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of Hungarian Studies

Power Struggle in Hungary: Analysis in Post-war Domestic Politics, August–November 1919 *EVA S. BALOGH*

Symbolist and Decadent Elements in Early Twentieth Century Hungarian Drama *IVAN SANDERS*

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The Folk Traditions of Rural Hungary: A Photographic Record *VERONIKA GERVERS-MOLNÁR*

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Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies, Vol. IV, No. 1 (Spring 1977)

Power Struggle in Hungary: Analysis in Post-war Domestic Politics August–November 1919

Eva S. Balogh

In the history of nations there are times which can truly be called watersheds. The one brief year between October 1918 and November 1919 is a case in point in the history of modern Hungary. Within a year after the lost war Hungary's situation changed drastically: from monarchy to republic; from old-fashioned liberalism to white terror; from sham parliamentarianism, through brief periods of precarious democracy and bolshevism, to no recognized government at all—and all this against the backdrop of foreign invasions and the ultimate loss of two-thirds of the country's former territories. By August 1919, the revolutionary period was ostensibly over, but there was no political consolidation in sight. For almost four months a bitter power struggle took place in Budapest in which all the old and new parties participated and in which the Allies, eager to conclude peace with a representative government, also had a hand.

The political crisis of 1919, central to an understanding of Hungary's inter-war development, has not received sufficient attention in the hands of those few historians who have studied the period in any depth. Early conservatives saw the fierce political struggle as simple "personal jostling" for power among selfish and petty political upstarts.[1] Marxist critics have been apt to dismiss the party struggle altogether as a mere camouflage for the united effort of "the Hungarian ruling classes" to introduce white terror, stamp out bolshevism, and punish the working class for its support of the Hungarian Soviet Republic.[2] Recent American studies also brush aside the political crisis of 1919 as irrelevant. They either claim that "the fierceness of the struggle that ensued between factions [was] misleading" since "in reality, no sharp [ideological] difference existed between the groups"[3] or they ignore the crisis on the grounds that the "political sub-structures" were neither important nor influential in the face of the growing power of the military.[4]

This paper, by contrast, views the party struggle of 1919 not as the

beginning of Hungary's counterrevolutionary era but rather as the end of her unfinished revolution of 1918. In this light, the power struggle ceases to be a squabble among petty politicians or a useless exercise of like-minded counterrevolutionaries; instead, it takes on the dimensions of the final agony of the makers of the October revolution.

Outwardly, the October revolution of 1918 seemed to mark the peaceful transition of Hungarian political life into modernity. There was only one minor armed clash and one assassination: István Tisza, the embodiment of the old order, was murdered on the night of October 31. Beneath this calm exterior, however, lay the seeds of political turbulence. Although the new revolutionary regime was genuinely committed to the purest democratic principles, the three-party coalition of Mihály Károlyi was hardly representative of the Hungarian people. The Social Democratic party, the most powerful component of the coalition, could rely on organized labor, but the working class in agricultural Hungary was inherently weak. The other two parties, the Radical party of Oszkár Jászi and the Party of Independence of Mihály Károlyi, appealing as they did to the democratic segments of the middle classes, were in an even weaker position. In spite of the country's long parliamentary tradition, true supporters of democracy were few and far between in Hungary.

Revolutionary governments are apt to be created overnight, but they are rarely able to withstand the test of time. The coalition, hastily formed on October 31, 1918, was no exception. It is true, the Hungarian people greeted the formation of the new government with great enthusiasm, but their outbursts of joy were as much due to the arrival of peace and independence as they were to the passing of the old regime. Soon enough, the population would become disenchanted. The first stirrings, however, came from within the government itself; the Social Democrats, who had been given two ministerial posts in the original coalition, demanded a larger share of power. They were successful in their demands; by January, the Social Democratic party was the strongest in the coalition. Other groups were not so successful in gaining a voice in the government. In the October coalition, for example, the largest segment of Hungarian society, namely the peasantry, was entirely ignored. It was not until January that István Nagyatádi Szabó, the peasant leader of the Smallholders' party, was offered a portfolio in the government.

Another group which found itself outside of the coalition both in October and in January comprised the conservative middle classes, the petit bourgeoisie, and the unorganized and unattached blue collar

workers of the cities. The spokesman for this amorphous group was the Christian Social People's party. The rise of the Christian Socials had been rapid. In 1910 they had sent only a handful of representatives to Parliament; by January 1919, they were regarded as a serious electoral threat to the survival of the Károlyi regime.[5] Nor was their strength overestimated. In the first post-war elections of 1920, they ran shoulder to shoulder with the Smallholders' party, the single largest party in the country.

While the Christian Social People's party was the most important oppositional party to the left-dominated coalition, it was not the only one. The large and middle-size landowners, in anticipation of the proposed land reform, established a party of their own, ironically called the National Peasant party. The large industrialists followed suit and created the Hungarian Bourgeois party. The conservative politicians of the old regime, after a few months of hibernation, founded the Party of National Unity. The right-wing members of Károlyi's Party of Independence abandoned their party leader and organized their own Party of Independence. The former Democratic party, the party of the Budapest middle classes (especially the Jews), re-emerged as the Bourgeois Democratic party. Although the organization of these parties was only in an embryonic state in January 1919 and although their following was small, their very creation was indicative of the unsettled political conditions which characterized the period. It was becoming evident that only elections could put an end to the chaos which was developing in Budapest.

However desirable elections had become by early 1919, they were not to take place. On March 21, the Social Democrats and a handful of Communists, burying their differences, united and declared the establishment of the Hungarian Soviet Republic. The Soviet Republic, which speedily introduced a one-party system on the Bolshevik model, lasted only 133 days, but its effects on Hungarian politics were devastating. It thoroughly discredited the Social Democrats without whom, it was charged with some justice, the ill-fated dictatorship of the proletariat could never have been introduced. It also further undermined the already battered reputation of the Károlyi coalition which, it was widely held, was either unable or unwilling to check the unwarranted ambitions of the Social Democrats and the reckless, subversive activities of the Communists. The shift in public opinion towards the right, gradual between October 1918 and March 1919, took a violent turn after the fall of the Soviet regime.

Given the violently anti-Communist and anti-Socialist sentiments of

the population by late July 1919, the formation of an all-Socialist government on August 1 was clearly ill-conceived. From its inception, the new government was faced with a distrustful, sometimes hostile population and a disobedient civil service corps. Moreover, the Allies made it clear to the Social Democrats that they would not recognize any Hungarian government which was not representative. Reluctant but hard-pressed, Gyula Peidl, prime minister for six brief days, did initiate conversations with select party leaders. It was evident, however, that, even after the fiasco of the Soviet Republic, the Socialists did not envisage a coalition in which they held a subordinate position. By all indications, their concessions were meager. They tentatively agreed to allot two cabinet posts to the counterrevolutionary government of Szeged, a group formed during the Soviet period outside of Communist-dominated Hungary. In addition, they offered one portfolio to Nagyatádi Szabó of the Smallholders' party and another to Sándor Giesswein, a Christian Social whose ideological outlook, quite democratic and progressive, appealed to the Social Democrats but by no means reflected the views of his party as a whole.[6]

Social Democratic plans to dominate the projected coalition government came to an abrupt end on August 6 when a group of counterrevolutionaries, sensing the Socialists' determination to retain political leadership, staged a *coup d'état* and arrested the whole cabinet. If nothing else, the *coup,* which was executed expeditiously and which met with widespread approval within Hungary, should have convinced the Social Democrats that their opponents were determined and that they themselves were defenseless and without support. Yet they were not so easily discouraged. Due to the Allies' insistence on a coalition government, the Social Democrats still had a chance to wield some political power. Perhaps, they thought, the clock could still be turned back to the final days of the Károlyi period when their political strength was at its height and their power supreme.

István Friedrich, the new prime minister, had no intention of excluding the Social Democratic party from his government. Yet, as a conservative member of the former Károlyi party, he was determined to revert to the *status quo* of the early phase of the democratic revolution when the Social Democrats played only a subordinate role in the coalition.[7] Accordingly, Friedrich's first plan for a coalition government included only one portfolio for the Social Democrats. Otherwise, he planned to resign the premiership in favor of Márton Lovászy, a disaffected Károlyi man who had gathered the majority of the Party of Independence members, including István Friedrich, under his banner in

January 1919. Friedrich, most likely, had his eye on the post of minister of war since he had served as undersecretary of war in the Károlyi government between November 1918 and January 1919, when he had resigned as a protest over the government's steady shift to the left. Friedrich asked Gusztáv Gratz, an old-time liberal, to be foreign minister and Lóránt Hegedüs, a banking expert and a member of the Hungarian Bourgeois party, to be minister of finance. In addition, the Smallholders would have been given two ministerial seats and the Szeged government one or two portfolios. As during the Károlyi period, the Christian Social People's party was ignored.[8]

Both the Social Democrats and Friedrich were unrealistic in their political strategy. Turning the clock back to March 1919 was as illusory a goal as returning to the *status quo* of October 1918. No longer were the Social Democrats the only target of public wrath; all politicians who had participated in the October revolution, including Friedrich himself, were suspect. Lovászy's proposed premiership was immediately vetoed by the other politicians because he was "compromised" by his role in the democratic revolution of 1918.[9] István Nagyatádi Szabó, who in January 1919 had been quite happy to join the Socialist-dominated coalition government, now refused to participate in a government in which the Social Democrats had even one portfolio.[10]

As Friedrich's plans for a coalition government were crumbling, the extreme right made its first bid for power. On August 7, the radical wing of the Christian Social People's party, under the leadership of István Haller, a former member of parliament and editor of a Catholic newspaper, and János Anka, a right radical journalist, formed a new party: the National Christian Socialist party.[11] According to participants, the actual organization of the party had already begun during the Soviet period, and the party leaders claimed that by the end of the Kun regime they had 15,000 followers. This number may have been an exaggeration, but the Christian Socialist party's determination was real. On August 14, István Haller and János Anka led a twelve-member delegation to the prime minister[12] "to demonstrate that their party was the strongest political base in Hungary" and to demand an all-Christian—i.e., anti-liberal, right radical, and anti-Socialist—cabinet. Moreover, the party barraged the prime minister's office with "hundreds of delegations" in order to convince Friedrich that no government could survive without its active participation.[13] Friedrich, who had originally planned to exclude even the conservative faction of the Christian Social People's party, was now confronted with a vocal and well-organized group of a truly radical composition which claimed wide public support for its ideology.

Friedrich, hard pressed by the right radicals, received no assistance from the Social Democrats. He soon decided to give three portfolios to the Social Democratic party—one more than they had had in the first Károlyi cabinet, but Ernő Garami, the real authority of the decimated party, flatly refused the new offer.[14] The ostensible reason behind the refusal was the presence of the Archduke Joseph, a Habsburg, as governor of Hungary. However, as later developments proved, Garami's real objection was much more fundamental; he simply refused to participate in a government which was not dominated by his own party and the radical democrats of the Károlyi period. In fact, he was seriously thinking in terms of his own premiership.[15] Under these circumstances, the organization of a moderate coalition government was unlikely.

Laboring under unusually difficult conditions, Friedrich showed himself to be a master of political manipulation. On August 15, he was able to announce the formation of a coalition government which, if it had ever been allowed to function, might have formed the basis of a moderate administration. He managed to overcome Nagyatádi Szabó's objections to Social Democratic participation in the government, and the Smallholders received two portfolios in the coalition. Lovászy, in a generous spirit, accepted the post of foreign minister. Friedrich courageously withstood the right radicals' demand for a purely Christian government and persuaded their leaders to join a coalition in which they would be in the minority. One portfolio was given to Károly Huszár, a man of the conservative faction, and one to István Haller, the spokesman of the radicals. Three ministerial posts were reserved for the Social Democratic party. Thus in the sixteen-member cabinet only four men belonged to the conservative or right-wing parties, while seven ministers were drawn from the Party of Independence, the Smallholders, and the Social Democratic party. The rest of the posts were filled with non-political experts. It seemed that Friedrich and Lovászy were determined to keep a balance between the extreme right and the extreme left. Lovászy announced that the new government was resolute in its struggle "not only against Bolshevism but also against reaction."[16] Time proved, however, that this was a very difficult proposition in post-war Hungary.

The survival of Friedrich's coalition government required the active support of the Social Democratic party. In the first place, the Allies refused to recognize a government which did not include Socialist representatives. Moreover, the democratic bourgeois parties were far too weak, without Socialist support, to withstand the formidable attack on their ranks from the right. Lovászy therefore announced that the

government laid "great stress" on the good will of the Social Democrats, who would "surely agree to join" the coalition once the government demonstrated its democratic convictions.[17] Lovászy's hopes were dashed. Garami showed no inclination to cooperate with the government, claiming that the presence of the Archduke Joseph precluded participation, regardless of the composition of the government. In addition, it was rumored that the Social Democrats were not satisfied with three cabinet posts; they demanded five.[18] That demand, if met, would have wrecked the formation of a cabinet since the animosities between Socialists and non-Socialists had only intensified since August 6.

The readiness of Lovászy and Nagyatádi Szabó to make common cause with István Friedrich was a blow to the Social Democratic leadership. Their party had been abandoned by the very people on whom Garami had counted in his "struggle against Friedrich,"[19] whom he disliked and mistrusted. Indeed, the Social Democratic party seemed to be totally isolated. In this situation, the only hope for the party was the intervention of the Great Powers. Therefore, a day after the formation of the new cabinet, Garami departed for Vienna to sound out and to influence the Allied representatives.[20] His aim was twofold: to prevent a possible Habsburg restoration and, with the removal of Joseph as the head of state, to cause the fall of Friedrich's coalition. Garami's mission was successful. Under pressure from members of the American Relief Administration and its director, Herbert Hoover, the Supreme Council forced Joseph out of office on August 22, 1919.[21] The Hungarian Social Democratic party seemed victorious.

But the Socialist triumph at the time of Joseph's departure from office was hollow. What followed was a rapid shift to the right both in public opinion and in Friedrich's outlook. Realizing that the Social Democrats had been instrumental in the removal of the Archduke Joseph from office and, consequently, in the fall of his government, Friedrich—never very warm towards the Socialists—became openly antagonistic. He made dark references to "politicians" who were trying to influence the Entente missions against his government and to "intrigues" which would never stop regardless of the composition of the cabinet.[22] He reconsidered his original offer of three posts to the Social Democratic party, claiming that "the Socialists were not entitled to a larger field of action than their numbers warranted,"[23] and on August 24 announced that he was willing to grant the Socialists only two portfolios.[24] The Social Democratic party answered in kind. On the day of Friedrich's announcement, the Executive Committee of the party voted against participation in any government headed by István Friedrich.[25]

Friedrich's reaction was violent. He warned that although he had had to sacrifice "the symbol of Christian Hungary in the person of the Archduke Joseph" to the ambitions of the Social Democratic party, he would "yield no further."[26] For good measure, he added that he would not leave office "to gratify the personal aspirations of other parties."[27] The archduke's forced resignation and the fall of the coalition was a watershed; from this point on, Friedrich began to court right-wing political elements.[28]

The new government which Friedrich formed on August 28 reflected the extreme political polarization of post-revolutionary Hungary. Lovászy and Nagyatádi Szabó, duly impressed with Garami's success in winning Allied support, hurriedly abandoned what looked like Friedrich's sinking ship. Desperate to form a government, Friedrich turned to the National Peasant party, the party of the all-powerful landowning class. No longer did he attempt to draw the Social Democrats into the combination; on the contrary, he filled the cabinet posts which had been reserved for them with members of the Christian Socialist party, which had begun a campaign to build a powerful Christian trade union movement.

Public opinion overwhelmingly favored the *de facto* government of Friedrich. An Italian newspaperman observed that the prime minister's popularity had soared in the previous few weeks "owing to his bold and energetic attitude."[29] Vilmos Vázsonyi, a Jewish liberal politician and head of the Bourgeois Democratic party, had to admit that at least three-fourths of the population supported the existing government, which represented "the real true general opinion of Hungary."[30] István Bethlen, a conservative aristocrat and no friend of Friedrich, confessed that, contrary to his earlier opinion, he no longer believed that a coalition government was a prerequisite to the political consolidation of the country. In his view, "the socialist party . . . [had] lost considerable ground even among the industrial and working classes" while the "Government of Mr. Friedrich [had] succeeded in gaining a crushing majority of public opinion."[31]

Their influence greatly diminished, the liberal and Social Democratic parties sought ways in which to re-establish themselves. After abandoning a wild scheme by Lovászy and "other prominent men" to overthrow Friedrich's government by force,[32] the liberals made serious attempts to organize a bloc which would include all parties left of center. In spite of protracted negotiations, no liberal bloc ever emerged; the left was far too disorganized and ideologically divided. The first man to dissent was Vázsonyi, whose party had an important following in Budapest. Upon

hearing that Lovászy had been contemplating a *coup d'état,* Vázsonyi began negotiations with Friedrich.[33] The prime minister, always eager to receive support from the liberals, welcomed Vázsonyi with open arms, but he was soon forced to retreat when members of his cabinet and the newspapers of the Christian parties violently objected to the Jewish Vázsonyi joining the cabinet.[34] Although Vázsonyi's attempt to cooperate with Friedrich was frustrated, his very willingness to abandon the cause of Lovászy and Garami showed the fragile nature of the proposed liberal bloc. The next problem the leftist forces encountered was the attitude of István Nagyatádi Szabó, whose cooperation was vital to the liberal cause. In fact, Nagyatádi Szabó could make or break any political grouping in the immediate post-war period. Sensing the Smallholders' growing importance and always eager to be on the winning side, Nagyatádi Szabó refused to "give up [his] party's independence"[35] and preferred to sit on the fence until the political alignments gave a clearer indication of the relative strength of the right and the left.

