ask: what have we to do with that, how can we competently describe these specific phenomena? While in Déry's novel the background, Montana, and the tragedy of the young emigrant Hungarian couple are linked by an inner, dreamlike and poetic logic, on the stage these two elements drifted apart: what is the business of these two Hungarians here, why are they the central characters of a drama taking place in America? This contradicition gives rise to others. In the novel the associative nightmares of the neurotic young Hungarian woman about fascism in Hungary are fully acceptable: on the stage, however, the experiences of the forties do not appear authentic as the source of the attitudes of young people in the sixties. Thus Déry's far-reaching novel is reduced on the stage to some commonplaces and it is unfair to him that it serves only as a connecting text between the hits of an excellent musical. The music was composed and played by one of the most popular and talented Hungarian beat groups, the Locomotive G T ensemble, and both Gábor Presser's songs and Anna Adamis's lyrics are on a very high level in their particular genre. This explains the fact that Hungarian youth who are unfortunately not theatre-goers by and large, flock to this play, and go into ecstasies over the performance: the buoyant and suggestive staging and acting play an important part in this. I feel, however, that this could have been achieved without using Déry's novel as raw material for the play. The music, in any case, if only because it is played inside a theatre, does not express the hysterical atmosphere of an open-air American pop-festival with its hundreds of thousands of participants. Thus there is no inherent artistic reason for having it played and sung by American youths. This was, in fact, an opportunity to use this music as the basic material of a musical which has a relevance here and now and, if it had a libretto more in keeping with the rules of the genre, this music would have expressed the attitudes, atmosphere and problems of contemporary Hungarian youth.

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The second play by Gyula Hernádi (Jancsó's scriptwriter) was awaited with much interest. *Anti-Christ* had its premiere at the Pécs National Theatre, but it failed to come up to expectations. Of course there is never any guarantee that a gifted dramatist's second work will be better than the first, but in this case the disappointment has an ominous aspect in that the shortcomings of Hernádi's first play, the *Phalanstery*, are greatly accentuated in *Anti-Christ*. Hernádi's strong inclination towards extreme intellectualism, his tendency to think in abstract theses, were apparent in *Phalanstery*. There, however, the abstract-intellectual formula of the drama was clear, and he could convince the audience of the authenticity of the tragedy of his matter-of-fact, hard and rigid characters. This is where *Anti-Christ* fails: its characters are mere illustrations to the struggle between different theses and attitudes and the confused basic concept makes them tiring and unreal.

The scene is a small miners' colony in

South America, engulfed by terror. Juan Falcon, the military commander, is just conducting a mass execution in retaliation for an uprising when an odd creature descends from above. He is Solar, the noble and wise emissary from another planet, the herald of a remote future who resurrects the dead and proclaims the era of pure reason. He has come too early, however: the stupefied and cowed people do not understand him, and the spokesmen of irrationalism, religion and oppression immediately take the field to neutralize his impact and even turn it to their own advantage. Juan Falcon becomes Solar's priest, the interpreter of his ideas, and Solar commits the fatal tactical mistake of letting him take the initiative. Solar can prevent the complete failure of his experiment only by sacrificing himself: he provokes his own execution, thus proving that he is not immortal, he is not a new Messiah of the old irrational-mystical religion. This sacrifice at least proves to be meaningful, the awestricken people are led to new struggles by the Guevara-style revolutionary Maria Vilar, who was resurrected by Solar at the beginning of the play.

This concept proved to be an easy target for criticism, so easy that it arouses one's suspicion that Hernádi, this erudite and up-to-date thinker, must have known all this. Presumably he wanted to say something else, he must have known something—but what that is was not found out by either the audience or the critics. Those who have seen the suspiciously over-decorated, opera-like presentation of the Pécs theatre were unable to find out what Hernádi might have had in mind. I too must therefore limit myself to some major objections. How is it possible to reduce the many-sided and complex problem of the liberation of an oppressed people to the conflict between reason and religion? Where, in the present world situation, is a force of Solar's type emerging in this particular form? (Has any progressive trend emerged since the eighteenth century, the age of enlightenment, with merely a programme of pure reason?) What does Solar, the new (anti-)Christ represent if revolution in that concrete situation is represented by Maria Vilar, to whom Solar was opposed all along? Is he the representative of a new, super-revolutionary idea which will be appreciated only by posterity or, on the contrary, does he advocate an erroneous, utopistic tendency? (Solar's naive and politically impotent attitude suggests the latter but the play contains no criticism of his strategy; the author disapproves only of his hero's tactics.)

Luckily, contemporary audiences have become flexible in Hungary as well: they are willing to give up inherited or conditioned ideas. Jancsó's films or Brecht's plays have their admirers who know that one cannot criticize a model-play for not having a traditional construction of events, a traditional thrilling story to tell, or even flesh and blood characters. But the one thing that can be expected from a model-play is clarity. A confused model-play is an absurdity, a contradiction in terms.

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Finally, a few words about some events which relate to the Anglo-Saxon world. The Budapest National Theatre performed, for the second time during its 135 years of existence, Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*. It used to be among the least performed plays by Shakespeare everywhere in the world and it is now enjoying a fine renaissance—obviously because of the extremely modern and finely meanings that can be read into it. A campaign for moral purification in contemporary Britain ensured the topicality of William Gaskill's Exeter production. He necessarily made Angelo the most negative character and, unlike the original ending, the play concluded with his ill-omened triumph. Tamás Major, a director who likes to experiment, took up another aspect of the theme. He wanted to focus attention on the responsibility of the rulers.

His negative hero is the Prince who, with a view to strengthening his insecure position, entrusts someone else with the dirty work, thus deliberately provoking the intermezzo of Angelo's tyranny, in order to appear ultimately as the liberator. The deliberately false and sarcastically acted idyll of his return, however, does not offer any guarantee of peace and happiness for the people. This exciting concept is realized in some excellent episodes, but it is not carried out consistently by a cast used to more traditional interpretations. It has to be admitted, however, that the fault lay partly with Shakespeare himself who did not really write *this* play. Besides, the performance had a very serious stumbling-block that it could not get over: in *Measure for Measure* the most dramatic, most carefully worked-out conflict, arousing the highest tension, is the confrontation between Angelo and Isabella. Since Major, very consistently, interpreted the hierarchy of action from the aspect of the Prince, this confrontation lost its colour. Thus the spectator could not get emotionally close to the work, nor could he be convinced of the absolute need for this production.