The liberal bloc did not materialize, but the extensive reporting of the preparations for the formation of such a bloc immediately spurred the Christian and national parties into action. Fearing a concentration of the opposition parties, the leaders of the rightist parties began to consolidate their ranks. Unlike the liberals, the Christian and national groups managed to bring about a Christian bloc within weeks. Negotiations began on October 4 when the Christian National party, headed by Pál Teleki, merged with the Christian Social party.[36] A few days later, further negotiations took place with other Christian parties, and on October 25, 1919, the establishment of the Party of Christian Unity was announced.[37] Moreover, negotiations with other parties such as the still uncommitted Smallholders' and Peasant parties continued with a view to establishing a massive Christian bloc.[38]

Once the Social Democratic leadership realized that the liberals could not organize a strong bloc, they decided to seek Allied help abroad once again. On October 8, Ernő Garami and Manó Buchinger left for Vienna, ostensibly to negotiate with the representative of the Czechoslovak government in the Austrian capital on the question of Czechoslovakia's supply of coal for impoverished Hungary. Their real goal, however, was not Czech coal, although they did get that;[39] rather, Garami and Buchinger spent their time in Vienna negotiating with Entente and Czech representatives in an attempt "to get rid of Friedrich."[40] Their original plan called for the retention of Romanian troops in Budapest, under whose protection a coalition government, composed predominantly of the parties of the left, could be established.[41]

The Allied representatives were not enthusiastic; after all, the Supreme Council had been trying to dislodge the Romanians from the Hungarian capital for months.[42] The Socialists' next move, therefore, was to approach the Czechoslovak government. On October 15, Foreign Minister Edward Beneš received a copy of the Hungarian plan, the result of cooperation between the Social Democrats and émigré politicians of the Károlyi era. Their memorandum proposed that an international gendarmerie of 15,000 to 20,000 troops should be created and sent to Hungary in order to pacify the country. Furthermore, the memorandum envisaged a new coalition government in which one-third of the cabinet posts would be allocated to the Social Democrats, one-third to the liberal bourgeois parties, and one-third to the growing Christian bloc. It was not a modest political plan, considering the strength of the left-of-center parties, and it could have been achieved only by the employment of an international force.[43] But Beneš liked the plan and, although he could not "promise them any active intervention . . . without the concurrence of the Great Allied Powers," he was ready to support it in its general outline. Accordingly, with minor alterations, Beneš sent the memorandum to the Quai d'Orsay where, again, it was favorably received.[44] In the hands of the Supreme Council, however, it met its death; in spite of French support, the British, American, and Italian representatives violently opposed it.[45]

In the meantime, in the absence of the Social Democratic top leadership, the bourgeois liberal parties began to consolidate their ranks. Realizing that the formation of a massive oppositional bloc was hopeless, they concentrated their efforts on the creation of a single liberal party. Even this modest goal, however, was beyond the reach of the party leaders. From the long negotiations two liberal parties eventually emerged. On October 12, Vázsonyi joined forces with the small, newly-created National Liberal party, establishing the National Democratic Bourgeois party.[46] On October 15, Márton Lovászy and Ferenc Heinrich agreed to merge their parties, the Party of Independence and the Hungarian Bourgeois party, calling their combination the All-Hungarian National party.[47] Both groups sensed their inherent political weakness. Vázsonyi anxiously awaited the arrival of Count Gyula Andrássy, Jr., the monarchy's last foreign minister, and Count Albert Apponyi, the doyen of Hungary's pre-war political life; perhaps they could assist him in his negotiations with the other parties.[48] Lovászy, once a very close friend of Károlyi, turned to the politicians of the former Party of National Work, that is the followers of István Tisza, Károlyi's archenemy.[49] At the same time, both parties worked hard to

induce Nagyatádi Szabó to stand behind their combinations, thereby hoping to gain the sympathy and support of the Hungarian peasant class. The Smallholders, however, refused to commit themselves; Nagyatádi Szabó announced that his party was "Christian, liberal, and democratic and therefore destined to be a bridge between the Christian bloc and the liberal parties."[50]

The fruitless negotiations among the opposition parties, their inability to gain the active support of the Smallholders, and their realization that the Christian bloc was rapidly gaining ground put considerable stress on the formally united but ideologically divided liberal parties. The All-Hungarian National party was the first to show the signs of strain. Lovászy and Heinrich could not agree on immediate strategy. In the former's opinion, negotiations with Friedrich would be in vain, especially since the liberals could not organize a united bloc. Heinrich, on the other hand, was quite willing to negotiate with Friedrich. Heinrich, having a stronger position in the party, emerged victorious from this argument. In the second half of October, to the annoyance of the other liberal politicians, the National party, represented by Lovászy and Heinrich, undertook negotiations with the prime minister. The basis of the conversations was a list of demands prepared by Lovászy: the formation of a non-partisan government, an effective check on the growing class and religious hatred, the granting of all political rights, and the restoration of social tranquility. In return, the All-Hungarian National party was ready to join the government. Friedrich, riding high on his popularity and being aware of the weakness of the National party, assumed a rather high-handed attitude. In theory, he agreed with all of Lovászy's demands, but he made it clear to the National party delegation that while he believed that Vázsonyi's Democratic party had a substantial following in Budapest, he was less sure of the National party's strength and constituency.[51] The conversations, not surprisingly, broke down without Friedrich formally answering the demands of the National party or making any promises concerning participation in the government.

The failure of the All-Hungarian National party's negotiations with Friedrich coincided with the arrival in Budapest of Sir George Clerk, the special representative of the Supreme Council, who delivered the Allies' demand for the immediate organization of a coalition government, with or without István Friedrich.[52] Clerk's presence in Budapest indicated that the Great Powers were growing increasingly impatient with the Hungarian political deadlock and were intent on ending it, even if this meant undisguised interference in the domestic affairs of a

vanquished nation. The importance of Clerk's mission was not wasted on Hungary's politicians. Immediately after the arrival of the special representative, there were signs of renewed willingness, at least in certain circles, to end the crisis without further Allied interference. The call for cooperation and unity came, as before, from the All-Hungarian National party in the form of a public appeal published on October 26.[53] This time, Friedrich, fully aware of Clerk's demands, eagerly seized the opportunity to show his conciliatory attitude and his willingness to compromise. The prime minister now readily accepted Lovászy's demands and indicated that he would be happy to negotiate directly with the other opposition parties, including the Social Democrats.[54]

If Clerk's presence in Budapest had a mellowing effect on Friedrich, his disclosure that Social Democratic participation in the government was a prerequisite for recognition had exactly the opposite effect on Garami. The Social Democratic leader admitted that Clerk's revelation "naturally incredibly strengthened the position of the Social Democratic party."[55] In the light of this new information, they once again resolved not to negotiate with István Friedrich under any circumstances.[56] The bargaining position of the Socialists proved to be a powerful magnet which drew the hitherto uncommitted parties into the Social Democratic orbit. Vázsonyi, who had been eager in the past to make his peace with Friedrich, now found himself in perfect agreement with Garami.[57] The Smallholders, who had consistently refused to join either combination, now considered the Social Democratic and liberal parties the clear winners; accordingly, István Nagyatádi Szabó shifted his position and openly committed himself and his party to the anti-Friedrich forces of Garami and Vázsonyi.[58] Finally, the Social Democratic success split the All-Hungarian party. While Ferenc Heinrich, the co-chairman of the party, was negotiating with Friedrich, his colleague Lovászy sided with the leaders of the other opposition parties.[59] Clerk, confronted with what seemed to be united opposition to Friedrich's premiership, concluded that István Friedrich had to resign.[60] The news that Clerk was willing to sacrifice the prime minister for the sake of a workable coalition government spread like wildfire in Budapest.[61]

Friedrich's reaction to the news of his pending political demise was swift and "absolutely defiant."[62] The prime minister took exactly the same position which Garami had taken all along. If the Allies insisted on his removal from the head of the government, the Party of Christian National Unity and the cabinet members would boycott the negotiations. The conservative bloc would thus not be represented in the cabinet, in spite of the fact that everyone knew that it had the majority of the public behind it.[63]

The Allies threatened Friedrich's premiership but, ironically enough, they also contributed indirectly to his obdurate refusal to resign and to the Party of Christian Unity's steadfast support of his stance. At long last, the Allies forced the Romanian army to leave Budapest. The Hungarian National Army, hitherto confined to territories west of the Danube, would now be responsible for the maintenance of order in the Hungarian capital. This army had been created by the Szeged counter-revolutionary government during the Soviet period and, within a few months, it had become a notorious gathering place for *déclassé* elements who espoused a right radical ideology and who introduced a veritable white terror in the territories under their jurisdiction. The Friedrich government, having no independent military force behind it, had endeavored, on the one hand, to persuade Admiral Miklós Horthy, the supreme commander, to put an end to his army's illegal activities and, on the other, to convince him to support the *de facto* government in Budapest. Up to November, he had been unsuccessful in both of these endeavors; the atrocities continued unabated, and Horthy refused to subordinate his army to the government. In a power struggle between the right and the left, however, the likelihood of the National Army supporting the rightist forces seemed almost certain. Admittedly, Horthy was not entirely satisfied with the Friedrich government because "it was not explicitly Christian and national and it [was] still a transition from the Commune,"[64] but its opponents, the Social Democrats and the liberals, were clearly worse. In Horthy's opinion, they were solely responsible for all of Hungary's recent misfortunes. Thus the news of the National Army's arrival in Budapest raised high hopes in the ranks of the Party of Christian National Unity and sent chills down the spines of the Social Democrats and the liberals.

Clerk, fully aware of the army's importance in the political struggle and faced with a deadlock, began negotiations with Miklós Horthy. If he could convince the Supreme Commander to support a coalition government in which the Social Democrats and the liberal parties participated, his mission could easily be accomplished. A promise from Horthy that he would cooperate with such a coalition would lull the suspicions of the leftist parties, and it would, at the same time, break István Friedrich's resistance to his resignation. Once Friedrich left the cabinet, an agreement between the Christian parties and their opponents could be achieved quickly. After all, the politicians of the liberal camp repeatedly assured Clerk that the only obstacle to their participation in the government was the presence of the prime minister.

While Sir George Clerk's decision to employ Horthy in his negotia-

tions with the Hungarian parties was perfectly understandable and, from his own point of view, could be considered "a masterstroke,"[65] the willingness of the Social Democrats and the liberals to negotiate with Horthy seemed totally incomprehensible. Only a few weeks earlier, the Social Democratic party had energetically urged the Supreme Council to disarm the dangerous forces of the National Army.[66] But, though they feared the National Army, they were even more desperate to get rid of Prime Minister Friedrich.

When, on November 4, Clerk asked Horthy to a meeting with leftist politicians and when Vázsonyi, Garami, Lovászy, and Nagyatádi Szabó agreed to accept the Admiral's assurances of his support for a coalition government in which their parties participated, it was clear to contemporary observers that Friedrich's resignation was imminent. It was argued that "if Horthy [was] ready to sit down with Friedrich's political opponents . . . he [left] M. Friedrich without support [so that Friedrich could not] any longer maintain his unbending *non possumus* attitude."[67] The liberal camp was jubilant. Suddenly Horthy, whom they had consistently portrayed as a man of reaction, became a pillar of democracy and "a Hungarian Saint George."[68]

The agreement between the liberal camp and Horthy achieved one of the aims of the opposition, namely, the resignation of István Friedrich as prime minister of Hungary. However, it did not and could not help them to accomplish their main objective. As Garami admitted to Clerk, the Social Democratic party's real desire was the establishment of "a coalition government in which the preponderance of the Christian Union" was broken.[69] The opposition parties pressed their cause in the ensuing negotiations. The Democratic party of Vázsonyi demanded one portfolio in the new government; the All-Hungarian National party of Lovászy, three portfolios, and the Social Democratic party, two.[70] In addition, the Smallholders laid claim to two ministerial posts. But the powerful Christian bloc, though ready to compromise on the person of the prime minister, had every intention of retaining their dominant position in Hungarian political life. They were prepared to admit one liberal, one Social Democrat, and one Smallholder to the cabinet, but they did not contemplate an entirely new political orientation.[71] They found support for their stance in Sir George Clerk, who had made up his mind that the Christian bloc must be fully represented in the cabinet.[72] In this decision, he diagnosed the political climate of the country correctly. At the same time, however, he exhibited a certain distaste for the "extreme Jewish and social democratic elements," as he called the leftist leaders.[73]

The liberals and Social Democrats not only lost Clerk's support in the renewed struggle over the composition of the government; Horthy also began to retreat from the position he had outlined at the November 4 meeting. On November 7, he made a public statement concerning the real meaning of the crucial word 'subordination' which had appeared in the published text of the document signed by the participants in the earlier meeting. Horthy now claimed that he did not mean "to subordinate the army to the government"; instead, he promised "to support the new government just as he had been supporting the Friedrich government."[74] Considering that Horthy had in no way supported the Friedrich government but had in fact worked against it, this announcement sounded most sinister. And if the Social Democrats still had any doubts about Horthy's intentions after November 7, they soon learned of his true feelings for their party. On November 12, Horthy, known for his indiscretions, was interviewed by the correspondent of the *Nemzeti Újság,* the official organ of the Christian bloc. During the interview Horthy announced that "as far as the Social Democrats are concerned, I do not 'negotiate' with them, just as the Romanian troops of occupation did not 'negotiate' with them. I order, and they obey."[75] Clerk's support withdrawn and Horthy's army on the march, the liberal camp had lost all of its trump cards.

The sudden reversal of the liberals' fortune was not wasted on István Nagyatádi Szabó. Initially an outspoken enemy of the Social Democratic party and a willing participant in Friedrich's government, Nagyatádi Szabó was not a firm supporter of the liberal cause. Once the Smallholders realized that neither Clerk nor Horthy stood squarely behind the liberals and the Social Democrats, they were quite ready to swing their support to the Christian bloc. On November 14, Nagyatádi Szabó made the startling announcement that he had left the liberal bloc and now intended to support the battered Friedrich government.[76] Nagyatádi's desertion was perhaps the harshest blow to Garami's political strategy since Lovászy had joined Friedrich's government on August 15. The constituency of the opposition had now shrunk to a very small minority indeed.

Garami, realizing the consequences that these developments would have on Hungary's political future, made one more desperate move. He now proposed that the Social Democratic party "use its favorable position due to the Entente's insistence on its participation in the government . . . and . . . decline to join the coalition and with this gesture . . . prevent the recognition of a government formed against it by the Entente."[77] This new strategy involved grave risks for Garami's party.

Clerk was on the verge of leaving Budapest if "within a few days no coalition government [was] formed which he [could] approve." Garami, however, was optimistic about Clerk's reaction to the new Social Democratic stance. He hoped that Clerk, in his eagerness to achieve a personal success, would put further pressure on the Christian bloc to accept a greater number of liberal and Social Democratic politicians in the cabinet. Moreover, even if Clerk refused to placate the Social Democrats and left the Hungarian capital without any tangible results, Garami was not pessimistic. After all, he argued, "everything would remain the same as before."[78] In fact, Garami grossly miscalculated the situation, as the Executive Committee of the Social Democratic party recognized when they vetoed his plan. Clerk was siding more and more with the rightist forces, and his return to Paris with a report of Garami's intransigeance might have swayed the increasingly impatient Supreme Council to withdraw its support from the Social Democrats. Moreover, if Clerk had departed without either recognizing the Friedrich government or establishing a new coalition cabinet, nothing would have remained the same, as Garami supposed, because Horthy would have intervened. The admiral was becoming annoyed with the political game even during Clerk's stay in the capital, and towards the end of the crisis he threatened "to arrest the whole company and to appoint a government which the Entente will recognize."[79]

On November 22, the newspapers announced the formation of a new coalition government under the Christian Social Károly Huszár, minister of education in the Friedrich government. The painfully slow negotiations under the watchful eyes of the Supreme Council brought meager results for the liberal forces in general and the Social Democratic party in particular. The Huszár government, which was hailed as a master stroke of Sir George Clerk's diplomacy, hardly differed from the previous Friedrich governments in composition. With the exception of Károly Peyer, the new Social Democratic minister of labor relations, and István Bárczy, the National Democratic minister of justice, every cabinet member had served previously under Friedrich. Even Friedrich remained in the Huszár government as minister of defense. All in all, the months of governmental crisis achieved very little: Friedrich's removal from the premiership and one seat for the Social Democrats.[80]

The damage caused by Garami's refusal to negotiate with Friedrich was almost incalculable, both to his own party and to Hungary's democratic future. To be sure, the record of the two previous regimes was bound to lead to a considerably more conservative regime than that of Mihály Károlyi. However, the protracted political crisis only further

convinced the public that Hungary's misfortune was the result of immoral and injurious politics conducted by Hungary's political elite before, during, and immediately after the Soviet interlude. If the Social Democratic party had accepted the three ministerial posts offered to it in August, a viable coalition government in which the liberal elements predominated could have been established. Moreover, the Supreme Council would undoubtedly have immediately recognized this government. Such recognition would have given the government the prestige which Friedrich's government never had. It would also have put the government into a stronger position *vis à vis* the military. As it was, with one governmental crisis after another, the army soon came to be regarded as the only stable organization in the country. The liberal camp's willingness to draw Horthy and the National Army into political conversations also spurred the army's own ambitions; it allowed Horthy and his followers to view the army not as an apolitical force but as an organization with a political destiny. Without a doubt, the liberal camp's aim was the maintenance of democratic institutions in Hungary, but their tactics had exactly the opposite effect: the spectacular growth of the political right and the suppression of all remnants of Hungary's democratic revolution.