The Thália Theatre presented Graham Greene's *The Quiet American*. The writer authorized the dramatization, which was carried out by Tamás Ungvári and Károly Kazimir, the Art Director of the theatre, who also directed the play. Kazimir is the indefatigable promoter of the political theatre. He likes to dramatize great novels because he cannot find enough plays of a high standard which are at the same time unequivocally progressive politically. This respectable passion has both its merits and disadvantages, a fact which emerged from the performance of *The Quiet American*. The production is theatrically powerful, visually rich and has many virtues, yet as an extract it could not offer the same experience as a play might which would speak in an inherently dramatic form of these problems of historic significance.

As an optimistic finishing touch, let me add a few enraptured sentences about the Budapest Operetta Theatre's production of the *Fiddler on the Roof*. The production of this peak of the American musical, Sholem Aleichem's and Chagall's vision of Anatevka, was excellent. László Vámos's direction was several shades more sentimental and tender than those of his predecessors', but this was an intelligent and deliberate compromise which took account of the nature of the theatre, the actors and the audience and which did not betray the spirit of the work. If a Tony-prize for acting were awarded in Budapest, then Ferenc Bessenyei, one of the finest Hungarian actors, would stand a good chance of getting it for his Tevye, even if only one prize were awarded in the musical and prose category. His performance was more than just wonderful acting and fine singing: he created a dramatic type that from now on will be considered a classic in Hungary too.

JUDIT SZÁNTÓ

MUSICAL LIFE

IN THE WORKSHOP OF 88 MUSICIANS

MÁRIA FEUER: *88 muzsikus műhelyében* (In the Workshop of 88 Musicians). Editio Musica, 1972, 428 pp.

This volume is a collection of interviews by Maria Feuer, a well-known musicologist, which appeared in the weekly review *Élet és Irodalom* (Life and Literature).

The 88 musicians who answered her questions come from very different areas of musical life. They include composers, conductors, opera singers, directors, music teachers, musicologists, television and record editors, instrumentalists, soloists and members of orchestras.

It was the joys and worries of their "workshops" that the musicians discussed with the greatest willingness and colour. Sándor Szokolay, the composer, spoke about the decisive role played by his childhood experiences—the lightning, the faraway rumble of a train, all "elementary phenomena". A younger composer, Attila Bozay, declared: "The only possible creative attitude is not to mind the opinions of others and to have the courage to continue along your own path. Opinions are most contradictory, anyway: in Hungary composers are expected to be homogeneous and to synthetize in their work, whereas abroad they are expected to renew themselves constantly."

Pál Kadosa said: "I compose because I must get rid of my worries and misgivings..."

The workshop of the performing and interpretative artists is equally interesting. The greatest contemporary conductor living in Hungary, János Ferencsik, was very modest: "Somebody once said that the contacts with masterpieces also had an etiquette of their own and it was very similar to that of royal courts where the rule was not to address the king but to wait until one was spoken to... A musical composition can be alive and yet not speak to us: we can hear it through the interpretation of others, we can study its score—we can know the composition and still not know anything about it until a certain inner voice starts to speak." The 67-year-old conductor concluded: "I feel that His Majesty the Music is talking to me more often and more intimately now than in the past." György Lehel, Ferencsik's junior by almost 25 years, and well known as the conductor of the Hungarian Radio and Television Symphony Orchestra says: "Perhaps it's absurd that amid the problems of heart transplantation, space travel and nuclear warfare I rack my brains for months on how to interpret a melody of Mozart's. Nevertheless I find it quite natural... I don't believe the world could exist without it."

All 88 musicians are imbued by this belief, their workshop is illuminated by their confidence in the power of music. The viola player, Pál Lukács, who is also an outstanding pedagogue who has taught the viola for

26 years at the Music Academy, was not ashamed to admit that he believed in romanticism despite those who thought that it had become obsolete. The singer Erika Sziklay, one of the finest interpreters of modern vocal music, did not profess her faith primarily in Schubert or Webern but in general in everything that was good: "With a good piece everything makes sense and for me, a musician, the strict serial songs of Webern or a work by Boulez are as melodious as Schubert. But if I have to learn bad music, I suffer from nervous exhaustion..."

The Modernity and National Character of Music

Most questions concerned modern music, i.e. the modernity of music. The people most competent to give answers were, of course, the composers. György Ránki remarked ironically about the technical tricks employed by the extremist experimentalists: "This procedure is always successful if we exclude man, as an interfering factor, from the process of making music. Only one thing is not clear: what is its purpose? Nor is it clear why those composers who despise contact with the public have their works performed before an audience?" András Szőllősy: "I am convinced that our era will also create its specific world of forms which will be determined by the musical material, just as in the past." István Láng, a younger composer: "I feel that the new means of music also reflect the problems of our times and out of an infinite number of methods we should choose the only one which fits the content of the work. I want to follow Picasso who... does not play with the variations of 'isms' but looks for the expression best adjusted to his theme."

It is impossible for the interviewer, in asking for the views of composers about the scope and validity of modern music, not to discuss the character of this music, or more precisely, the features which determine Hungarian music today. It is very interesting to note that most of the interviewees mentioned the national character of music. András Szőllősy: "The personality of a composer is determined by the fact that he is completely imbued with national and international traditions and that he is able to express them from a new—individual, if you wish—aspect." István Láng: "When we speak of Hungarian characteristics, we think chiefly of Hungarian folk music which, through the different transpositions of Bartók and Kodály, has attained a European level which cannot be continued without the risk of epigonism. But Liszt's Hungarian music —especially the works written in his old age —are also alive for us through Bartók's mediation and these too are part of the elements of our national music."

Composers, pedagogues and performing artists all agreed that the significance of contemporary Hungarian music was due on the one hand to its modernity and on the other hand to its specifically Hungarian character.