NOTES

1. Gusztáv Gratz, *A forradalmak kora: Magyarország története 1918-1920* (Budapest: Magyar Szemle Társaság, 1935), p. 249.
2. Dezső Nemes, *Az ellenforradalom története Magyarországon (1919-1921)* (Budapest: Akadémia, 1962), p. 35.
3. István Imre Mocsy, "Radicalization and Counterrevolution: Magyar Refugees from the Successor States and Their Role in Hungary, 1918-1921" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, 1973), p. 225.
4. William Michael Batkay, "The Origin and Role of the Unified Party in Hungary, 1919-1926" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1972), p. 56.
5. Jenő Gergely, "Keresztényszocialisták az 1918-as magyarországi polgári demokratikus forradalomban," *Történelmi Szemle* 12 (1969): 47.
6. Mrs. Sándor Gábor, comp., "Böhm Vilmos, bécsi magyar követ jelentései a Peidl-kormányhoz és Ágoston Péter külügyminiszterhez," *Párttörténeti Közlemények* 6 (November 1960): 202, and *Népszava,* August 5, 1919. See also Gyula Peidl's speech in Parliament, August 2, 1919, in Jenő Kalmár, *Kik hozták be a románokat Budapestre, vagy hogy ütötték agyon Friedrich, Csillérv, Pekár úrék a magyarországi szociáldemokrata pártot?* (Budapest: Népszava, 1922), p. 121.
7. On István Friedrich and his political stance at the time of the *coup* see Eva S. Balogh, "István Friedrich and the Hungarian *Coup d'État* of 1919: A Reevaluation," *Slavic Review* 35 (1976): 269-286.

8. The proposed composition of the government can be found in Thomas T. C. Gregory to the Supreme Council, August 6, 1919, United States, Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States. The Paris Peace Conference 1919,* 13 vols. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1943–1947), 7: 604. Henceforth cited as *FRUS PPC.* On plans for Lovászy's premiership see *Nemzeti Újság,* October 9, 1919. On Lovászy's willingness to accept the post see Ernő Garami, *Forrongó Magyarország: Emlékezések és tanulságok* (Vienna: Pegazus, 1922), p. 156, and Albert Halstead to the American Commission to Negotiate Peace (henceforth cited as CNP), August 9, 1919, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (henceforth cited as N.A.), Record Group 59, M820/215/0278. On the ministerships of Hegedüs and Gratz see Halstead to CNP, August 13, 1919, American Relief Administration (henceforth cited as ARA)—Paris—H74, Hoover Institution, Stanford University.
9. Halstead to CNP, August 14, 1919, ARA—Paris—H74.
10. Garami, *Forrongó Magyarország,* p. 159; Manó Buchinger, *Küzdelem a szocializmusért: Emlékezések és élmények,* 2 vols. (Budapest: Népszava, 1946), 2: 95. Foreign newspapermen also reported on the Smallholders' objections to joining the Social Democrats in a coalition government. See Segrue to Hiatt Press, August 15, 1919, ARA—Paris—H74.
11. Jenő Gergely, "A Magyarországi Radikális Kereszténységszocialista Párt (1919. szeptember - 1920. július)," *Századok* 106 (1972): 1051.
12. *Budapesti Közlöny,* August 14, 1919, evening.
13. Recollections of the Christian Social politicians in the first issue of their newspaper, *Nemzeti Újság,* September 28, 1919.
14. Archduke Joseph to Clemenceau, August 16, 1919, *FRUS PPC,* 7: 709, and Halstead to CNP, August 13, 1919, ARA—Paris—H74.
15. Vilmos Vázsonyi, a close associate of Garami, was convinced that Garami aspired to be the next prime minister of Hungary. *Beszédei és írásai,* 2 vols. (Budapest: Az Országos Vázsonyi-Emlékbizottság, 1927), 2: 255. Garami found support in Thomas T. C. Gregory, a member of the American Relief Administration; see Gregory to Logan, August 14, 1919, ARA—Paris—H74, and Garami, *Forrongó Magyarország,* p. 160.
16. *Budapesti Közlöny,* August 15, 1919, evening.
17. "Interview with Lovászy," Bing, United Press, August 15, 1919, ARA—Paris—H74.
18. Segrue to Hiatt Associated Press, August 15, 1919, ARA—Paris—H74.
19. Garami, *Forrongó Magyarország,* p. 162.
20. Atter to Isenmann, Reuter, August 15, 1919, ARA—Paris—H74.
21. *FRUS PPC,* 7: 803.
22. *Tag,* August 23, 1919, N.A., Record Group 59, M820/215/0549.
23. *New York Times,* August 28, 1919.
24. *Budapesti Közlöny,* August 24, 1919.
25. András Fehér, *A magyarországi szociáldemokrata párt és az ellenforradalmi rendszer, 1919. augusztus - 1921* (Budapest: Akadémia, 1969), p. 36.
26. *New York Times,* August 28, 1919.
27. *Manchester Guardian,* September 1, 1919.
28. Ferenc Harrer, a liberal and a former follower of Mihály Károlyi, speculated that Garami's behavior "probably contributed to Friedrich's shift to the right." *Egy magyar polgár élete* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1968), p. 447.
29. *Daily Telegraph,* September 2, 1919.
30. Vázsonyi's disclosure to one of his Romanian friends in Switzerland. J. Schiopul to Herron, September 11, 1919, George D. Herron Papers, vol. 5, Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

31. Bethlen to Clemenceau, September 27, 1919, S.H. Bulletin No. 1036, October 10, 1919, Hoover Institution, Stanford University. Trade union membership dropped drastically in the second half of 1919 and in 1920. See Budapest, Statisztikai Hivatal, *Budapest székesfőváros statisztikai évkönyve, 1921–1924* (Budapest: Budapest székesfőváros statisztikai hivatala, 1925), p. 490. The Social Democratic party refused to participate in the 1920 elections, but on the basis of void ballots cast in Budapest an approximation of their strength can be made. In Budapest sixteen per cent of all votes, in adjusted figures, was cast for the Social Democratic party, while in the country as a whole the Social Democratic vote did not exceed six per cent. Ibid., p. 566, and Hungary, Központi Statisztikai Hivatal, *Magyar statisztikai évkönyv,* new series, vols. 31–33 (1923–1925) (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1927), p. 274.
32. Causey to Gregory, September 12, 1919, Thomas T. C. Gregory Papers, Box 1, Hoover Institution, Stanford University.
33. *Nemzeti Újság,* September 28, 1919.
34. Ibid.
35. *Nemzeti Újság,* October 3, 1919, and *Az Est,* October 3, 1919.
36. *Nemzeti Újság,* October 4, 1919.
37. *Nemzeti Újság,* October 26, 1919.
38. Ibid.
39. *Népszava,* November 5, 1919.
40. Ágnes Szabó, ed., "Részletek Ágoston Péter naplójából," *Párttörténeti Közlemények* 9 (May 1963): 177. The *Nemzeti Újság,* reporting from "a very reliable source," announced that Garami's final destination was Prague, although it was believed that he was to see not Beneš but Mihály Károlyi; October 13, 1919.
41. Fehér, *A magyarországi szociáldemokrata párt,* p. 43.
42. Halstead to Lansing, October 10, 1919, *FRUS PPC,* 12: 579.
43. "Entwirrungsplan für Ungarn," October 15, 1919, N.A., Record Group 59, M708/3/0460-0465. Beneš met the Hungarian delegation on October 16, 1919, *Národní listy,* October 17, 1919, cited in Alena Gajanová, *ČSR a středoevroská politika velmocí (1918–1939)* (Prague: Academia, 1967), p. 54.
44. Beneš's conversation with the British *chargé d'affaires* on the details of the memorandum is reported in Gosling to Curzon, October 23, 1919, Great Britain, Foreign Office, *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919–1939,* 45 vols. (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1946–1973), I: 6: 304. Henceforth cited as *DBFP.* The French proposal, based on the original memorandum and entitled "Note from the French Delegation: The Situation in Hungary," can be found in *FRUS PPC,* 8: 918–920. The French were ready to participate in the proposed international force; see Minutes of the Heads of Delegations, November 4, 1919, Ibid., pp. 939–940.
45. Great Britain and the United States did not want to send military contingents to Hungary and refused to consider using Romanian, Czechoslovak, and Yugoslav troops. Italy was afraid of the employment of Yugoslav troops, especially under French command. Great Britain's representative put his finger on the real problem: Hungarian conditions were not yet conducive to democracy, and any Allied intervention for the establishment of a government not representative of popular feeling could achieve only temporary results. See Minutes of the Heads of Delegations, November 3, 1919, *FRUS PPC,* 8: 908–912.
46. *Az Est,* October 12, 1919.
47. *Az Est,* October 15, 1919.
48. *Az Est,* October 4, 1919.

49. *Nemzeti Újság,* October 4, 1919.
50. *Az Est,* October 18, 1919.
51. *Az Est,* October 21, 1919.
52. Draft telegram to Monsieur Friedrich, October 11, 1919, *FRUS PPC,* 8: 787.
53. *Az Est,* October 26, 1919.
54. *Pester Lloyd,* October 26, 1919, quoted in *Review of the Foreign Press: The Political Review* 1 (1919-1920): 13.
55. Garami, *Forrongó Magyarország,* pp. 169–170.
56. *Az Est,* October 28, 1919. On the resolution of the party's Executive Committee to this effect, see Fehér, *A magyarországi szociáldemokrata párt,* pp. 44–45.
57. *Az Est,* October 29, 1919.
58. *Nemzeti Újság,* November 6, 1919, and *Az Est,* November 9, 1919.
59. For the controversy between Heinrich and Lovászy and for the separate negotiations see *Az Est,* November 1, 2, 8, and 9, 1919, and *Nemzeti Újság,* November 4 and 8, 1919.
60. Clerk to Supreme Council, November 1, 1919, Polk Papers, Yale University.
61. *Az Est,* October 29, 1919.
62. Clerk to Supreme Council, November 4, 1919, *FRUS PPC,* 9: 9.
63. *Az Est,* November 2, 1919.
64. György Borsányi, ed., *Páter Zadravecz titkos naplója* (Budapest: Kossuth, 1967), p. 243.
65. *Times,* November 8, 1919.
66. "Entwirrungsplan für Ungarn," October 15, 1919, N.A., Record Group 59, M708/3/0460-0465.
67. *Times,* November 8, 1919.
68. *Az Est,* November 9, 1919.
69. Fehér, *A magyarországi szociáldemokrata párt,* p. 47.
70. *Az Est,* November 9, 1919.
71. *Az Est,* November 12, 1919.
72. Clerk to Supreme Council, November 1, 1919, *FRUS PPC,* 8: 947-948.
73. Clerk to Crowe, October 25, 1919, *DBFP,* I: 6: 310.
74. *Népszava,* November 7, 1919.
75. *Nemzeti Újság,* November 12, 1919.
76. *Nemzeti Újság,* November 14, 1919.
77. Garami, *Forrongó Magyarország,* p. 185.
78. Ibid., p. 187.
79. Diary of Countess Gyula Andrássy, Jr., November 20, 1919, quoted in Elek Karsai, *A Sándor-palotában történt, 1919-1941* (Budapest: Táncsics, 1967), p. 27. See also Harry H. Bandholtz, *An Undiplomatic Diary* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1933), p. 235.
80. Although the liberals succeeded in having István Bárczy appointed minister of justice, they did not actually gain ground since Lovászy, a member of the Friedrich government formed on August 15, was missing from the combination.

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Symbolist and Decadent Elements in Early Twentieth-Century Hungarian Drama*

Ivan Sanders

I

In his first major work of literary criticism, an ambitious history of modern drama, György Lukács devotes an entire chapter to a discussion of trends in the Hungarian theatre. Although he wrote this important, and still relatively little-known, synthesis originally in Hungarian (a rather inelegant, German-influenced Hungarian, one might add), Lukács does not hesitate to point out that Hungarian dramatists have not made an original contribution to Western dramatic literature, and what is more, predicts—in 1911—a rather bleak future for Hungarian drama.[1] As Lukács's other youthful works, this study of modern drama displays awesome erudition and keen insights into patterns of social and intellectual evolution implicit in literary development; yet the work's rigorously consistent theoretical framework is distressingly rigid, often betraying Lukács's cardinal and all-too-familiar weakness as a literary critic: his indifference to purely literary values.

In the *History of the Development of Modern Drama,* Friedrich Hebbel is seen as the father of modern drama and the Hebellian notion of the necessary coincidence of personal and historical tragedy as the only legitimate source of drama.[2] Lukács was not yet a Marxist when he wrote his treatise, but he had already been influenced by the modern sociological theories of Max Weber and Georg Simmel, which in turn incorporated some of the conclusions reached by students of *Geistesgeschichte,* the approach to intellectual history just then coming into its own.[3] Thus, in examining nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Western drama, Lukács considers only those works dramatically valid that offer grand syntheses: characters that embody the spirit of the age, particularized conflicts that intimate larger upheavals — in short,

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dramas that impress us with a strong sense of historical inevitability. In view of Lukács's early intellectual commitment and consequent opposition to pure aestheticism in literature, it is interesting that he was nevertheless among the first to discuss under the same heading such dramatists as Maeterlinck, Hofmannstahl, Hauptmann, Yeats, Wilde and D'Annunzio, and indeed may have been the first to deal critically with Symbolist drama.[4] Lukács prefers "decorative stylization" to Symbolism and associates the term primarily with Maeterlinck's theatre which he greatly admires but which he must ultimately reject because it does not offer the kind of synthesis he looks for in modern drama. Maeterlinck's attempt to create mood, to dramatize states of mind and nameless terrors, results in breathtakingly beautiful theatrical moments, according to Lukács. "The essence of these beautiful moments is the strongly symbolic fusion of psychological, lyric, musical and pictorial elements in a given scene which expresses definitively and unforgettably the emotion underlying the scene."[5] Lukács is also quick to discern the philosophical and spiritual implications of Maeterlinck's dramas: "Maeterlinck's only aim is to express feelings—man's feelings toward the infinite, the eternally unknown, and those ultimate internal and external forces which can not be further analyzed but whose irresistible and immanent power we all sense." Yet for all his praise, Lukács would not consider Maeterlinck's plays truly dramatic. They are "merely" decorative, elliptical, ballad-like; in none of them is there an "all-encompassing sense of inevitability and universality."[7]

After rejecting, ruefully, it seems, even the most radical dramatic experiments of his time as timid and limited, it is hardly surprising that Lukács speaks disparagingly of Hungarian drama which in the second half of the nineteenth century remained largely unaffected by the new European literary trends, or absorbed only the extrinsic features of certain foreign models. Interestingly enough, the only nineteenth century Hungarian drama Lukács does think highly of—Mihály Vörösmarty's charming fairy play, *Csongor és Tünde* [Csongor and Tünde]—is one which, according to Lukács, is close in spirit not only to Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* but to some of the late nineteenth century Symbolist dramatic attempts. "The stylistic peculiarities of *Csongor und Tünde* have not lost their relevance," writes Lukács in his chapter on Hungarian drama; "on the contrary, they never seemed so modern as today when there is a trend in drama everywhere toward fantastic, anti-Platonic, anti-tragic fairy plays which, in order to render perceptible their ethereal content, draw on the spirit of the folktale (Hauptmann, Yeats, Synge)."[8] In relating what he considers the single

significant nineteenth century Hungarian play to a major current within the Symbolist theatre, Lukács once again reveals an affinity for a literary trend which he champions on aesthetic grounds but repudiates for ideological reasons.