The Aims and Paradoxes of Art

We have already mentioned the question posed by György Lehel, the conductor, whether in the era of space travel and electronics it is not paradoxical for a serious adult to meditate for months on how to interpret a Mozart melody. Or, to approach the problem from a different aspect: has music a purpose and if so, what is it these days, when respected scholars speak of the decline of the Gutenberg galaxy, the end of the printed word and no less serious experts fear that home-made, electronic, canned music will replace live music.

The musicians interviewed by Maria Feuer did not share these doubts. Even though one of the composers, speaking about the opportunities for having one's music performed, gave vent to his not un-

justified exasperation because of "protocol lists", "the aggressivity of authors" and the "kowtowing to fashion", it is nonetheless worth noting that his colleague, György Ránki, attributed an important role to the audience, the receptive element, in the function of music. "I believe that music is primarily a process of communication, a kind of three-phase game in which the creator (the communicator), in his search for partners who can share his experiences transmittable only through music, with the help of the interpreting artist (the transmitter of communication) wants to awaken human resonancy in the audience (the receptor of communication)". Erzsébet Tusa, a well-known pianist and Bartók-interpreter, said: "I think that today the main need in art is for order, meaning and clarity of ideas. I am convinced that these are as important contents to be expressed as sentiments were in romanticism."

The passages quoted so far have probably revealed that these 88 interviews are a small collection of paradoxes from contemporary Hungarian musical life. András Székely, a director of the Hungarian record company, said about the exaggerated technical perfection of canned music: "I prefer the breath of music to technical perfection." Kamilló Lendvay: "The essence of light music is that it expressed in commonplaces the essence of serious music."

Beat, Jazz, Opera, Television

Many topical questions were touched upon in these interviews, including the seemingly total victory of beat music over serious music. It is interesting that those who have every reason to fear the "rivalry" of beat music seem to be the last to regard it as an important or dangerous enemy. Erzsébet Szőnyi, noted for her work in popularizing the Kodály method of teaching music, said: "I think many fashions and even sexual factors attract the beat fans which are simply the natural concomitants of adolescence and which do not necessarily involve any opposition to serious music. A child who has had a basic training in music can become an enthusiastic concert fan as well as loving beat music." Magda Szávai, deputy general secretary of the Hungarian Federation of Musicians and the organizer of Jeunesses Musicales in Hungary, spoke about the international music camp organized every summer in Pécs: "In the camp concerts of a high standard, spontaneous singing of folk songs and jazz alternated—and the guitar was often produced."

The notorious declaration by Boulez that he wanted to blow up opera houses caused a furore in Hungarian musical circles as well, although his opinions about the agony and death of opera did not make a wide impact in Hungary. This forecast has been refuted by a series of operas created by Hungarian composers in the last ten years. Apart from *Blood Wedding* and *Hamlet* we should also mention Emil Petrovics's *Crime and Punishment*, based on Dostoevsky's novel, his comic opera entitled *Lysistrate* and an opera by György Ránki set to Madách's classic play *The Tragedy of Man*.

It would be misleading the reader to pretend that everything is as it should be in musical life in Hungary. This is by no means the case. The interviewees spoke about problems and shortcomings. Television pays more attention to light music than to serious music. The work of the impressarios leaves much to be desired. There is no concert hall in Budapest which could accommodate an audience of at least 2,000. Musical life in Hungary is centred too much on Budapest.

Musical directors, conductors and choir masters outside Budapest complained that they had to produce musical programmes on a Budapest and European level in conditions which lagged far behind those of the capital. However, Maria Feuer's book also shows that these efforts are crowned with success in Szeged, Pécs and Szombathely.

ISTVÁN GÁBOR

NEW RECORDS

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN *String Quartets* 1, Op. 18, Nos. 1–6. Bartók Quartet (Péter Komlós, Sándor Devich, Géza Németh, Károly Botvay). Qualiton LPX 11123–25 (Stereo-mono)
LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN *String Quartets* 2, Op. 59, Nos. 1–3., Op. 74, Op. 95. Bartók Quartet (see above) Hungaroton LPX 11470–72 (Stereo-mono)

Perhaps one ought to have waited for the completion of the series before making any evaluation of the Bartók Quartet's work. This outstanding ensemble have already finished the actual recording of the complete quartets of Beethoven—it is only for technical reasons that the third group of records is not yet ready. It would thus be a pity to remain silent about the six long-playing records which have so far appeared, for of Beethoven's sixteen string quartets and the so-called *Grosse Fuge*—that is, seventeen works in all—eleven have already appeared and on the basis of these it is quite possible to imagine the remainder.

There is one aspect of the historical development of the string quartet which is not pondered as it ought to be: the question of what performing circumstances were, or may have been, in the composer's mind when he wrote the works. And yet in the case of Beethoven we cannot understand much of his chamber music without consideration of this point.

Is it possible to imagine amateur musicians playing the late Beethoven quartets at home for their own pleasure? It is conceivable in principle, but—especially in Beethoven's time—it would appear extremely improbable. The master was obviously thinking of professional musicians when he composed these last works: moreover, they, and at the same time their meaning, are considerably larger, broader and deeper than everything preceding them. In other words, this chamber music is already too large for the chamber.

In this respect the *Op. 18* set can be regarded as a borderline case: although technically they are by no means "easy", they can nevertheless be approached by amateurs and it is not difficult to imagine them being performed domestically. The first six quartets date largely from around 1800 and the three of *Op. 59*, the so-called Razumovsky quartets, from around 1805–6. It was in 1804 that Ignaz Schuppanzigh's (1776–1830) quartet gave their first public concert in Vienna. This new chamber music possibility cannot have been without influence on Beethoven. If we place these dates in chronological order the reason for the tremendous difference between the *Op. 18* series and the *Op. 59* series soon becomes clear. The latter three masterpieces can justly be regarded as the first high-level representation or revelation of the so-called concert quartet genre. Later all the chamber works of Schumann and Brahms were to belong to this same category, but the chamber music of this century also travels this road: writers of string quartets count immediately on the performing conditions of concert halls—quartets are not produced for use at home except possibly for educational purposes.