Of course, Lukács may have admired Vörösmarty's *Csongor and Tünde* because it, too, is a kind of synthesis: a felicitous blend of "the fantastic and the real, the coarse and the magical, the sublime and the grotesque, the playful and the profound."[9] In being able to fuse disparate elements into a harmonious whole, Vörösmarty was indeed a lonely figure in Hungarian drama. Lukács as well as other Hungarian critics were well aware of the fact that the enormously popular playwrights of the early twentieth century (Ferenc Molnár, Menyhért Lengyel, etc.) were never able to assimilate successfully new dramatic techniques in their slick social dramas and easily exportable drawing room comedies. They tamed the more daring achievements of the Naturalist, Symbolist and, somewhat later, Expressionist theatre so that the innovative techniques became mere external adornments in their works. In discussing Ferenc Molnár's plays, the essayist Antal Szerb notes that "his [Molnár's] symbolism is Ibsen's, Maeterlinck's and Hofmannstahl's symbolism watered down to suit the tastes of his bright, though not too bright, public."[10]

II

It is generally agreed that drama was the only genre not to undergo a process of rejuvenation during a ten-year span between 1900 and 1910 that proved to be a particularly productive period for Hungarian literature in general. Perhaps it is for this reason that György Lukács greeted the Symbolist-inspired dramas of Béla Balázs with such unwavering, and according to contemporaries quite unjustified, enthusiasm.[11] Balázs was a member of the intellectual circle that gathered around the young Lukács, and he also became a close personal friend of the philosopher-critic. This loose circle of young poets, sociologists and artists, which met regularly in Balázs's Budapest apartment during the mid 1910's and included such men of great future renown as Karl Mannheim and Arnold Hauser, was partially responsible for changing the course of Hungarian cultural life during the first two decades of the twentieth century, even though it was never part of the mainstream of the reformist-modernist movement (whose bastion was the periodical *Nyugat*), but was in fact often in opposition to that liberal, aesthetics-conscious mainstream.[12] Politically more radical, intellectually more

sophisticated than the writers of *Nyugat,* Lukács and his circle were students of German culture. They journeyed to Heidelberg and Berlin, while the poet Endre Ady and his followers, motivated perhaps by the traditional Hungarian antipathy for things German, turned to France for inspiration: to them the West meant Paris. Balázs's plays and poetry, as well as Lukács's literary theories, were on the whole too speculative, too abstract, too "German" for Hungarian tastes; and the fact that both of them came from a Jewish background and were perfectly bilingual — Lukács of course wrote most of his works in German — further alienated them from the leading modern poets of the day, who, despite their Western orientation, had a strong sense of ethnic identity.

The two groups' attitude towards Symbolism is a clear example of their dissimilar approach to literature. The so-called first generation of *Nyugat* poets were heavily influenced by French Symbolism, though most of them were attracted not so much to the philosophical implications of the movement as to the supple, sensuous, musical language created by Symbolist poets.[13] It is a curious, though by no means unexplainable, fact that Stephane Mallarmé's work, aside from some early sonnets, was not translated into Hungarian by the leading *Nyugat* poets who were otherwise enthusiastic translators of Baudelaire, Verlaine and a host of other Symbolists, including minor, now-forgotten poets. Mallarmé was of course recognized as the sage of the Symbolist *cénacle,* but his poetry was far too cerebral and metaphysical for a group of Eastern European modernists whose mysticism, irrationalism and decadence were tempered by a down-to-earth native tradition. However, it is precisely the philosophical and metaphysical aspects of Symbolism that interested men like Lukács and Balázs. They should have become familiar with Mallarmé, but because they were much closer to German literature, they approached Symbolism via Goethe, the German Romantics, Wagner and others who are known to have had a profound influence on the theorists of the movement. Thus, in expressing the notion that all things in the world are symbols, emblems of a higher reality, or in drawing attention to the incantatory nature of poetic language, Béla Balázs is echoing Novalis, E.T.A. Hoffman and the Schlegels rather than Baudelaire or the later Symbolists. Even when Balázs's point of departure is a writer who has little to do with Symbolism, his conclusions are strikingly close to theories enunciated by poets and dramatists associated with the movement. For example, in an essay entitled "Friedrich Hebbel and the German Romanticists' Meta-

physical Theory of Tragedy" Balázs comes close to defining Symbolist drama:

> We may speak of the symbolic impact of sensory impressions that supersede the power of words, or of the ability of drama to express ultimate things with the techniques of concealment and silence. . . The Germans, the greatest masters and theoreticians of modern drama, who also have the best feeling for metaphysics in modern culture, have recognized this, as well as the fact that a drama must be symbolic in both content and form.[14]

Balázs was primarily a poet and playwright, and not a systematic thinker à la Lukács. Unlike Lukács, he was just as interested in Symbolist poetry as in Symbolist poetics. In 1908, four years before the publication of his *Misztériumok* (Mysteries), a collection of three one-act plays closest to the Symbolist spirit, Balázs wrote an essay on Maeterlinck, which contains a number of highly impressionistic and subjective observations on the aesthetics of the Symbolist theatre—observations which are nevertheless more illuminating at times, and more to the point, than Lukács's densely theoretical discussions. Alluding to such plays as *L'Intruse* and *Les Aveugles,* Balázs states:

> The true hero of Maeterlinck's dramas is an invisible, all-powerful mystery. In the languid silence nothing seems to happen, yet an invisible force takes over and represses life. The static drama depicts the advent of this force, and of the great enigma that embraces us like a dark forest. The most visible and dramatic manifestation of this force is death. Death is the ancestor of all of these dramas, though it appears not as a terrifying tragic end, not in the guise of graves and skeletons, but as a dark, lurking secret — a symbol of the great mystery. Death is an invisible but live figure that walks among people, caresses them, sits at their table — an uninvited guest. Nothing happens in these plays. Life happens.[15]

Balázs is convinced that Maeterlinck revolutionized drama, and the essay makes it clear that its author has become an advocate of this new, plotless, often voiceless theatre of mood, nuance and effect. "I am forever envious of musicians who do not have to speak," Balázs confesses, "and forever in love with drama that does not speak."[16] Despite his tendency to view Symbolism in terms of German Romantic poetry and philosophy, Balázs is aware of course of the vast difference between German Romanticism and Maeterlinck's Symbolism: "His [Maeterlinck's] probe is not intellectual. His profundity is not akin to Goethe's or Hebbel's. He wants to capture 'unthought' thoughts, which is not a German profession."[17]

III

In view of Balázs's admiration for Maeterlinck and the Symbolist theatre, it is perhaps not surprising that his three one-acters, whose collective title, *Misztériumok,* inevitably brings to mind Mallarmé's use of the term *mystère* in connection with drama,[18] contains significant Symbolist elements. By far the best-known of the three one-act plays (mainly because it served as the basis for Béla Bartók's opera, about which we will speak presently) is *A Kékszakállú herceg vára* (Bluebeard's Castle), a stark two-character drama. In choosing the legend of Bluebeard as the subject of his play, Balázs was in all probability influenced by Maeterlinck's three-act fairy play, *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue,* which he called, in his 1908 essay, Maeterlinck's "most profound" drama.[19] The legend of Bluebeard (whose historical model is usually said to be Gilles de Rais, a cultivated fifteenth century French nobleman turned sex-fiend) is allusive and violent enough to serve as the subject matter of a Symbolist play. Earlier literary treatments of the legend emphasized the horrific aspects of the story of the depraved woman-chaser. Maeterlinck and Balázs, however, tried to humanize the main protagonists, and used the legend as a metaphor for human predicaments and longings. As in so many Symbolist poems and plays, the setting in Balázs's drama is an exteriorization of a state of mind. Balázs himself makes this clear in his preface to the German text of the play: "Bluebeard's castle is not a real stone castle. The castle is his soul — a dark, mysterious, locked-up castle."[20] (In the original version of the play the castle is listed as one of the *dramatis personae.*) The minstrel introducing the drama also has this idea in mind when he asks:

> Szemünk pillás függönye fent:
> Hol a szinpad: kint vagy bent,
> Urak, asszonyságok?
>
> [Our eye-lash curtain is raised
> But where is the stage, out there or in here,
> Lords and ladies?][21]

Balázs's Bluebeard is not a perverse Don Juan but a sullen, troubled man; and his latest bride, Judith, senses the enormity of his sins and the extent of his spiritual disquietude, and expresses her fears in terms that suggest an awareness of the symbolic character of the setting. Touching the damp wall of the castle Judith cries out: "Sír a várad, sír a várad!" [Your castle cries, your castle cries.] When she hears the wind whistling through the dark passages of the castle, she says: "Oh a várad felsóhajtott!" [Your castle has sighed.] And when the first door is opened,

revealing Bluebeard's instruments of torture, Judith exclaims in horror:

> A te várad fala véres!
> A te várad vérzik!
>
> [There is blood on your castle wall;
> Your castle is bleeding!][22]

One by one the doors of Bluebeard's castle fly open, exposing weapons, treasures, vast lands — the possessions of a powerful and proud male. From behind the seventh door the former wives emerge, beautiful, sad creatures, resplendent in their wedding gowns. Though her curiosity is satisfied, Judith is more terrified than ever, and Bluebeard, after realizing that baring his soul had not relieved his anguish, bids her to join the other women, which Judith stoically does, weighed down by her new crown and robe.

There is disagreement among critics as to the precise extent of Balázs's indebtedness to Maeterlinck. According to literary historian Miklós Szabolcsi, for instance, Balázs paid closer attention to Charles Perrault's famous fairy tale on the subject than to Maeterlinck's version of the legend.[23] However, György Kroó in his lengthy account of the history of the Bluebeard legend concludes that *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue* "is, in a sense, the source" of *Bluebeard's Castle.*[24] A comparison of the two works reveals that Balázs did borrow some of Maeterlinck's dramatic devices — for example, the motif of the seven locked doors. To be sure, the Hungarian dramatist changed the images behind the doors: in Maeterlinck's play the first six doors lead to rooms filled with jewels, in *Bluebeard's Castle* only one of the locked doors contains dazzling precious stones; but the seventh door in both plays conceals Bluebeard's former wives who have been imprisoned, not killed. The two dramas are also similar in their rather obviously symbolic use of lighting. In both plays the stage is shrouded in darkness, and the opened doors emit blinding shafts of light. It is of course Ariane and Judith who are associated with light — they both radiate love. Ariane reacts ecstatically to the dazzle of diamonds pouring out of the sixth chamber:

> Immortelle rosée de lumière! Ruisselez sur mes mains, illuminez mes bras, éblouissez ma chair! Vous êtes purs, infatigables et ne dormez jamais, et ce qui s'agite en vous feux, comme un peuple d'esprits qui sème des étoiles, c'est la passion de la clarté qui a tout pénétré, ne se repose pas, et n'a plus rien à vaincre qu'elle même! . . . Pleuvez, pleuvez encore, entrailles de l'été, exploits de la lumière et conscience innombrable des flames! vous blesserez mes yeux sans lasser mes regards![25]

Judith also yearns for light; she would like to deliver Bluebeard from the darkness by illuminating his murky soul:

> Lesz fény, szegény, Kékszakállú
> Megnyitjuk a falat ketten.
> Szél bejárjon, nap besüssön
> Tündököljön a te várad!
>
> [There shall be light, poor Bluebeard
> We shall throw open these walls.
> Let the wind blow, the sun shine;
> Let your castle glitter.][26]

There is even a similarity between the animism of the two castles. As we said, Judith talks about Bluebeard's abode as though it were a living thing. In Maeterlinck's play, Ariane's Nurse exclaims as she is about to open the first door:

> Prenez garde! — Fuyez! Les deux battants s'animent et glissent comme un voile.[27]

We should also note that the dissimilarities between Maeterlinck's and Balázs's plays are as striking as the similarities. *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue,* a far less mysterious, indeed a less Symbolist, play than Maeterlinck's early one-acters, is really only about Ariane who is the prototype of the liberated woman. At the end of the play, after enraged peasants capture Bluebeard, Ariane asks them not to harm him. She herself leaves when realizing that she can be of no help either to Bluebeard or to his former wives who are too submissive to opt for freedom. Ariane is "the light-bringer in Maeterlinck's drama," according to Bettina Knapp, author of a recent monograph on Maeterlinck; "she has attempted to illuminate what was living in perpetual darkness and confusion — the other wives. She has the courage to venture forth alone in forbidden, and, therefore, terrifying realms, which is the fate of many light-bringers."[28] Balázs's play, on the other hand, is almost completely devoid of external action and its ending is not nearly as unambiguous as that of *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue.* Next to Maeterlinck's eventful play, *Bluebeard's Castle* is a static drama in which — as one of its unsympathetic critics put it — "two people clamor on stage for an hour and nothing happens."[29]

Even though it was performed as a play, Béla Balázs's *Bluebeard's Castle* was made famous by Béla Bartók who used a somewhat shortened version of the Balázs play as the libretto for his one-act opera by the same title (first performed in 1918). Because Bartók's dark-toned, somber, chillingly dissonant music is as atmospheric as it is dramatic,

we might conclude that it is the perfect complement to a Symbolist play — just as Debussy's and Richard Strauss's scores are ideal musical counterparts to plays by Maeterlinck and Hofmannstahl. However, there are music critics who argue that the combination of Balázs's words and Bartók's music produces a far different effect than the music dramas of Debussy. According to György Kroó only Maeterlinck's and Debussy's world can be said to be subtly, intimately suggestive; Bartók's opera is elementally symbolic.[30] Indeed, if we view the castle as having straightforwardly allegorical rather than suggestively symbolic significance; if we read the drama as an internalized psychological confrontation between tragically incompatible Man and Woman, we have less and less reason to believe that *Bluebeard's Castle* is a Symbolist play. And if we accept the interpretation that Bluebeard represents the eager and insatiable adolescent who "with each kiss experiences the joy of liberation as well as the desire for even sweeter kisses,"[31] then we are further removed from Symbolism and are edging closer to allegorical drama. Yet, even if we concede that *Bluebeard's Castle* is preoccupied with clear-cut psychological conflict and is therefore not Symbolist in theme, its language, staging and atmosphere remain essentially Symbolist. Recent scholarship has demonstrated that one of the most significant changes the Symbolist movement underwent in Eastern Europe has been its "folklorization."[32] Béla Balázs's *Bluebeard's Castle* is an almost perfect example of this process since Balázs's — and Bartók's — avowed purpose was "to portray the modern soul with the unmixed, primeval colors of the folk ballad. We believed that the very new must be transplanted from the very old, but in such a way that the original material survive the process of our spiritualization and not evaporate between our fingers."[33] It is above all the terse, elliptical, strategically stylized and repetitive language of Balázs's drama that gives it its Symbolist flavor. Balázs was aware of the existence of Hungarian folk ballad versions of the Bluebeard legend and wanted to transfer to the stage the dramatic spirit of these ballads.[34] In Béla Bartók Balázs found an ideal collaborator, for at the time he wrote his opera Bartók had already begun his investigation of Eastern European folk music.

In order to fully appreciate the significance of the Symbolist use of the ballad form, we must again refer to Lukács's *History of the Development of Modern Drama* which, we could safely assume, had a profound effect on members of Lukács's circle, and especially on someone like Balázs who considered himself primarily a dramatist. In his chapter on Maeterlinck Lukács defines the Symbolist theatre in terms of the ballad. He is aware of course of the narrative nature of the ballad form,

yet he believes that "Maeterlinck's dramas are ballads. They are expressions of a tragic sense stripped of all extraneous detail, though the feeling itself is expressed simply, naturally."[35] Lukács does not consider the ballad an adequately dramatic form; nevertheless he ascribes much of the power and tension of Symbolist drama to its ballad-like qualities. Maeterlinck's dramas, like the ballad, "depict states, not relationships, human traits, not human characters, moods, not worlds."[36] According to Lukács, Maeterlinck reduced the realism of the ballad as much as possible. "First he wanted to eliminate all external action so as not to disturb the internal happenings. Then he dispensed with those human traits and features that did not have a direct bearing on his characters' fate. Finally he did away with verisimilitude with regard to time and place."[37]

It is precisely these reductive techniques that we encounter in Balázs's *Bluebeard's Castle.* Yet to reduce the drama to simple allegory would be an unjust oversimplification. We could, as has been suggested, conclude that *Bluebeard's Castle* is about the tragic irreconcilability of the male and female ego; but we could also concentrate on Judith's curiosity, on her relentless search for the unknown. The opening of the doors could be seen as a lifting of the veil which is a frequent and powerful image in Symbolist literature. Even the familiar—and richly allusive—motif of the forbidden chamber, as well as the theme of the redemptive secret turned fatal, adds to the polyvalent character of the drama. For every critic who detects non-Symbolist elements in Balázs's drama, there is another who would classify it as a Symbolist play. For example, József Ujfalussy, in his book on Bartók, places the drama in the mainstream of the Symbolist tradition.[38] He sees a clear thematic connection between the Tristan legend, *Pelléas and Melisande* and Balázs's *Bluebeard's Castle,* and relates Golaud's dark and bleak castle to Bluebeard's domicile. According to Ujfalussy, "if we call Melisande the 'white woman of the castle,' she leads us to Ady's poem; if we name her Judith, she reappears in Balázs's play."[39]

The two other plays in the trilogy — *A tündér* (The Fairy) and *A szent szűz vére* (The Blood of the Holy Virgin) — are far less evocative than *Bluebeard's Castle.* In these dramas the attempt to poeticize and spiritualize basic psychological conflicts becomes much too self-conscious and contrived. *The Fairy* has a story-book Germanic setting, and *The Blood of the Holy Virgin* is medieval in decor. Despite the more concrete locale, however, the author does not aim for a sense of realism in these dramas. His objective rather is to take characters quite modern in sensibility and place them in a hazy, pseudo-historical setting. The conflict in

The Fairy is between a young woman, her fiance, and her old love who after a long absence mysteriously reappears and raises some fundamental questions about love, thereby shattering the serenity of the young couple. *The Blood of the Holy Virgin* is also about a triangle: two knights who have vowed eternal friendship during a crusade meet again in the castle of one of the comrades who in the meantime has taken a wife. A classic conflict develops between friend and wife, with the anguished husband standing in the middle. The antagonists stab themselves to prove their love but are revived by the Holy Virgin whose statue comes alive. At the end of the play the wife goes off to a convent and the two friends join another crusade.[40] As we can see, the irreconcilability of friendship and love, as well as, in a larger sense, the eternal strife between man and woman is the leitmotif running through all three *Mysteries*.[41] But the stylized decor and language lend even these two plays a Symbolist aura. Moreover, the sense of foreboding and troubled expectation present in both plays is highly reminiscent of Maeterlinck's "théâtre de l'attente."[42] For example, Oliver, the old sweetheart in *The Fairy* is associated with the ill-omened wind, and with a fairy that, according to local legend, hides out in the nearby woods. Like the castle in Balázs's first one-acter, the wind is listed as a character in *The Fairy*. It blows frequently and ever more menacingly throughout the play. The character of Oliver is also interesting because he is a wanderer, a figure often encountered in Symbolist literature, in search of the undefinable, the unattainable. "Nem, nem vagyok én soha egyedül," he tells his former love. [No, I am never alone.]