Beethoven's *Op. 59* is a watershed in the history of chamber music.

If we transfer all this to the conditions pertaining in modern concert life, it is easy to understand the problems of performing the quartets of Mozart or Haydn. These problems are not of a technical nature: they arise because it is necessary to make concert music of what was not written as concert music. With Beethoven's quartets the matter is somewhat simpler: it is necessary to realize the potential effects which the master wrote into his works. In these, however, there is a problem of real technical difficulty.

The chief strength of the Bartók Quartet

lies in the performance of the "concert quartet" genre. They achieved their first world successes with the six quartets of the master whose name they bear—and these Bartók masterpieces are among the most important works in their repertoire to this very day. Their performing style is characterized by irresistible intensity. Essentially they can do everything which it is possible for a quartet to do—at the very most it was still possible a few years ago to demand the ultimate in simplicity from their Mozart quartet recordings. But the works of Beethoven—particularly those which come after the *Op. 59* set mentioned above—can be called almost anything, but not simple.

The magnitude of the undertaking is obvious without any special explanation. But every listener will agree with me that the Bartók Quartet have carried out the task they undertook on a dazzling level. Their virtuosity can be admired in the finales of the *Op. 59* Razumovsky quartets: here the music really sizzles with youthful impetus. Even within this the fast closing movements of the first and second quartets, constructed on Russian-style themes, must be classed as outstandingly fine. The last movement of the *Op. 59* Quartetto serioso, the sighing, sometimes panting agitato, is given magnificent treatment of quite a different kind almost approaching the style of Schubert. Even within allegros this ensemble possesses infinite variety of tone and colour—for example, in the opening movement of the *Op. 18* F major quartet they take a strong grip of the principal subject's turn motif and with a passionate effect release the driving energies concealed within it.

But this intensive and passionate style of playing can be found in certain slow movements as well, particularly in the D minor Adagio (inspired by the churchyard scene from *Romeo and Juliet*), which likewise comes in the first quartet of the *Op. 18* series. The performance of the slow movements is never interminably protracted; there is never a boring impression. The F minor Adagio, of hymnic beauty, in *Op. 59, No. 1*, for example, and the even calmer and purer A flat major slow movement of the *Harfenquartett, Op. 74*, display sensitive, full tone control, a well moulded performance rich in effects. During parts such as these one involuntarily feels that this recording is even capable of compensating for the absence of the immediacy of concert experience; in other words it almost achieves the impossible.

The reader will know that there are nearly fifty—mostly large-scale—movements which ought to be discussed but this is naturally not possible here. The general observation that the Bartók Quartet have proved worthy of their reputation in these recordings will have to suffice.

CHOREARUM COLLECTANEA Instrumental Dances of the Late Renaissance Camerata Hungarica Ensemble Hungaroton LPX 11498 (Stereo-mono)

Old Hungarian Instrumental Dances—Arranged by László Czidra—this is the subtitle which this record bears. It must be added straight away that the names of the performers are not listed on the sleeve, nor is it mentioned that László Czidra not only made the arrangements but also leads the ensemble. Furthermore, the sleeve text may provide opportunity for some misunderstanding; the impression may be given that here it is a question of some sort of provincial music which has real significance only within the history of Hungarian national music.

The truth, however, is that the first side of the record contains international material —mostly instrumental dances—written, or published, approximately between the middle of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth. These can only be related to old Hungarian music in that certain of their rhythmic patterns or melodic phrases display kinship with the old Hungarian folksongs. The greater part of the first side is taken from the material in the

1571 and 1583 collections of the Dutch publisher Pierre Phalèse, well known to lovers of Renaissance music. On the other side, however, we really do have dances—mainly in Renaissance style—which were written down and preserved in Hungary.

But perhaps the most important point is not this but the way these pieces sound, the improvisational style of performance, authentic throughout, resting on contemporary ornamentation practices. This says a great deal for the extraordinary individual abilities of the leader, László Czidra. He was in fact solo oboist for a long time with one of the Hungarian orchestras, but even during that period it was the recorder which held the greatest attraction for him. He has been studying Renaissance and Baroque improvisation methods for almost a decade now, and having left orchestral life, has been working exclusively with recorder playing. On this record he proves himself to be a real virtuoso on every kind of recorder. A new world is over and over opened up before us by his rich, melodically inspired ornamentation; some well-known *Allemandes*, even considering the perspective of four centuries, come as near to us as if they had been written yesterday. As is often to be experienced with this kind of musical material, László Czidra sometimes forms a larger piece from several smaller dances—as, for example, with the *Allemande* entitled *S'medelijn*, which acts as a main section, and the *Allemande D'Anvers*, which comes as a central section.

On the other side of the record, as has been mentioned above, the Camerata Hungarica Ensemble plays material of direct Hungarian origin which was written down in the course of the seventeenth century but which remains closely bound stylistically to sixteenth-century instrumental music throughout. These pieces also show great variety in instrumentation—some of them are for harpsichord solo, but lute pieces, viol consorts and songs are equally in evidence. Renaissance performing practices, which nowadays are flourishing more and more, are present throughout and on this Camerata Hungarica record come to life in a form which enchants the modern listener, too.

JOSEPH HAYDN—1. *Appointment of a Conductor* 2. *Choral Works* (a) Svanisce in un momento (Enervated Moment) (b) Madrigal. The Storm (c) Chor der Dänen (Chorus of the Danes) Apollo: Klára Takács (soprano), Minerva: Katalin Szőkefalvy-Nagy (soprano), Bacchus: Attila Fülöp (tenor), Budapest Madrigal Choir, Hungarian State Orchestra. Conducted by Ferenc Szekeres. Hungaroton LPX 11527 (Stereo–mono)

The first side of the record contains the cantata *Die Erwählung eines Kapellmeisters*, which may or may not have been written by Haydn. The contemporary copy score preserved in the Budapest National Széchényi Library has come down to us with Joseph Haydn indicated as composer—and this is how the cantata appeared in the edition by Editio Musica, Budapest, in 1970. (The edition was prepared by Ferenc Szekeres, who also directed the recording.) But this is really a secondary matter for the reality of this charming music would not be changed in the least were it to be discovered that it was not Joseph Haydn who wrote it.

The ten-movement work unequivocally belongs to the *cantata comica* genre. Briefly it concerns Apollo's search for a conductor for his chorus of gods: he asks for advice in the matter from Minerva and Bacchus. As one might guess, Minerva gives extraordinarily wise and useful advice—but Bacchus supplements it by claiming that the new conductor can only be good if he likes wine. And in the end Apollo makes his decision in a truly divine way: he selects a knowledgeable and talented musician who is also very fond of wine. The "dramatic" conflict, however, has not been solved just by this. Bacchus and Minerva have still to quarrel as to which of them had been of influence in getting the chosen conductor his job. In the end this,

too, is smoothed out and the final chorus can sing to everyone's being satisfied.

To be honest, this record cannot primarily be recommended because it is to be considered an "epoch-making" recording. Chiefly the two female voices sound a little pale, and indeed Minerva is occasionally even out of tune. The orchestral sound, on the other hand, is very good, and Bacchus sings magnificently. What makes it worth listening to is above all the work itself, which as far as I know has not yet appeared anywhere on record. The piece has been written with a wonderfully fine sense of humour. This humour does not consist of some meagre musical jokes, but becomes manifest in the infinite simplicity of the musical material. It is irresistibly comic, for example, when Bacchus—in praise of Apollo's choice—sings a song of gratitude which suddenly makes the action "serious" and then immediately, along with his followers, starts into the praise of wine. This material becomes true comedy on account of its setting, the obsessional representation of the characters in what follows (Bacchus is always glorifying wine, and Minerva always sober reason and knowledge).

The other side of the record likewise contains rarities: one "storm" chorus in Italian and one in English, the first being from Haydn's oratorio *Il ritorno di Tobia* and the other a madrigal with chamber orchestra accompaniment, written in London in 1792 to English words by Peter Pindar. The third chorus is also connected with England: it is from the incidental music to a play *Alfred, or the Patriotic King*, performed in Vienna in German, and written by an English writer named Bicknell. All three choruses are very effective and are given an excellent performance.

W. A. MOZART—*Divertimento in E flat major for Violin, Viola and Cello, K. 563*
Dénes Kovács (violin), Géza Németh (viola), Ede Banda (cello).
Hungaroton LPX 11590 (Stereo-mono)

Perhaps Mozart's definition of genre is nowhere so misleading as in this divertimento where—as Liszt puts it—"he entrusts the most exquisite secrets to his music". Actually it is only its six-movement structure which indicates a certain divertimento quality, for apart from that this trio occupies a special place even among the late Mozart masterpieces alongside the great string quintets and the clarinet quintet. And as far as the combination of instruments used in the string trio is concerned, there is absolutely no other work of any value to compare with it in the whole history of music.

The masters were understandably frightened away from the violin–viola–cello combination as it contains the danger of giving an "empty" or "incomplete string quartet" impression, or of the listener having a "not-quite-string-quartet" feeling about it. But Mozart, who discovered the soul of the instruments—and discovered it for the first time in music history—produced a dazzlingly full tone. It is really unfortunate that this piece is so seldom to be heard in concerts.

It was at one of Dénes Kovács's concerts last year that the Hungaroton company first got the idea of putting the E flat Divertimento on record. In the concert's first half, he played a Bach solo sonata, and then, together with Géza Németh, the Bartók Quartet's splendid viola player, one of Mozart's duos. And finally came the present trio, where the violin and viola were joined by Ede Banda, cellist with the excellent Tátrai Quartet. It was an unforgettable evening. One is reminded of it by this fine record.

Each of the three performers is also a magnificent soloist in his own right. It is scarcely necessary to introduce Dénes Kovács to the English reader, for it was in London that his career reached European level when he won the Carl Flesch competition in 1955. Géza Németh won the Geneva competition in 1962, and Ede Banda is likewise a frequent guest soloist on the various concert platforms. Their playing together has an abun-

dance of big moments and at the same time they manage to create the most intimate chamber music atmosphere.

It would be difficult to lay special emphasis on anything in particular from the masterpiece, which lasts close on three quarters of an hour, but the listener with a good ear cannot help noticing the clouding over which comes in the development section of the first movement, or the contemplative beauty of the Adagio—characteristic of the later Mozart. In the course of the variations the Andante (fourth movement) continually changes face and form, so sensitively and flexibly that almost a new world opens up before the listener in each single one. The virtuosic performance of the final movement is a fitting crown for the whole.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN 1. *Trio for Two Oboes and Cor Anglais in C major*, Op. 87 Péter Pongrácz (oboe I), Lajos Tóth (oboe II), Mihály Eisenbacher (cor anglais) 2. *Duos for Clarinet and Bassoon* (WoO 27) (a) No. 1 in C major (b) No. 2 in B major Béla Kovács (clarinet), Tibor Fülemile (bassoon).
Hungaroton LPX 11565 (Stereo–mono)

I cannot claim that the *Op. 87* Trio stands among Beethoven's most significant masterpieces. And anyway the high opus number is misleading in this case, since the piece dates from 1794, a sort of pleasant reflection of the wind chamber music popular in the court at Bonn. (Possibly not everyone knows that Beethoven wrote numerous wind works in his youth.) But because of its very special tone this trio does deserve attention—not to mention the exceptionally perfect performance which is to be heard on this record. The cor anglais—the essentially romantic alto oboe, mostly used melodically—provides an excellent bass here for its two higher brothers. And with regard to the two oboe parts, one can only speak in superlatives. There is some kind of blissful perfection in the tone of the three which gives the listener the feeling that he is hearing true classical entertainment music. After all, music does not consist only of redeeming the world—simply to entertain may also be permitted occasionally. Beethoven, too, wrote this trio with that kind of purpose in mind: particularly in the two outer movements the instruments almost laugh their way along and it would scarcely be possible to listen unsmilingly.