> Velem van minden még nem élt napom,
> Ezer nyitott ajtóval áll körül
> És néz és vár és hív és integet.
> Velem van minden, ami nincsen itt,
> Velem van minden, ami még lehetne
> S kiált utánam: jer értem, jere!
>
> [I have with me my still unspent days;
> They open a thousand doors for me,
> And look and wait and beckon and wave.
> I have with me all that is not here,
> All that could still be,
> Calling out: Come, come after me.]

IV

Balázs's Symbolist—or perhaps semi-Symbolist—attempts appear to be the only example, in Hungary, of this type of theatre. While

Symbolism triumphed in Hungarian poetry, in drama it seems to have made even less of a dent than elsewhere in Europe. Yet if we examine the history of early twentieth century Hungarian drama, we discover that there were sporadic attempts, sometimes by the popular dramatists of the age, to exploit the atmospheric, pictorial and poetic potentials of the theatre, and downplay conventional plot and character development. Many of these playwrights were responding to the spirit of Art Nouveau and Secession, which were themselves offshoots of Symbolism. Secession, a term widely used only in the Germanic world and Eastern Europe, refers to a movement in art that stressed the ideals of aestheticism developed by the pre-Raphaelites and the French Symbolists, and favored subjectively stylized, lush, sinuous formal elements, as well as the fusion of the primitive and the modern. It is this last feature that characterizes Hungarian Secession at its best. The incorporation of folk motifs in turn-of-the-century "modernist" architecture, the search in the early poems of Endre Ady for the primitive, pagan Magyar spirit, the utilization of folk-ballads in Balázs's poetry and plays are all examples of Hungarian Secession which, as an artistic trend, was rather short-lived. Its heyday was between 1895 and 1905, and it never developed into a full-fledged culture movement.[45] Secessionist techniques were widely imitated, vulgarized, and the term itself soon became a pejorative, associated with kitsch. In recent years, however, there has been a resurgence of interest in Secession, and historians of literature and art have shown that its influence has been more pervasive, and in some cases more positive, than previously believed.[46]

The language of the theatre was also influenced by the ornate secessionist style. Two dramatists in particular—Ernő Szép and Dezső Szomory—were partial to this style which in large measure defined their artistic sensibility, labelled Decadent by most of their critics. But as Pál Réz points out in his essay on Ernő Szép, Decadence in the Hungarian context doesn't signify the ennui of an overripe, overrefined civilization, or a waning life force in conflict with an intensified zest for life, but rather a quiet aestheticism, an inward-turning, asocial stance, a deliberate cultivation of certain easily recognizable mannerisms and a morbid fascination with death.[47] Like Paul Verlaine, Ernő Szép was a consciously naive poet. All of his writings exude a childlike innocence and charm, as well as a wise understanding of the vicissitudes of life. He mixes poetic and prosaic subjects,[48] and the "simplicity of folk tales with the most up-to-date French stylistic trends."[49] It is in this connection that we find *Az egyszeri királyfi* (The Prince of Yore), one of his lesser-known plays, significant. Like Vörösmarty's *Csongor and Tünde,* men-

tioned earlier in this essay, *The Prince of Yore* is a fairy play, an everyman tale in peasant garb, which draws on practically all the popular elements of Hungarian folklore. However, as Dezső Kosztolányi pointed out in his review of the play, first performed in 1913, Ernő Szép combines the charm of primitive folk art with the techniques of a Beardsley drawing.[50] *The Prince of Yore* has nothing to do with the sentimental native-populist theatre still very popular in Hungary at this time, or with populist literature in general; it is not even so much a play as a series of tableaux, set pieces, incorporating the favorite characters and conventions of Hungarian folktales. A peasant prince is pursued by Death who is also depicted as a simple, rather good-natured Hungarian peasant. The young prince, however, is an atypical fairy tale character in that he is listless and world-weary. Whereas Balázs was attracted to the simplicity of Szekler (székely) folk ballads, Szép crowds into his play a whole gallery of folk characters, a thesaurus of poems, proverbs, jingles, rhymes, wordplays, etc. We are faced with an abundance of riches which often seems excessive. However, the Decadent character of the play stems not only from its self-conscious primitivism, but also from its preoccupation with death. The final speech made by Death is a lyrical celebration of the eternal rest, a seductive appeal to the death wish:

> Félsz lemenni a földbe, kedves kis cselédem? Ó, te balga, nem látod, hogy lefelé kívánkozik minden a világon, az anyaföld felé? Nem látod a szomorúfűz ágát, hogy borul lefelé, nem nézted meg a daru tollát, hogy lankad a földnek, a búza boldog kalásza hogy hajlik lejjebb, lejjebb, meg a szép őszi falevél milyen édesdeden száll, száll a fáról a földre. A friss égi harmat, a fehér hó is a földre jön az égből, a fényes esti csillag megunja a magosságot, lefelé szalad a föld felé, a dicső nap is lefelé ballag alkonyattal, minden a földet keresi, minden a földbe vágyakozik. . . Ó, be áldott is a lágy anyaföld, be drága, be ékes, be jóságos, be kívánatos, be gyönyörűséges.
>
> [You are afraid to go into the ground, my pet, aren't you? But don't you see, you little fool, that everything in the world moves downwards, toward mother earth? Haven't you noticed the drooping branches of the weeping willow, or the crane's flagging feather? The happy wheat-stalks bend low, and the autumn leaves fall gently from the tree onto the ground. Fresh morning dew and white snow also fall from the sky, as does the bright evening star when it tires of its lofty perch. At dusk even the glorious sun sinks low — all things long for, reach for, the good earth. . . Oh, blessed mother earth, how dear and precious you are, how kind and tempting and beautiful.][51]

V

Dezső Szomory epitomized for many Hungarians the dandified literary gentleman. He spent seventeen years in Paris, between 1890 and 1907; and although these were still crucial years for the Symbolist movement, he seems to have known little more about it than what was reported in newspapers and popular magazines.[52] He was considered a modernist in Hungary, yet his taste was rather conservative: Stendhal, Balzac, Renan were his favorites, and he was proud of having been a regular in Alphonse Daudet's salon in Paris. Szomory wrote short stories and some poetry, but he was a born dramatist, if only because he knew how to create pathos on stage with overpowering words, and how to deflate it with devastatingly pedestrian words. A late-Romantic, Szomory outdid the Romantics with his overembellished, sonorous, interminable, and ultimately self-mocking tirades which became his signature. Alluding to Wagner, he often expressed the desire to create a language that would be a kind of synthesis, a *Gesamtkunstwerk* based on the word.[53] Szomory would also have agreed with Oscar Wilde, according to whom "a mask tells us more than the face."[54] In his personal life Szomory eagerly cultivated the image of a Des Esseintes-like decadent and narcissist; his poses and eccentricities, his carefully stage-managed affairs, scandals, sufferings made him a celebrated and controversial literary figure. A cult of beauty informed all of Szomory's works and shaped his lifestyle; the aestheticization of pain and death became an especially conspicuous feature of his work. During the First World War, he wrote a series of fictitious eyewitness reports from the Western front. In one of them he exclaims: "These stiff-bodied young soldiers stretched out in pools of blood over the black wreaths of crows make a beautiful, oh, God, forgive me, an incredibly beautiful sight."[55] Szomory wrote a number of plays — "tumultuous spectacles," he called them — about Habsburg kings, as well as social dramas in which the accent is always on passionate, if ill-fated, love affairs. But the play we are concerned with here — *Sába királynője* (The Queen of Sheba) — was never performed; we do not even know for sure when it was written. The manuscript was believed lost and only recently rediscovered among the author's papers by his biographer, Pál Réz, who speculates that it was composed in the early twenties. In his notes on the forgotten play, Pál Réz discounts Szomory's claim that *The Queen of Sheba* is his chef d'oeuvre. Réz believes "it is merely a libretto, waiting for an inspired composer. . . [In it the author] tries to revive the antiquated and unrenewable dramatic tradition of Maeterlinck and D'Annunzio."[56] Yet the

importance of *The Queen of Sheba* as a Symbolist play should not be underestimated. In his essay on the Symbolist theatre, Hartmut Köhler points out that in addition to myth, legend and fairy tale, "the voluptuous paganism of antiquity" can be a rich source for a Symbolist play. (Interestingly enough, Köhler mentions in this connection the Portuguese Eugenio de Castro's *La reine de Saba.*)[57] What attracted Szomory to the Biblical story was clearly its decorative aspects. His *Queen of Sheba* is more of a pageant than a play. The actual story of the relationship of Solomon and Belkiss—the psychological aspects of the romance or the historical background—is of little importance to the author. The scenes containing narrative interest (the one in which Belkiss tries out her riddles on Solomon, for example) are the weakest in the play. The emphasis is on spectacle, verbal and emotional crescendos, aria-like tirades, climactic theatrical moments — Belkiss' triumphant entry to Jerusalem, her equally dramatic leavetaking, etc.

What is especially interesting about the play from a Symbolist point of view is that Szomory's exotic, opulent decor includes a profusion of birds and flowers which not only echo the details of the legend of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, but are clearly Symbolist in inspiration. Solomon sends his favorite bird, a hoopoe, as a messenger to Sheba, and with it a whole flock of birds take off, darkening the sky and forming a "winged cloud."[58] Similarly, Belkiss is surrounded by, and is identified with, rare and beautiful flowers.[59] Indeed, the unreally luxuriant, hothouse atmosphere of the play is quite reminiscent of the rarified ambience of much Symbolist poetry. What is more, Belkiss resembles a figure favored by the Symbolists: Salomé. The prophet Jossué in the play warns Solomon of the terrible consequences of his involvement with the Queen. Like Jokanaan in Wilde's *Salomé* he is — quite literally — a prophet of doom. At the end, Belkiss watches with satisfaction as Solomon, intoxicated by love, is about to have the prophet put to death.

We could cite further Symbolist traits in *The Queen of Sheba,* but before going too far in spotting resemblances and parallels, we might do well to recall that Symbolist drama, in Hungary as elsewhere, is an imposed critical category. It is unlikely that Szomory was consciously adapting Symbolist devices in his drama. If nothing else his ever-present irony and merciless self-parody; his embracement of "l'esprit cruel et le rire impure" separate him from "true" Symbolists. We should also keep in mind that a major problem in dealing with Szomory's Symbolism, indeed with Hungarian Symbolism in general, is that the term is very loosely used by Hungarian critics and writers. The dividing line between

Symbolism, Neo-Romanticism, Impressionism, Decadence, Art Nouveau, Secession is often blurred and the labels are used interchangeably. (For example, in an essay on Dezső Szomory, Kálmán Vargha talks about Szomory's "symbolist-secessionist period."[60] We must remember, too, that Lukács's term "decorative stylization" encompassed both Symbolism and the artistic impulses covered by the term Secession.)

VI

In this essay we attempted to isolate certain thematic and stylistic traits in early twentieth century Hungarian drama, which reflect an awareness of the Mallarméan-Maeterlinckian notion of an internalized, "detheatricalized," evocative theatre. We also tried to examine Decadent features in certain Hungarian plays. We define Decadence as an aspect of Symbolism, which in its Middle European incarnation manifested itself in an overrefined aesthetic sensibility, an excessive preoccupation with death and a predilection for heavily stylized and overcharged forms of expression. Our choice of plays was to a certain extent subjective; it is conceivable that similar elements could be found in other Hungarian plays of this period.[61] Béla Balázs's *Mysteries,* Ernő Szép's fairy play and Dezső Szomory's Biblical drama may be considered examples of experimental theatre, not wholly successful, but significant nevertheless from both a literary and dramatic point of view. These unconventional attempts did not have much of an impact on the development of modern Hungarian drama which has been generally unresponsive to new dramatic theories and practices, and is to this day heavily representational.[62] It should be noted, though, that while Béla Balázs's plays (with the exception of the operatic version of *Bluebeard's Castle*) have not been staged in fifty years, Szomory's dramas — the more conventional ones, to be sure — are again in vogue in Hungary. There is hope at least that audiences attuned to the subtleties of language, mood, feeling in the theatre might learn to appreciate these static, "unstageworthy," Symbolist-inspired Hungarian dramas.

NOTES

1. György Lukács, *A modern dráma fejlődésének története* (Budapest: Franklin Társulat, 1911), vol. 2, pp. 494-531.
2. Lukács, *A modern dráma,* vol. 1, pp. 351-393. After he became a Marxist, Lukács scorned most of the Symbolist playwrights. In a 1966 interview he declared that Maeterlinck's works had become "unreadable." See Theo Pinkus,

ed., *Gespräche mit Georg Lukács* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1967), p. 26. Understandably, Lukács retained his great admiration for Hebbel. See for example "Hebbel és a modern tragédia megalapozása" in Lukács, *Világirodalom* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1969), vol. 2, pp. 332–366. For a more objective appraisal of Hebbel and the modern theatre, see Ronald Peacock, *Poet in the Theatre* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1946), pp. 64–76.