The three duos for clarinet and bassoon, without any opus number, were similarly not written for world-changing purposes—dating certainly from before 1792. Of these, two are to be heard on this record, in a performance equal in excellence to what precedes them. Béla Kovács is a splendid clarinettist—it is to be hoped that the reader has already managed to hear one or two of his records—so splendid in fact that he is capable of bringing these exceptionally demanding duos to life. The position is actually that clarinettists do not much favour these three Beethoven duos since they do not suit the instrument very well. (The nature of this instrument has been understood in its entirety by very few in the course of the history of music—Mozart stands out above all, and also Weber and Brahms.) Many exacting high positions occur here and the slightest intonational slip can be heard since there are no filling-out parts between the melody and the bass. On the other hand it was Beethoven who wrote these works, too, and so for that reason, if for no other, they can justly claim the right to be known. Thanks to the talented and virtuosic performers there is now an excellent recording of these works at our disposal as well.

ANDRÁS PERNYE

ADDENDUM:

The sections of the score of Sándor Balassa's Requiem for Lajos Kassák used to illustrate György Kroó's article on the composer in No. 50 were published with the permission of Editio Musica Budapest.

ECONOMIC LIFE

HUNGARIAN FOREIGN TRADE AND THE GROWTH OF THE ECONOMY

Foreign trade is of major importance in Hungary's economy and for Hungarian economic development. This is also true of many countries with an economic structure unlike that of Hungary, and for a variety of reasons. Grossly over-simplifying one might say that the country is compelled to join intensively in the international division of labour since—seen in the light of imports—there is a relative scarcity of raw materials while—seen in the light of exports—the small inland market can only absorb a restricted quantity of goods.

I wish to stress, however, that this is indeed a rough and simplified outline of the rather complex problem since Hungary does not import raw materials only while exports are needed and justified for reasons that go beyond the restricted domestic market.

It is pretty obvious that the economy of a small country such as Hungary cannot be based on principles of autarky. This is not a new discovery and is shown in practice by the fact that the country's foreign trade amounts to forty per cent of national income. In the past ten years when Hungarian national income rose by a yearly one per cent on average, a rise in both imports and exports of one and a half per cent was needed. Imports of raw materials and sources of energy had to be increased by 1.6 per cent whenever industrial production rose by one per cent. Under such conditions the probability and efficiency of the country's substantial exports and imports are a question of the very first importance. In recent years, after a new system of economic guidance was introduced in Hungary, this question was given a greater share of the limelight. Thus, it seems necessary to analyse the changes which took place in the development of Hungarian foreign trade as a result of the economic reform.

Speedy Growth

The basic principles of the economic reform essentially influenced foreign trade in many respects. These basic principles are:

— The independence, initiative and responsibility of enterprises in economic matters considerably increased as a result of the reform. On the basis of their interest in profits, enterprises decide questions concerning production and sale for themselves.

— The central guidance of the economy is mainly implemented, efficiently and according to plan, by means of economic (indirect) regulators such as credit policy and the imposition of taxes instead of the earlier system which relied on the prescription of specific quantities; a further aim of economic regulators is to ensure harmony between social interests and the interests of enterprises.

— As a result of the new system of economic guidance, commodity and money

relations as well as categories of the latter such as money, prices, profitability and the planned and regulated market now play a more active role.

— It is considered an important basic principle to co-ordinate more efficiently the domestic market and markets abroad in order to make the most of the advantages of the international division of labour.

Hungary's foreign trade has grown dynamically since 1968—the first year of the reform—: export increased on the average by 11 per cent and imports by 15 per cent a year. Foreign trade increased at a faster rate than national income, that is on the average by 6.2 per cent a year since 1968. It should be noted that national income grew at a faster rate after the reform was introduced for the average growth rate between 1961 and 1967 was only 5.2 per cent. From 1968 to the end of the first half of 1972 Hungarian foreign trade as a whole increased by 52.5 per cent, and within it trade with capitalist countries grew by 67.3 per cent.

Imports increased at a fast rate and thus ensured unbroken reproduction and, besides, permitted an improvement in the supply of consumer goods in addition. Growing imports allowed one to supply industry and agriculture with more modern materials, component parts and machines permitting the carrying out of changes in production methods. The product pattern for export purposes was more in confirmity with the demands of markets abroad than in the years preceding the economic reform.

There is no doubt that the results achieved are mainly due to the economic reform. Unlike in earlier years, an organic relationship was established between inland prices and foreign market prices after 1968, hence enterprises could see more clearly the effects and consequences of their export and import activities. Apart from a few exceptions, enterprises were allowed to buy foreign exchange freely to complete payments for imports needed; this being a significant step forward. New forms of economic co-operation have been established, for example, a number of enterprises were vested with the right to make foreign trade deals on their own and new types of trade links allow enterprises engaged in production and foreign trade companies to establish joint ventures. As a result enterprises engaged in production became more familiar with the demands and possibilities of external markets. Since exports make a considerable impact on the results of productive enterprises it is obvious that—under the changed conditions—they can adapt themselves more flexibly to the possibilities of the market than earlier.

A sounder production structure

Imports generally increased at a faster rate than exports. Between 1961 and 1970 a unit increase in the social product generally involved a 2.01 per cent growth in exports and a 2.34 per cent growth in imports. As I mentioned already, imports grew by an average 15 per cent since the introduction of the reform. This, however, includes 30 per cent in 1970 and 21 per cent in 1971.

As a result the trade balance of the country was negative in most years, this being particularily true of trade with capitalist countries. 1969 was the only exception when Hungary, showing herself most elastic in exploiting a boom on capitalist markets, succeeded in establishing a favourable balance. More lukewarm demand, and falling Hungarian exports resulting therefrom, pointed to certain vulnerable points in Hungarian industrial production. It is clear that such a state of affairs cannot be maintained over a longish period of time, particularily when, as it is the case in Hungary, a trade deficit can only be partially made up from other sources, such as shipping, transit trade and travel.

There are basically two ways in which equilibrium can be restored, one is a reduction in imports and the other is an increase in exports. A reduction in, or limitation of,

imports can however only offer a short term solution at best. In the long run a reduction in the import of either raw materials or machines or equipment would mean a slowing down of economic growth, while a reduction in consumer goods would be contrary to the standards of living policy of the government. In the long run a growth of exports is the only possible solution. This does not of course mean growth at any price. The object is to increase the most profitable exports. This raises a number of problems which were in part inherited from the past.

In Hungary talk of changes in the production structure has for some time now referred not to the macrostructure, since changes there were carried out some years ago: in 1970 industrial exports made up 87.1 per cent of exports as a whole, and agricultural ones 12.9 per cent. Before the war, in 1938, the share of industry was a mere 38.2 per cent.

But it was precisely the accelerated industrialization of the post-war years, linked as it was to the wish to further autarky, which created certain trends which have to be corrected. In the early years of industrialization the production of numerous commodities, and even whole industries, was initiated, which did not prove competitive once comparisons with other countries were made.

This problem increasingly came to the fore when the economic reform was introduced. The level of their technology, the conditions of production and the price obtained for their commodities is most important indeed to enterprises, given their present structure of interests. It is part of the basic principles of economic direction in Hungary that changes in the structure of exports and imports, and of production, are closely interrelated. It is not worth while to engage in the production of goods in Hungary which, either because of investment costs or unfavourable conditions of production or difficulties in selling, can be imported more cheaply. This applies not only to the introduction of new products but also to continuing with the manufacture of existing commodities.

A process has got going in recent years which, though moving slowly and not at the required rate, means that these ideas will be implemented. There have been cases where imports have replaced goods manufactured at a loss or at relatively high costs in Hungary. These include various types of transistor radios, machines and equipment. Industry aims to replace these by goods that can be profitably sold at home and abroad.

It is obvious that such changes take time and that an optimal production structure does not occur just because it has been decided on. Human factors are also important, habits that were established in the course of many years. These however are not here discussed. What I have tried to do is to indicate the technological and economic conditions for attaining this objective. The facts discussed are of course still only individual cases, what has been achieved does not as yet significantly effect the results of the economy as such.

Becoming part of the international division of labour

From the aforesaid it has already become clear that the actual system of economic regulators prompts enterprises to produce commodities which are competitive on the world market. The question now arises: are Hungarian enterprises in command of means enabling them to carry out the changes needed to become competitive on an international scale?

In the first place there is a development fund which every enterprise constitutes out of its own profits enabling it to modernize production. In addition, Hungarian banks grant credits to facilitate the endeavours of enterprises aiming to modernize. Enterprises can invest available financial resources in

production in various forms. Hungarian enterprises are in continuous search of ways with the help of which the efficiency of investments and development can be raised. More and more licences are bought and know-how is acquired, and an increasing number of co-operation agreements in production have been concluded with enterprises of both socialist and capitalist countries. This is in conformity with a widespread tendency throughout the world.

Agreements on the specialization of production and co-operation concluded with socialist countries within the framework of CMEA are increasingly connected with that kind of large-scale production which determines, at the same time, the structure of the particular section of industry. Specialization agreements concern the division of labour according to products, that is, partners of a co-operation agreement establish the division of labour in respect to the production and sale of a certain commodity. Experience shows that socialist co-operation is particularly important in sectors of production such as computer techniques, electronic elements and synthetics and also includes technological development within these industries. It is of mutual interest to tighten production relations by organizing the coproduction of part units on a broader basis. A case in point is cooperation in the production of vehicles for public transport, however, Soviet–Hungarian co-operation in the production of machines for the textile industry is also worthy of note. Hungarian enterprises produce various component parts of textile machines in return for modern micro-shuttle looms.

Co-operation relations in production established with enterprises of capitalist countries further Hungarian technological growth and help to expand the country's market. On the basis of these agreements commodities can now be produced in which there is an actual demand on the world market and new markets are opened up which Hungary was unable to reach earlier. More than two hundred co-operation agreements with enterprises of capitalist countries have been concluded up to now; these agreements also include the sharing and common development of intellectual property and many agreements are designed to allot different stages of production to the partners. Such agreements have been concluded—to mention only a few—between the Hungarian Refrigerating Machine Factory and the Clark Equipment Co. on the joint production of commercial refrigerating furniture, between the Győr Waggon and Machine Factory and MAN on the common production of heavy-duty vehicles and between Danuvia and Rexroth on the joint production of hydraulic elements.

The development of co-operation in the food-processing industry is also significant. Let me name only a few of the many examples: the Hungarian Refrigerating Industry concluded in 1961, an agreement of the production of fast-frozen products with Findus–Burman of Sweden and Iglo of the German Federal Republic; as a result of this co-operation the export of fast-frozen products to capitalist countries increased from 28 per cent to 76 per cent. Co-operation agreement concluded in 1968 between the Research Institute for Stock-Breeding and Lehmann's of the German Federal Republic lays down a hybridization breeding programme as a result of which a stock of hybrid hogs is to be raised which will ensure a minimum output of 200,000 porkers by 1973.

The purchase of licences and know-how is prevalent particularly in the engineering industry. It can be expected that a number of recently acquired important licences will have a far-reaching impact on the engineering industry as a whole. These licences include the computer type 10010 with fixed magnetic disc containers on the basis of which the manufacture in Hungary of instruments for the computer industry can be started; another licence provides a new smelting and rolling technology needed for

the implementation of the aluminium programme. The purchase of the Ribbon-type production line for the manufacture of incandescent lamps is a great step forward in technological and production capacity growth in this industry.

Hungarian products on markets abroad

Table
(in millions of dollars)

	Imports			Exports		
	1967	1969	1971	1967	1969	1971
Socialist countries	1,183.0	1,305.8	1,963.5	1,166.8	1,417.6	1,723.1
Non-socialist countries	592.2	621.8	1,026.1	534.3	660.0	777.3
Total:	1,775.2	1,927.6	2,989.6	1,701.1	2,083.6	2,500.4

The greater part of Hungarian foreign trade, that is, 63–65 per cent, is transacted with CMEA member countries on the basis of long-term agreements, and within the latter, on the basis of goods exchange protocols which are reconsidered every year. Machines, which at present amount to 32 per cent of exports as a whole, are the most significant Hungarian export item, and according to estimates a further increase in the export of products of the engineering industry is to be expected. The export of industrial consumer goods—amounting to about 26 per cent—stands second. In imports, raw materials and semi-finished goods —with an import ratio amounting to about 45 per cent—stand first, while machines, the proportion of which in imports is around thirty per cent, stand second.