3. See Lukács's preface to an anthology of his theoretical writings on literature, *Művészet és társadalom* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1969), pp. 5–6.
4. Lukács, *A modern dráma,* vol. 2, pp. 240–290. Lukács was also among the first to note the similarities between Symbolism and Naturalism. He points out that in eliminating contrived plots, in suggesting an all-powerful force behind human action, in searching for the *tragique quotidien:* "the reflection of a sense of fatality in everyday things," Symbolist drama is strikingly close to Naturalism. Lukács's conclusions are echoed by modern critics. For example, Anna Balakian in her *The Symbolist Movement* (New York: Random House, 1967) states: "Naturalism and symbolism are both nurtured by fatalistic philosophies in which the human will is subordinated to outer influences and pressures." (p. 138) John Gassner in *Form and Idea in Modern Theatre* (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1956) defines Symbolism as "naturalist playwrighting with its teeth drawn." (p. 106.)
5. Lukács, *A modern dráma,* vol. 2, p. 279.
6. *Ibid.,* p. 262.
7. *Ibid.,* p. 258.
8. *Ibid.,* p. 503.
9. Pál Pándi (ed.), *A magyar irodalom története* (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1965), vol. 3, p. 453.
10. Antal Szerb, *Magyar irodalomtörténet* (Budapest: Révai, 1943), p. 492.
11. See György Lukács's collection of essays on Béla Balázs's work: *Balázs Béla és akinek nem kell* (Gyoma: Kner Izidor, 1918). These essays illustrate Lukács's polemical zeal as well as his blindness to Balázs's limitations as an artist. For a recent view of Balázs, Lukács and their circle, see Ferenc Fehér's introductory essay in Béla Balázs, *Az álmok köntöse* (Budapest: Magyar Helikon, 1973), pp. 5–24. For an appraisal, in English, of Balázs the writer and thinker, see Lee Congdon, "The Making of a Hungarian Revolutionary: The Unpublished Diary of Béla Balázs, *Journal of Contemporary History,* 8, No. 3 (1973), pp. 57–74.
12. See Kristóf Nyíri's interview with Arnold Hauser, in which Hauser reminisces about Lukács, Balázs and others, in *Kritika,* Nos. 4 & 5 (1976), pp. 5–9; 16–18. It is often pointed out that an important reason why Lukács and his circle did not have a more decisive role in shaping Hungarian culture in the 1920's and 1930's is that after 1919 almost the entire group left the country. Lukács and Balázs became Communist émigrés, staying first in Austria and then moving on to Russia. By the time they returned to their native country in 1945, a whole generation had grown up who hardly knew of their existence.
13. In his definitive study on the influence of French Symbolism on Hungarian poetry, André Karátson points out that "les Hongrois de l'époque, sauf Béla Balázs et Dezső Kosztolányi, y pensaient peu, préoccupés qu'ils étaient de révéler leur moi intime et de transformer les rapports entre la poésie et la vie nationale." *Le symbolisme en Hongrie* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1969), p. 442.
14. Béla Balázs, "A tragédiának metafizikus teóriája a német romantikában és Hebbel Frigyes," *Nyugat* 1 (1908), 89. We might add here that some of Lukács's

formulations also coincide with Symbolist perceptions. In one of his essays on Balázs, Lukács reaches the conclusion that Shakespeare was a great symbolist since his symbols "mean everything and nothing in particular; they are musical and non-intellectual" (Lukács, *Balázs Béla,* p. 63.). Mallarmé reached a somewhat similar conclusion. Haskell Block points out in his *Mallarmé and the Symbolist Drama* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1963) that according to the French poet Shakespeare's "cosmic symbolization" makes him "the great precursor of the symbolist drama." (p. 91)

15. Béla Balázs, "Maeterlinck," *Nyugat* 1 (1908), p. 448.
16. *Ibid.,* p. 450.
17. *Ibid.,* p. 452.
18. Like Mallarmé, Balázs was deeply aware of the mystery inherent in theatre; and although the title *Misztériumok,* according to some critics, simply refers to the parabolic aspects of the plays, quasi-religious, ritualistic elements are very much present, especially in the third drama, *A szent szűz vére* (The Blood of the Holy Virgin).
19. Balázs, "Maeterlinck," p. 449. It should be noted that Lukács believed *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue* to be "an insignificant" play. (*A modern dráma,* vol. 2, p. 287.), and in general considered Maeterlinck's late work too explicitly philosophical and therefore not Symbolist, indeed not at all dramatic. The wise man, Lukács maintained, is by definition "not tragic" (*A modern dráma,* vol. 2, 286.). In a sense Balázs's other youthful literary works — his many fables, fairy tales and parables — could be related to Maeterlinck's later writings since both writers moved away from Symbolism in the direction of didacticism and philosophy. Balázs also wrote non-symbolist social dramas which are rather abstract illustrations of Lukács's and others' dramatic theories. However, while in exile in Russia and Germany Balázs made a name for himself as a film theorist and critic and his preoccupation with the visual medium could perhaps be related to his early interest in Symbolism.
20. Béla Balázs, *Válogatott cikkek és tanulmányok,* ed. by Magda K. Nagy (Budapest: Kossuth, 1968), p. 35. There is an interesting resemblance between the castle image in Balázs's play and Endre Ady's poem "A vár fehér asszonya" [The White Woman of the Castle] whose opening line is: A lelkem ódon, babonás vár/Mohos, gőgös és elhagyott (My soul is an ancient bewitched castle/Mouldering, haughty and abandoned.) See Karátson, *Symbolisme en Hongrie,* p. 122.
21. Béla Balázs, *Az álmok köntöse,* p. 197.
22. *Ibid.,* pp. 203–206.
23. Miklós Szabolcsi *et al., A magyar irodalom története* (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1966), vol. 6, p. 247.
24. György Kroó, *Bartók szinpadi művei* (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1962), p. 25. György Lukács, on the other hand, rejected any attempt to link Balázs's *Bluebeard's Castle* with Maeterlinck's *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue,* and went as far as claiming that while Maeterlinck's images are "abstract," Balázs's dramas are "terse, precise and richly sensuous expressions of the inner life of a dramatic here." (*Balázs Béla,* p. 58.) In this particular essay Lukács was responding to an article by Mihály Babits in which Babits criticized Balázs's dramas for their lack of poetry and imagination. See *Nyugat,* 6 (1913), pp. 166–169. Other critics have also questioned Balázs's Symbolism. In his essay on Balázs's dramatic theories, Ferenc Fehér notes that while "Maeterlinck was a conscious Symbolist, Balázs was one only accidentally and momentarily." Ferenc Fehér, "Narcisszusz drámái és teóriái," in Béla Balázs, *Halálos fiatalság* (Budapest:

Magyar Helikon, 1974), p. 21. On the other hand, Miklós Szabolcsi maintains that Balázs's theatre is closely related to Maeterlinck's Symbolist dramaturgy. *A magyar irodalom története,* vol. 6, p. 247.

25. Maurice Maeterlinck, *Théâtres* (Brussels: P. Lacomblez, 1912), vol. 3, pp. 142–143.
26. Balázs, *Az álmok köntöse,* p. 202.
27. Maeterlinck, *Théâtres,* vol. 3, p. 138.
28. Bettina Knapp, *Maurice Maeterlinck* (Boston: Twayne, 1975), p. 99.
29. Emil Haraszti, *Bartók Béla élete és művei.* Quoted by Kroó in *Bartók szinpadi művei,* p. 29.
30. Kroó, *Bartók szinpadi művei,* pp. 105–106.
31. See László Bóka's essay on Balázs's play in a special illustrated edition of *A kékszakállú herceg vára* (Budapest: Helikon, 1961), p. 62. A contemporary critic—George Steiner—sees the castle and Judith's curiosity as a symbol of modern man's search for ultimate and devastating truth about his culture. See Steiner's *In Bluebeard's Castle* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971).
32. See for example Vilmos Voigt, "Folklore in Symbolism," MS, to be published in *The Symbolist Movement in the Literatures of European Languages,* under the aegis of the International Comparative Literature Association.
33. *Bécsi Magyar Újság,* May 21, 1922. Quoted by Kroó, p. 35.
34. See "Molnár Anna balladája" in *Új guzsalyam mellett* (Bukarest: Kriterion, 1973), pp. 26–27. In this version of the legend, the Bluebeard figure hangs his victims on a tree.
35. Lukács, *A modern dráma,* vol. 2, p. 251.
36. *Ibid.*
37. *Ibid.,* p. 261.
38. József Ujfalussy, *Bartók* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1965), 2 vols.
39. *Ibid.,* vol. 1, p. 169. See also footnote 20.
40. *The Blood of the Holy Virgin* is the least satisfying of the three *Mysteries,* and its symbolism is the most literal. For instance, the rich tapestry we see hanging over the grim walls of a Norman castle clearly suggests the changes made by Blanka, the lovely wife. In a climactic moment her husband's comrade expresses his jealousy by angrily tearing off the wall hangings.
41. This conflict was rooted in Balázs's personal life. Two fictionalized accounts of his friendship with Lukács and with members of Lukács's circle — Balázs's own *Lehetetlen emberek* [Impossible People] and Anna Lesznai's *Kezdetben volt a kert* [In the Beginning was the Garden] — reveal some of the dilemmas highlighted in the *Mysteries.*
42. See Guy Michaud, *Message poétique du symbolisme* (Paris: Nizet, 1966), pp. 445–448.
43. Significantly, the title of Balázs's first volume of poetry is *A vándor énekel* [The Wanderer Sings]. According to Lukács the wanderer is a highly ambiguous symbol: he symbolizes those moments "when everything becomes symbolic." (Lukács, *Balázs Béla,* p. 65.)
44. Balázs, *Az álmok köntöse,* p. 247.
45. See Aladár Komlós, "A magyar art nouveau vagy a nemzeti és európai elv összeolvadása," in his *Vereckétől Dévényig* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1972), pp. 99–156.
46. For a brief overview of recent research on this subject, see Lajos Pók, "Szecesszió és nosztalgia," *Nagyvilág,* 21, No. 5 (1976), pp. 758–762.
47. See Pál Réz's introductory essay in Ernő Szép, *Úriemberek vagyunk* (Budapest: Magvető, 1957), pp. 5–17.

48. André Karátson in his chapter on Szép lists some of these themes: "De quoi s'entretient-on avec Szép? De choses éminemment poétiques: des fées, des princesses, des nuages, des cygnes, des roses, mais aussi de choses éminemment prosaiques: des lits de faits, des visages mal rasés, des godillots de soldat, de la toux et du cri du ventre." *Le symbolisme en Hongrie,* p. 345.
49. Ernő Szép, *Úriemberek vagyunk,* p. 17.
50. Quoted by Pál Réz in Ernő Szép, *Szinház* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1975), p. 123.
51. *Ibid.,* p. 118.
52. In *Levelek egy barátnőmhöz,* a series of fictitious letters to a lady friend, Szomory speaks rather disparagingly of Jean Moreas, one of the "activists" of the movement, and gives a sampling of his own unabashedly imitative Symbolist verse (Budapest: Atheneum, 1927), pp. 164–165.
53. See Pál Réz, *Szomory Dezső* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1971), pp. 17, 83.
54. See Oscar Wilde, "The Truth of Masks," in *Complete Works of Oscar Wilde* (London: Collins, 1948), pp. 1060–1078. Compare Wilde's statements in this essay, as well as his famous Preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray,* with some of Szomory's observations in his *A párizsi regény* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1969): "The power of appearance, of all artifice, is always greater than the power of reality." (p. 19.) "Beauty is never of any use. The useful goes hand in hand with the ugly." (p. 34.)
55. Szomory, *Harry Russel-Dorsan a francia hadszíntérről.* Quoted by Réz in *Szomory,* p. 154.
56. Dezső Szomory, *Szinház* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1973), p. 285.
57. Hartmut Köhler, "Symbolist Techniques in the Theatre Arts," MS, to be published in *The Symbolist Movement in the Literatures of European Languages* under the aegis of the International Comparative Literature Association.
58. Szomory, *Szinház,* pp. 760–765.
59. *Ibid.,* p. 769.
60. Kálmán Vargha, "A novellista Szomory," in Dezső Szomory, *Az irgalom hegyén* (Budapest: Magvető, 1964), pp. 20–21. For a discussion of the problems of defining Symbolism, see René Wellek's "The Term and Concept of Symbolism in Literary History" in his *Discriminations* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), pp. 90–121.
61. László Bóka calls our attention to Mihály Babits's symbolic fairy play, *A második ének,* which, in 1911, also bucked the Naturalist trend, and sought to project an *état d'ame* on the stage. See Bóka's essay in Balázs, *A Kékszakállú herceg vára* (Budapest: Helikon, 1961), pp. 59–75.
62. One of the many possible reasons why Symbolism in the theatre did not have a stronger effect in Hungary is that it arrived almost at the same time as Naturalism which clearly overshadowed it. In 1904, when Lukács and others established Thália, Hungary's first *théâtre libre,* Naturalism was still considered the latest word in drama. Thália staged such masterpieces of Naturalist theatre as Gorki's *The Lower Depths* and Strindberg's *The Father.* No play by Maeterlinck was performed during Thália's four years of existence between 1904 and 1908, though works by Hauptmann and D'Annunzio were staged.

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The Hungarian Image of Benjamin Franklin

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"The impact of this new American man upon Europe," commented Henry Bamford Parkes on Franklin, "was of the greatest importance."[1] The Philadelphia printer, son of a Boston tallow-chandler, acted as the agent of the Pennsylvania Assembly in London during 1757–1762 and resided in Paris during 1776–1785. Between 1778 and 1784 he served as the rebellious American colonies' minister plenipotentiary at the French court. Because of his prolonged stay in Europe, Franklin became a symbol for all ideas and ideals associated with America. "If eighteenth-century America borrowed its theories from Europe," said Parkes, "it more than repaid the debt by the encouragement it offered, by its mere existence, to European liberalism."[2] His long sojourn in London and Paris made Franklin the most accessible representative of the Founding Fathers to Europeans. Besides his political role, his invention of the lightning conductor, this epochal discovery in the field of electricity, contributed to Franklin's early fame in Europe, and brought him honors in all parts of the continent.[3] Franklin, the scientist and politician, was soon to capture the attention of Hungarians.

His European presence accounted for Franklin's early recognition in Hungary as an American patriot. Colonel Mihály Kováts (who was to die in the defence of Charleston, S.C. in 1779), volunteered to serve the American cause in a letter to Franklin in January 1777.[4] János Zinner (later a professor of philosophy and mathematics in Kassa), "prefect of the Imperial and Royal Academy of Buda," as he signed his letter to Franklin of October 26, 1778,[5] asked Franklin for material for two books he was planning to write in Latin on the American Revolution. In a second letter, dated September 23, 1783,[6] Zinner offered his *Notitia Historica de Coloniis Federatis in America* to the thirteen states. Since the Latin works have not been found, it is believed that the results of those researches had been incorporated in his other writings.[7] His German *Merkwürdige Briefe und Schriften der berühmtesten Generäle in America* [Noteworthy Letters and Writings of the Most Famous Generals in America] (1782),[8] is a survey of the American Revolution's

major military figures, both patriot and loyalist. It also contains a few Franklin letters and a short biography of the American in which he is described as an exceptional philosopher and statesman. Considering the political situation in Habsburg-dominated Hungary at the time, it is not surprising that Zinner cautiously refrained from speculating on the revolutionary struggle's outcome. Zinner's 1778 letter to Franklin tells much about political attitudes in Hungary and illustrates the sympathies of her progressive-minded intellectuals. Zinner began with a tribute to the Habsburgs, a prudent caution lest his letter fell into the wrong hands. "I was born the subject of a great monarchy," he wrote, "and under a government whose rule is mild." But he soon revealed his true feelings about the War of Independence: "... I cannot tell you what joy I feel, when I hear or read of your progress in America. To speak the truth, I look upon you and all the chiefs of your new republic, as angels, sent by heaven to guide and comfort the human race." Zinner confessed that his reason for writing his book was the desire to spread the ideas of the American Revolution. "To give a public manifestation of this sentiment, I have composed a work in Latin." Commenting on this letter in Franklin's *Works,* Jared Sparks noted the "interest taken in American affairs even in the remote parts of Europe."[9] Because of her unfortunate political status at the time, Hungary was a remote country indeed in more than one sense of the word.

At the same time when Hungary's political thinkers discovered Franklin the politician, her physicists realized his importance as a scientist. In 1776, the first lightning conductor was installed on the Royal Palace in Buda, and in his joy over the event, Lőrinc Orczy, a rather conservative, aristocratic poet, dedicated a poem to Franklin.[10] If Zinner pioneered in making the versatile American known as a progressive statesman, a fellow-scholar in Buda, Pál Makó, was equally eager to acquaint his countrymen with Franklin's achievement in the field of electricity. His book on the subject appeared first in Latin, then in 1772 it was translated into German and finally in 1781 it also appeared in Hungarian.[11] In 1786, the periodical *Merkur von Ungarn* reported that another physicist, Elek Horányi was teaching Franklin's theories on electricity to two young noblemen, Antal Grassalkovich and Ignác Almássy.[12] As early as 1785–1788, Franklin's theory became an examination question at the College of Sárospatak, one of the country's most famous Protestant colleges.[13]

The Jacobin conspiracy of 1794–1795 in Hungary was inspired by French ideological influences, but there was also an impact of American political thought. The writings of the conspiracy's participants reveal an

acute awareness of the events in America, and Franklin's name is frequently mentioned. Two facts are noteworthy about these references. First, the conspirators were aware of Franklin's prominence both as a scientist and as a politician. In his pamphlet *Oratio ad Proceres et Nobiles Regni Hungariae,* the conspiracy's chief figure pointed to Franklin, the inventor, as a man eminent in "disciplinis physicis et matematicis."[14] At the trial of the conspirator Szecsenacz, the prosecution presented the lawyer Samuel Kohlmayer's letter, dated November 20, 1790, as evidence. Referring to the accused, Kohlmayer cited Turgot's famous remark on Franklin "non quidem coelo fulmen, sed tamen eripuit sceptrum tyrannis."[15] The second point about the Hungarian Jacobins' Franklin image is even more important, because of its pertinence to István Széchenyi's fascination with the American statesman, namely Franklin's dedication to the common good. Eighteenth-century Hungarian intellectuals very much appreciated Franklin's sense of public service and respected his community-orientedness. In his funeral oration over the deceased Alajos Capuano, a friend and public figure, Ignác Martinovics cited Franklin as an example of a life's dedication to the common good.[16]

Indeed, the main idea of *Tempefői* (1793), a drama by the greatest poet of the age, Mihály Csokonai Vitéz, displayed a similar concern. "Blessed endeavor," one of the characters exclaims, "which though prompted by self-interest, works for the public good." Csokonai admired Franklin, one of the creators of a free republic. In a letter to Sándor Bessenyei, probably written in 1795, Csokonai voiced his most personal feelings and convictions: "An exile in my own country," wrote the poet after his expulsion from the College of Debrecen, "I am dragging along my days in boredom. My only happiness consists in finding a new world for myself, where I can build a Republic and a Philadelphia and — at least there, like Franklin did — eripio fulmen coelo sceptrumque tyrannis."[17]

It is difficult to assess how widely Franklin was known in late eighteenth-century Hungary. There are a few safe guesses, though. Since the *Hadi és más Nevezetes Történetek* [Military and Other Famous Stories] as well as the *Bétsi Magyar Kurir* [Vienna Magyar Messenger] published obituaries on Franklin's death, it is fair to assume that newspaper readers were familiar with his name.[18] The Sárospatak College examination requirement and Csokonai's comments on the American statesman suggest that Franklin's political activity was as well known among students as his scientific contribution. Recent assessments rate the popularity of some of Martinovics's pamphlets rather

high.[19] The distribution of five-thousand copies within three days of publication was a considerable achievement. Franklin was certainly well-known among late eighteenth-century progressive Hungarian intellectuals. He failed to reach a wider audience, however, before well in the nineteenth.