The export of Hungarian commodities to developed capitalist countries grew by 53 per cent between 1968 and 1971; that is, it increased at a faster rate than the average growth of foreign trade. It is one of the basic aims of Hungarian foreign trade policy that trade with all partners should be transacted without discriminating restrictions. The improved international situation and easing of the earlier embargo policy of Western countries as well as the growing interest of the latter in exports to socialist markets considerably contributed to the good results achieved in this field, as compared to previous years.

In recent years Hungary concluded long-term trade agreements with a number of capitalist countries, these agreements establish the main principles of future development of trade relations as well as ways and means of ensuring trade free of discrimination. Generally speaking it can be said that discriminating measures prejudicial to Hungarian exports are on the decline and that bilateral trade is developing prosperously mainly with those countries which were the first to abandon such restrictions. Although Hungarian trade policy mainly favours bilateral relations, Hungary is not averse to multilateral contracts or to joining multilateral organizations if these are in accord with the country's economic interests, and do not clash with those of other socialist

countries. Based on these assumptions Hungary applied for GATT membership. The main point of the negotiations on the terms of admission is that Hungary expects all member countries of GATT to honour, also in respect to Hungary, the decisions prohibiting any kind of discrimination—as laid down by the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. A number of West European countries however have so far shown themselves unwilling to respect this stipulation and wishing to have a free hand and continue to impose discriminating measures against Hungary, as well as maintaining quantitative import restrictions, only because of the country's different social and economic system. Hungary carries on negotations with GATT about tariffs and is not willing to accept quantitative import restrictions in return for tariff reductions obtained through GATT.

Exports to developing countries grew by 61 per cent and imports from developing countries by 36 per cent between 1968 and 1971. The greatest increase was achieved in exports to Iraq, Kuwait, Syria and Iran, however, trade relations with Egypt and Libya also developed favourably. Trade links with Peru and Brasil developed at the fastest rate as regards Latin-American countries. One third of the export to Latin-American countries consisted of machines and precision tools.

The composition of Hungarian imports from developing countries changed in recent years. The proportion of industrial consumer goods has also increased recently, as has that of raw materials. In 1972 Hungary imported twice as many industrial consumer goods from developing countries as in 1970. The import of agricultural products from developing countries is also on the increase.

*

The aim of the present paper is to make it plain that foreign trade is of outstanding importance for Hungary's economy. Whether one approaches the problem from the side of imports taking into consideration the country's lack of raw materials, and machines and licences needed for technological progress and modernization, or from the side of exports, bearing in mind that the interest of both enterprises and the national economy requires that economically efficient mass production should be carried on, it becomes unequivocally clear how vitally important for Hungary it is to participate actively in the international division of labour. In this respect conditions on external markets have considerably improved in recent years and since the expansion of the international division of labour is in the interest of almost every country, it is to be hoped that this trend will continue in the years to come.

MELINDA SZABÓ

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sirs,

I am writing this note to thank you for sending me the very interesting QUARTERLY which I have enjoyed reading from beginning to end. I hope you will take this to mean that I think the magazine is a worthy publication and representative of intellectual life in Hungary today.

Erskine Caldwell
Dunedin, Florida

Sirs,

Thank you very much indeed for sending me the Spring Number of The New Hungarian Quarterly containing Dr. Gerő's article (How Pest-Buda became Budapest) which did indeed interest me greatly. There is mention in it of Adam Clark in connection with the building of the Budapest Lánchíd. I live quite close to Hammersmith bridge, a mini chain bridge also built by him, and the Church where he is buried is just next door.

I haven't yet read all through the Quarterly as it only arrived today, but I can see from the Contents that there is much to enjoy.

Anne Bodnar
30 Peabody Cottages
Hammersmith
London, W6

Erratum. Under the illustrations facing p. 193 in No. 50, the photographer's name should read *László Vargha.* The NHQ regrets the error.

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HÁMOS, György (b. 1910). Journalist, writer. His short stories, reviews and essays appear in many dailies and weeklies in Budapest. His musical *Aranycsillag* ("Golden star") was performed in 1950, his filmscript *Két vallomás* ("Two confessions") was shown in 1957. A volume of his reviews and articles appeared in 1973.

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KÖPECZI, Béla (b. 1922). Historian and literary historian, Secretary General of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, formerly Professor of French at Eötvös University in Budapest. A member of the Editorial Board of this review. See his "Socialist Realism — The Continuing Debate", in No. 24, "Hungarian University Reform", in No. 35, "A Controversy on the New Left" in No. 45 and "Fatherland and Nation" in No. 50 of *The N.H.Q.*

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MARÓTI, Lajos (b. 1930). Poet, novelist and essayist, a physicist by training, at present editorial director of *Gondolat* Publishing House in Budapest. See "McLuhan's Media" in No. 29, "Moravia's Adventure in China" in No. 32, and "The Building of Socialism on a Higher Level" in No. 44 of *The N.H.Q.*

MÁNDY, Iván (b. 1918). Writer, author of short stories, novels, radio plays and children's books. Some of his works were published in German and French. See "Morning at the Cinema" in No. 4, "Private Lives" in No. 26, and "Girl from the Swimming Pool" in No. 36 of *The N.H.Q.*

NAGY, Péter (b. 1920). Literary historian and critic, Professor of Comparative Literature at Eötvös University in Budapest. Recently spent a year as guest professor at the Sorbonne in Paris. See "The Discovery of George Steiner" in No. 36, his review of Susan Sontag's "Against Interpretation" in No. 37 and his essay "Socialist Realism — Style or Approach?" in No. 48 of *The N.H.Q.*

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cooperative movement and the economic reform in Hungary. See his "Social and Political Effects of the New Economic Mechanism" in No. 34 and his "Hungary the Economic Situation and Development" in No. 47 of *The N.H.Q.*

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