II

The first attempt at introducing Franklin's ideas to a wider audience — with the twin purpose of entertaining and educating — was made in 1816. János Kis translated excerpts from Franklin's writings, probably from a German collection, without ever mentioning Franklin's name. The message was important, not the man behind the ideas! Kis translated a portion of Franklin's *The Way to Wealth* as *A szegény Jakab, kinek elegendője volt* [The Poor Jacob Who Had Enough]. He included it among other moralizing essays in part four of his *Ifjúság barátja vagy Hasznosan mulattató darabok a két nembeli ifjúság számára* [A Friend to the Young or Pieces Providing Useful Entertainment for Both Sexes].[20] The lengthy title clearly betrayed the intention of the translator and was quite characteristic of the development of Franklin's image in Hungary. From the very beginning of the nineteenth century, the "Poor Richard" image prevailed and Franklin came to be regarded as an exemplary, virtuous personality, whose private life and principles might have a beneficial influence on the youth. In contrast to eighteenth-century thought, which celebrated Franklin the statesman and the scientist, János Kis saw in Franklin the educator of the young. This feature was to dominate the image of the great American in Hungary. Slowly but effectively it pushed the image of the politician into the background, and later into oblivion.

A more complete selection of Franklin's writings was published in 1836,[21] the work of an anonymous compiler and translator, identified as "S.J." A twenty-two-page introduction precedes eighty-one pages of a rather random collection, based probably on a German compilation. The preface emphasized Franklin's virtues. The extremely long title suggests that the translator wished to attract all segments of society: *Franklin arany kincses ládátskája vagy Útmutatás, mikép lehet az ember munkás, okos, kedves, jólmagabíró, rényes* [sic] *és boldog. Mint az élet minden viszonyaiban szerfelett hasznos, véneknek és ifjaknak, de különösen az elsőknek, nélkülözhető tanácsadót, úgy ajánlja honfitársainak S. J. Kassán 1836* [Franklin's Little Treasury Chest or Guidelines How to Be Zealous, Wise, Kind, Healthy, Virtuous and Happy.

S. J. Recommends it in Kassa to All his Countrymen as a Useful Counsellor to All Ways of Life Both to the Old and the Young, but Especially to the Former]. The title honored the spirit of contemporary Hungarian popular literature and that of *Poor Richard's Almanack*. The thirty-eighth chapter, entitled: "A szegény, öreg Richárd vagy módok, mikép lehet meggazdagodni" [Poor Richard or Ways to get Rich] rendered a more complete translation of *The Way to Wealth* than Kis's, which did not include the frame-story, Father Abraham giving advice to a gathering of people.

Lajos Szilágyi's partial translation of *The Way to Wealth, Franklin az öreg Rikhárd neve alatt* [Franklin under the name of Old Richard], 1848,[22] has a preface with some political implications. The translator was keenly aware of the need for a policy embodying compromise among Hungary's numerous ethnic minorities and different religions. He admired Franklin as the representative of a nation where ethnic groups lived in harmony and as a man of tolerance, and proposed to translate the *Autobiography* as well as other parts of the *Almanack*. The political overtones of the Franklin image did not disappear in nineteenth-century Hungary altogether. Intellectuals involved in political activity during the Reform Age recognized Franklin's achievements as a progressive statesman. The Transylvanian Ferenc Szilágyi, a future participant in the War of Independence of 1848–49 was busily engaged popularizing the image of Franklin. In 1818, he published a balanced Franklin biography in the periodical *Erdélyi Muzéum*.[23] It paid obeisance to the multiple activities of Franklin, and considered both the positive and negative features of his character. Another Transylvanian, the first Hungarian ever to write a travelogue on the U.S., Sándor Farkas Bölöni must be mentioned as a contributor to the Hungarian image of Franklin, the politician, with entries in the twelve-volume encyclopedia *Közhasznú Ismeretek Tára* [Encyclopedia of Useful Knowledge], and random but perceptive and informative remarks on Franklin's political activities in *Útazás Észak Amerikában* (1834) [A Journey in North America].[24]

The climax of Franklin's impact in Hungary was Count István Széchenyi's fascination with the American statesman.[25] The compatibility of the two politicians' aims, ideas and achievements accounted for Széchenyi's interest in Franklin. The Hungarian Jacobins had been aware of Franklin's commitment to the public good. The same commitment attracted Széchenyi, whose father possessed a copy of Zinner's book, and the young Széchenyi may have gathered his first information about the American statesman from this work. His own library boasted

of three books on Franklin: a three-volume London edition of his works, a two-volume London edition of his correspondence, and a French collection.[26] He made the following entry in his *Diary* about the latter: "Ein Buch, welches auf mein ganzes Leben den großten Einfluß haben wird" [A book that will have the greatest influence on my whole life].[27] The book to which he alluded was only recently (1824) published in Paris by Ch. A. Renouard: *Mélanges de morale, d'économie et de politique, extraits des ouvrages de Benjamin Franklin et précédé d'une note sur sa vie* [A Moral, Economic and Political Miscellany, Excerpts from the Works of Benjamin Franklin prefaced with a note on his life]. The title with its references to morals, economics and politics, explains Széchenyi's interest. He was getting involved with Hungary's political and economic problems, and he believed that these had moral implications.

Széchenyi admired and imitated Franklin's method of exercising virtues and fighting vices.[28] When we ask why, we cannot overlook the fact that Franklin's success story was also that of Philadelphia and the young American Republic. Széchenyi had something similar in mind for himself and his beloved Hungary. Because he endeavored to serve his country and to play a leading public role very much like Franklin had, he must have been fascinated with the American's deliberate and conscious effort to discipline himself and to educate himself into the kind of person who could succeed in a public career. Two ideas from Széchenyi's epilogue to his *Hitel* [Credit] illustrate the compatability of the two politicians. First Széchenyi emphasized his hatred of extremes of all sorts. He tried to describe himself as a peacemaker, a unifier searching for a middle of the road policy, Franklin's "golden mean," if you like. Széchenyi's ideas were those of a practical, pragmatic, prudent, and cautious politician. Nobody could have been more compatible with Franklin's view of the useful public figure. Said Franklin: "I even forbid myself, — the use of every word or expression in the language that imported a fixed opinion, such as *certainly, undoubtedly,* etc., and I adopted, instead of them, *I conceive, I apprehend,* or *I imagine* a thing to be so or so, — for the last fifty years no one has ever heard a dogmatical expression escape me."[29] In his second important statement in the epilogue to *Hitel* Széchenyi tried to focus the attention of his countrymen on a future they might shape; he begged them to turn away from the unchangeable past. Dedicated as he was to public affairs, he tried to prepare people's minds in Hungary for changes by publicizing the issues. Széchenyi emulated Franklin's example: "I endeavored to prepare the minds of people by writing on the subject in the newspapers."[30] They both fought for a better future by "proposing new institutions."[31]

A comparison of the list of their respective major achievements displays amazing similarities. On Franklin's side: Fire Company, Subscription Library, Orphan House, Philosophical Society, University and Hospital. On Széchenyi's side: the National Casino, the regulation of the Danube, the Chain Bridge linking Buda and Pest, and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Széchenyi's dedicated service to regenerate his country was an achievement similar to that of the Philadelphian nation-builder. Though under very different circumstances, ultimately both statesmen were involved in building a nation, Franklin in the literal sense of the word, Széchenyi indirectly but not less intensively. He certainly had the vision of a regenerated Hungary, and had a lion's share in its creation. Notwithstanding Hungary's calamity of 1849, and Széchenyi's personal tragedy, Hungary became a better country, and the Count's contribution to its development cannot be denied.

In the second half of the nineteenth century more accurate, detailed, and authentic information about Franklin came to the attention of Hungarian scholars, mainly from German and French sources. More and more original Hungarian works appeared, dealing with United States history, and all of them paid tribute to Franklin's statesmanship. The most objective and informative biography reaching Hungary was F.A.A. Mignet's *Vie de Franklin,* translated in 1874 as *Franklin élete* [Franklin's Life].[32] However, this objective evaluation of the free-thinker, cautious politician, and utilitarian businessman, seems to have had little or no impact on the Hungarian Franklin image. As Franklin's appeal reached a wider audience, his image lost its public and political features. The versatile real person came to be distorted into a one-dimensional figure, an exemplary religious and virtuous idol showing people the safe and sure way to a successful personal life. In trying to assess this development, we have to consider two facts. One was the political situation in Hungary. In 1867, a political compromise was reached with the Habsburgs. Under the radically different circumstances created by the *Ausgleich,* Hungarian politicians lost interest in the United States as a democratic model state. As a result, the ardent political involvement with the young republic, so characteristic of many outstanding public figures in the Reform Age, like Sándor Farkas Bölöni, Miklós Wesselényi, István Széchényi and Lajos Kossuth, also declined. The other important fact to be considered was the change of the Franklin image in America. As the United States entered a new phase, Franklin, the successful businessman, overshadowed Franklin, the Founding Father, and he came more and more to be identified with Poor Richard who "made good." Also, all over Europe, Franklin came

to be regarded as the archetype of the successful American businessman.

The only Hungarian contribution on Franklin in the second half of the century with some political overtones came from István Türr, a former participant in the 1848–49 War of Independence. He returned to his homeland on a pardon arranged by Queen Victoria. Türr was a freemason, hence his interest in Franklin. On the Budapesti Iparoskör's [Budapest Craftsmen's Association] request, he delivered a lecture about Franklin on 16 November 1880 to an audience of craftsmen. Türr recognized the special interest of his audience, and he talked about Franklin, the self-made man. With the number of hopeful emigrants from Hungary increasing, the image of the self-made man came more and more to be associated with America. In the same year, Türr's lecture was published as *Franklin Benjámin élete és tanairól* [On Benjamin Franklin's Life and Teachings].[33]

The dominant tone of the approach to Franklin in the second half of the nineteenth century was set by László Szalay's biography, published in the series, *Statusférfiak és szónokok könyve* [Book of Statesmen and Orators] in 1850. Szalay emphasized the success-story aspect of Franklin's life. He took extremely seriously the American's concern with being and appearing honest. Franklin had written in his *Autobiography:* "In order to secure my credit and character as a tradesman, I took care not only to be in *reality* industrious and frugal, but to avoid the appearance to the contrary."[34] Franklin, the tradesman and businessman, was to address himself to a wide audience in Hungary during this period.

It is certainly significant that in 1854, its first year, *Vasárnapi Újság* published a translation of Franklin's "Father Abraham's Speech."[35] *Vasárnapi Újság* was a popular magazine published for an unsophisticated audience. Its interest in Franklin testifies to the fact that his name was a household word in Hungary, and that his appeal had shifted from the intellectuals to a less educated public. In 1873, *Vasárnapi Újság* was acquired by the Franklin Társulat [Franklin Society], founded in the same year for the purpose of popularizing knowledge in Hungary. It could not have chosen a better symbol for such an enterprise than the name of the Philadelphian who had dedicated so much energy to "conveying instruction among the people," and who had tried to disseminate knowledge through his *Almanacks.*[36] The contributions of the Franklin Társulat during its many decades of existence were enormous. Not surprisingly, in 1873 *Vasárnapi Újság* published János Dömötör's "Franklin Benjámin élete" [The Life of Benjamin Franklin], a biography stressing industry, honesty and success.[37]

Another popular publication, *Kis Nemzeti Múzeum,* also propagated Franklin's image as the exemplary, successful, virtuous businessman. In its fourth number in 1873, it included what was described as a second edition of an anonymous work, "Franklin Benjámin élete és bölcsessége" [Benjamin Franklin's Life and Wisdom], a writing vying with the others in its moralizing tone.[38] It is noteworthy that this piece followed another moralizing story in the same issue, Heinrich Zschokke's "Goldmacherdorf" [Goldmaking Village].

All these works featured much correct information, yet distorted the true and complex Franklin image by unduly emphasizing certain features in the character and life of this many-sided personality. Since Franklin was remarkably versatile, his figure lent itself easily to distortion by eager but well-intentioned interpreters who wanted to educate the unsophisticated public. A good example of this tendency was a book written by a Lutheran minister, Vilmos Győry, entitled *Egy igaz polgár élete* [The Life of a True Citizen] in 1869. The Lutheran Society republished it in 1927 in its series "Heroes of Christianity."[39] This time, the title was slightly altered to *Franklin Benjámin, egy igaz polgár élete.* In the preface, Győry claimed to have based the book on Franklin's *Autobiography.* His main point was to prove that one can be simultaneously honest and rich. Claiming to have followed the *Autobiography,* Győry presented Franklin as a religious person. He certainly disregarded some of Franklin's confessions about his religious beliefs. "My indiscreet disputations about religion," the American wrote at one point, "began to make me pointed at with horror by good people as an infidel atheist." Later Franklin confessed: "I soon became a thorough Deist."[40] To describe him as a hero of Christianity was to stretch the truth exceedingly.

III

The twentieth century brought no dramatic change in Franklin's Hungarian image. Besides routine references in history and physics textbooks, he is still very much a writer for the young. The conclusion of the most recent article on Franklin in Hungary is relevant from this point of view. Katalin Halácsy ends her brief survey by saying: "That grandpa in his hexagonal specs can still teach the younger generation the way to live an honest life."[41] Symbolically, the first Hungarian contribution on Franklin in the twentieth century came from an educator. On 16 May 1906 Ferenc Kemény delivered a lecture to the Magyar Tanítók Egyesülete [Hungarian Teachers' Association], titled "Frank-

lin Benjámin." The lecture was later published in *Magyar Pedagógia.*[42] Kemény drew a realistic image of Franklin the pedagogue, the self-educated man, a person concerned with universal education, including women. The Teachers' Association's special interests naturally limited Kemény's approach to only one aspect of the versatile Franklin.

It was Franklin, the public figure, who got lost somewhere along the way. Consequently, it was refreshing to see Franklin linked with Washington in the most detailed twentieth-century analysis of his personality in Lajos Joób's *Washington és Franklin,* published in 1910.[43] Being a free-mason, the author's interest in Franklin was self-evident. The great merit of Joób's 186-page biography lay in its emphasis on the many-sidedness of Franklin's career. The author did not curtail the Franklin image to any particular endeavor, though he stressed the features most compatible with his own attitudes. Joób's contribution was unique in Hungary.

The twentieth century has seen several editions of Franklin's works and some biographies published, mainly for the young. Following a long line of more or less complete translations of *The Way to Wealth* (usually included in various compilations of moralizing pieces), a separate edition appeared in 1914, *A gazdagodás útja amint azt a szegény Richárd, egy pennsylvániai kalendáriumban világosan megmutatja* [The Way to Wealth as Clearly Shown by Poor Richard in a Pennsylvanian Almanac].[44] In his preface, Mihály Láng, the translator, quoted several pages from the *Autobiography* which referred to *Poor Richard's Almanack.*

In spite of the many allusions to, and occasional quotations from the *Autobiography,* no Hungarian translation of Franklin's work was published before 1921. Pál Pruzsinszky produced the first Hungarian version, *Franklin Benjámin önéletrajza* [Benjamin Franklin's Autobiography], sponsored by the Franklin Society.[45] The book's preface was a further contribution to the distorted image of an exemplary, virtuous man. Very soon after, Ödön Wildner published a second translation under the same title.[46] Neither of these translations was complete. The first full translation had to wait until 1961. In *Franklin Benjámin számadása életéről* [Benjamin Franklin's Account of His Life], Tibor Bartos produced an excellent version of this early masterpiece of American literature.[47] The translation did not necessarily mean any increased interest in Franklin. It was due rather to the endeavor in the 1960's and 1970's to compensate for the serious neglect in making American masterpieces accessible to Hungarian readers. A Magyar version of the *Autobiography* certainly was long overdue.

Bartos's translation of that work marked the climax. What remains

to be said is rather on the negative side. Early in the century, *Vasárnapi Újság* dutifully tried to revive interest in Franklin with a short biography, *Franklin Benjámin élete* [Benjamin Franklin's Life].[48] Later, fictional biographies by well-known German and French novelists were made available in translation. In 1948, the Franklin Society published *Franklin, egy optimista élete,* translated from André Maurois's *Franklin, la vie d'un optimiste* [Franklin, Life of an Optimist].[49] The book was intended for children. Lion Feuchtwanger's *Füchse im Weinberg* was translated three times,[50] in 1948 by Ferenc László as *Állanférfiak, cselszövők, bohémek* [Statesmen, Schemers, Bohemians], in 1953 by Győző Határ as *Rókák a szőlőskertben* [Foxes in the Vineyard], and in 1963 by Tibor Déry as *Rókák a szőlőben* [Foxes in the Vineyard]. The Franklin Society may have chosen Maurois's book because of its subject, but the interest in *Füchse im Weinberg* was evidently prompted by Feuchtwanger's fame rather than Franklin's.

The original Hungarian contributions to Franklin biographies were intended for children, thus for a limited audience. In 1957, Endre Sós presented an elderly Franklin narrating his life, in *Aki az égtől elragadta a villámot* [The Man Who Took the Lightning from Heaven].[51] An abridged version of the same book appeared in 1970, co-authored with Magda Vámos, and with a new title, *Franklin vagyok Philadelphiából* [I am Franklin from Philadelphia].[52] The book was rewritten in order to accommodate the series "Nagy emberek élete" [Lives of Great Men].

Though Hungary dutifully celebrates all the commemorations recommended by the International Peace Council, the 1956 Franklin Year produced nothing of any importance. An article by Antal Mátyás, "Franklin Benjámin közgazdasági nézetei" [Benjamin Franklin's Economic Views][53] commands interest, because it attempted to establish Franklin among the forerunners of Marxism. His versatility may have lent itself to various interpretations and distortions, but it is difficult to see him as an early Marxist.

In the twentieth century, Franklin's image underwent great changes in America. The contradictions and ambiguities in his personality were exposed, and explored, and consequently, a complex, sometimes controversial figure emerged. What makes the present Hungarian image so inadequate is the lack of any honest attempt to construct a complex image of a truly great historical personality. Marxists could hardly be expected to appreciate Franklin, the successful businessman, but Franklin, the participant in the American War of Independence, should still command their interest, even if he was not a revolutionary. The

contradictions and paradoxes in his character lend themselves easily to a dialectical interpretation and his negative views on religion must endear him to all Marxists. Indeed, it is surprising that no Hungarian Marxist has taken up the challenge to present a Marxist view of Benjamin Franklin.

To sum up, in the Hungarian reception of Franklin we can discern a pattern of a changing image matching a changing audience. Franklin's extreme versatility has enabled different ages and different audiences to choose those aspects in his character which most closely corresponded with their needs. At no time has Franklin been presented to Hungarians in his full complexity. In the eighteenth century he attracted only members of the intellectual élite. They respected and admired him as an outstanding scientist and as an exceptional public figure who devoted his life to the public weal. This image survived in the nineteenth century among some of the greatest Hungarian patriots, such as Bölöni, and Széchenyi. But the nineteenth century also witnessed the broadening of Franklin's appeal on the social scale. Hand in hand with this development came a definite change in emphasis in the evaluation of Franklin. The scientist and the politician were replaced by the Poor Richard image. His personal success story overshadowed his contribution to the public good. Those trying to popularize the exemplary, virtuous Franklin cited *The Way to Wealth* rather than the entire *Poor Richard's Almanack*. This is a pity. Whereas Father Abraham's Speech championed only the prudent and sober virtues of hard work and thrift, the *Almanack* covered much wider ground. Besides disseminating knowledge and encouraging private virtues, Franklin also tried to educate people to be good citizens: "Nature expects Mankind whould share/ The Duties of the publick Care."[54] In nineteenth century Hungary, the colorful, many-sided, flesh-and-blood Franklin was whittled down and distorted into a symbol of bourgeois virtues. No attempt was made in the twentieth century either to revitalize or rectify the Franklin image. Though Franklin would never have denied those virtues, they were only a part of his many-sided character. After all, he spent twenty years in establishing himself as a businessman, and forty in serving the public good. It is this combination and this proportion which make Franklin an uncomfortable figure and an unlikely idol in today's Communist Hungary.

NOTES

1. Henry Bamford Parkes, *The American Experience* (New York: Random House, 1959), p. 62.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 62–63.
3. Benjamin Franklin, *Autobiography* (New York: Lancer Books, 1968), pp. 237–238.
4. The original, dated January 13, 1777, is among the Benjamin Franklin Papers in the American Philosophical Society's Library.
5. Jared Sparks (ed.), *The Works of Benjamin Franklin* (Boston: Tappan and Whittemore, 1836) 8: 303–304. The "Royal Academy" may be a reference to the university founded in Nagyszombat by Cardinal Péter Pázmány in 1635 and operating between 1777 and 1790 in Buda.
6. Franklin Papers, no. 2616, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
7. István Gál, "Zinner János kassai professzor, Benjámin Franklin barátja és amerikai függetlenségi dokumentum-gyűjteménye 1782-ból" [John Zinner, Professor in Kassa, Benjamin Franklin's Friend and His Collection of Documents about the American War of Independence from 1782], *Irodalmi Szemle 13* (1970): 638–644.
8. Johann Zinner, *Merkwürdige Briefe und Schriften der berühmtesten Generäle in America, nebst derselben beygefügten Lebensbeschreibungen* (Augsburg, 1782).
9. *The Works of Benjamin Franklin*, 8: 303–304.
10. Oszkár Szimán, "Az első magyar nyelvű könyv az elektromosságról" [The First Hungarian Book on Electricity], *Fizikai Szemle* 10 (Aug. 1960): 252–255.
11. *A Mennykőnek mivoltáról s eltávozásáról való böltselkedés mellyet deák nyelven irt, és most jeles másolásokkal és toldalékokkal megjobbított Makó Pál, magyarázta pedig Révai Miklós.* [Consideration on the nature and departure of lightning, written in Latin, and now improved with excellent illustrations and supplements, by Pál Makó and translated by Miklós Révai]. Pozsony and Kassa: Mihály Landerer, 1781. See Francis S. Wagner, "The Start of Cultural Exchanges between the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the American Philosophical Society," *The Hungarian Quarterly* 5 (April–June, 1965): 91.
12. *Merkur von Ungarn* (1786), p. 977.
13. Jolán Zemplén, *A magyarországi fizika története a XVIII. században* [History of Physics in Eighteenth-Century Hungary] (Budapest, 1964), p. 47.
14. Kálmán Benda (ed.), *A magyar jakobinusok iratai: Naplók, följegyzések, röpiratok* [The Hungarian Jacobins' Documents: Diaries, Notes, Leaflets] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1952–1957) 1: 139. On this subject see also Denis Silagi, *Jakobiner in der Habsburger Monarchie: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des aufgeklärten Absolutismus* (Vienna: Herold, 1962), and Paul Bődy, "The Hungarian Jacobin Conspiracy of 1794–95," *Journal of Central European Affairs* 22 (1962): 3 26.
15. Benda, *op. cit.*, 2: 359.
16. *Ibid.*, 1: 354.
17. Csokonai Vitéz Mihály, *Minden munkája* [Complete Works], ed. Balázs Vargha, 2 vols. (Budapest: Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1973), 2: 809–810.
18. *Hadi és más Nevezetes Történetek*, December 10, 1790; *Bétsi Magyar Kurir*, July 29, 1790.

19. Béla Dezsényi and György Nemes, *A magyar sajtó 250 éve* [Two Hundred and Fifty Years of the Hungarian Press] (Budapest: Művelt Nép Könyvkiadó, 1954), p. 30.
20. Published in Pest by Trattner, 1816.
21. Published in Pest in 1836.
22. Published by Lajos Tichy in Nagyvárad in 1848.
23. *Erdélyi Muzéum* (1818), pp. 20–78.
24. Sándor Farkas Bölöni, *Útazás Észak Amerikában* (Kolozsvár, 1834).
25. On this subject see George Barany, *Stephen Széchenyi and the Awakening of Hungarian Nationalism, 1791–1841* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968); István Gál, "Széchenyi and the U.S.A.," *Hungarian Studies in English* 5 (1971): 95 119.
26. László Szabó Bártfa (ed.), *Gróf Széchenyi István könyvtára* [Count István Széchenyi's Library] (Budapest: 1873).
27. Széchenyi *Naplói* [Diaries], ed. Gyula Viszota, 2 vols. (Budapest: 1926–1939) 2: 537.
28. *Ibid.*, 2: 716–721.
29. Franklin, *Autobiography*, pp. 135–136.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 185.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 136.
32. F. A. Mignet, *Franklin élete*, trans. Attila De Gerando (Budapest: Kis Nemzeti Múzeum, 1874).
33. István Türr, *Franklin Benjámin élete és tanairól* (Budapest: Légrády testvérek, 1880).
34. Franklin, *Autobiography*, p. 107.
35. *Vasárnapi Újság* (1854): 238.
36. Franklin, *Autobiography*, p. 142.
37. *Vasárnapi Újság*, April 16, 1873.
38. *Franklin Benjámin élete és bölcsessége* (Budapest: Kis Nemzeti Múzeum, No. 4, 1873).
39. Vilmos Győry, *Egy igaz polgár élete* (Pest: Corvina Könyvkiadó Társulat, 1869); *Franklin Benjámin, egy igaz polgár élete* (Budapest: Luther Társaság, 1927).
40. Franklin, *Autobiography*, pp. 36 and 92.
41. Katalin Halácsy, "Benjamin Franklin's Image in Hungary," *The New Hungarian Quarterly* 17 (Winter, 1976): 121–25.
42. Ferenc Kemény, "Franklin Benjámin," *Magyar Pedagógia*, 1906.
43. Lajos Joób, *Washington és Franklin* (Budapest: Kilián, 1910).
44. *A gazdagodás útja, amint azt a szegény Richárd egy pennsylvániai kalendáriumban világosan megmutatja*, trans. Mihály Láng (Budapest: 1914).
45. *Franklin Benjámin önéletrajza*, trans. Pál Pruzsinszky (Budapest: Franklin Társulat, 1921).
46. *Franklin Benjámin önéletrajza*, trans. Ödön Wildner (Budapest: Rózsavölgyi és Társa, 1927).
47. *Franklin Benjámin számadása életéről*, trans. Tibor Bartos (Budapest: Európa, 1961).
48. The biography appeared in the series "Vasárnapi könyv könyvtára" [Sunday Books' Library] in 1921.
49. André Maurois, *Egy optimista élete*, trans. Mária Várady (Budapest: Franklin Társulat, 1948).
50. Lion Feuchtwanger, *Államférfiak, cselszövők, bohémek*, trans. Ferenc László (Budapest: Nova, 1948); *Rókák a szőlőskertben*, trans. Győző Határ (Budapest: Új Múzsa Kiadó, 1953, reprinted 1956, 1958); *Rókák a szőlőben*, trans.

Tibor Déry (Budapest: Európa, 1963, reprinted, 1967). Some of the reprints appeared under a title originally used by another translator.

51. Endre Sós, *Aki az égtől elragadta a villámot: Franklin Benjámin életregénye* (Budapest: Móra Kiadó, 1957).
52. Endre Sós and Magda Vámos, *Franklin vagyok Philadelphiából* (Budapest: Móra Kiadó, 1970).
53. Antal Mátyás, "Franklin Benjámin közgazdasági nézetei," *Közgazdasági Szemle* 3 (1956): 453–460.
54. Benjamin Franklin (publ.), *The Complete Poor Richard Almanacks*, reproduced in facsimile (Barre, Mass.: The Imprint Society, 1970), p. 205.

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REVIEW ARTICLES

A Traditional Historian's View of Hungarian History

S. B. Vardy

Küldetés. A magyarság története [Mission. The History of the Magyars]. By Ferenc Somogyi. (A magyar öntudat forrásai/The Sources of Hungarian Consciousness I.) Cleveland, Ohio: Karpat Publishing Company, 1973. 656 pp. Numerous maps, illustrations, tables, $12.00.

To write a brief factual account of an institution's history is not an insurmountable task for a trained historian. Many of them can also produce respectable monographs on limited topics — be these biographies of historical figures, or detailed studies on limited problems in history. To produce a major and complex synthesis of a nation's history, however, is quite another matter. Usually, only mature scholars can tackle such undertakings with a reasonable hope of success. Not that others have not made such attempts. But the results were usually feeble chronological summaries, with little or no understanding of the forces and major trends of the nation's history.

If we look back in the history of Hungarian historical studies, starting with the emergence of "scientific" historiography in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, we note that only a handful of major (mostly multivolumed) syntheses of Hungarian historical developments have appeared. These were written either by such exceptionally gifted historians as L. Szalay (1813–1864), M. Horváth (1809–1878), I. Acsády (1845–1906), H. Marczali (1856–1940), B. Hóman (1885–1951) and G. [J.] Szekfű (1883–1955), or by a group of outstanding scholars under the direction of a gifted organizer, such as S. Szilágyi (1827–1899).[1] The most exceptional among these summaries was undoubtedly Hóman's and Szekfű's joint eight-volume (later five-volume) *Magyar History* (1928–1934),[2] which is still to be surpassed in its sheer brilliance as a synthesis of Hungarian historical developments.

In addition to these really outstanding multivolumed syntheses, Hungarian historians have also produced a number of significant shorter summaries. Some of the better interwar examples include the worthy popular syntheses by such scholars as S. Domanovszky (1877–1955), F. Eckhart (1885–1957), M. Asztalos (b. 1899) and S. Pethő (1885–1940), I. Szabó (1898–1969), and D. Kosáry (b. 1913).[3] A number of these also appeared in one or more of the Western languages. But it was Kosáry's *A History of Hungary* (1941) that became perhaps the most popular short summary of Hungarian history in the Anglo-Saxon world.

The trend set by the above scholars in the area of short one or two-men syntheses was discontinued after 1945 in Hungary. Marxist historiography initiated the age of collective syntheses. Some of these are major undertakings, such as the four-volume university textbook (1961–1975),[4] the two-volume popular synthesis edited by the "father" of Hungarian Marxist historiography, E. Molnár (1894–1966),[5] and published in three separate editions since 1964, or the ten-volume *History of Hungary,* now under preparation by the Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.[6] There are also a few shorter popular syntheses.[7] But whether short or long, they all reflect the collective view of Hungarian Marxist historiography, and not the personal interpretation of the author or the authors. True, these interpretations have become quite sophisticated and of high quality in recent years, but they all have to reflect the Marxist view of history.

The situation is different in Western historiography on Hungary, where the traditions set by the individual interwar interpreters of history were continued by such scholars as D. Sinor (b. 1917) and C. A. Macartney (b. 1895). Moreover, during the late 1960's Kosáry's popular history also reappeared with a sizable addition by the present author.[8] It is to be lamented that none of the above scholars went ahead to produce a major multivolumed synthesis of Hungarian historical developments. That, however, may still be in the making.

In addition to the above English language summaries, Hungarian scholars in the West have also produced a number of small Magyar language syntheses of Hungarian history. Until recently, the most noteworthy of these was G. [J.] Miskolczy's *The History of the Hungarian People* (1956).[9] But this work covers the history of the Magyars only between the Battle of Mohács in 1526, when the medieval Hungarian state fell to the Ottoman Turks, and the First World War. Of the other Magyar language summaries Ö. Málnási's *The Candid History of the Hungarian Nation* (1959) is closer to a political or publicistic tract than

to a detached history.[10] The multi-authored *Hungarian History* by M. Ferdinandy, G. Miskolczy, S. Gallus and B. Szász, on the other hand, was prepared basically for use as a textbook on the secondary school level.[11] Thus, one who wished to read a scholarly and non-Marxist summary of the whole course of Hungarian history in the Magyar language on a higher than secondary level, had to turn to one of the difficult-to-get interwar syntheses.

The situation remained unchanged until three years ago, when Ferenc Somogyi's *Küldetés* [Mission] appeared. Professor Somogyi's work is the first more-than-cursory attempt in the last three decades by a non-Marxist Hungarian scholar to summarize the whole course of Hungarian history in the Magyar language. Naturally, he undertook this task from the vantage point of an idealist, rather than a materialist philosophy of history. Yet, while breaking sharply with the philosophy that rules current historical scholarship in Hungary, Somogyi made great efforts to take into consideration the most recent developments and results of Hungarian historical sciences.

Even a cursory glance will tell the reader that Somogyi's *Küldetés* is the result of long years of research, meditation and teaching. It is the product of a scholar who started out as a legal historian at the University of Pécs in Hungary during the 1930's, and then ended up as a socio-cultural historian in the United States.[12] His synthesis is basically the refined version of his lectures on Hungarian social, cultural and political history that he delivered during the 1950's and the 1960's, both at St. Stephen's Free University, as well as Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio.[13] Thus, it is not the esoteric work of a secluded research scholar, but rather the product of a teaching historian who had devoted long years of his life toward making the history of the Magyars comprehensible to an audience that had little or no background knowledge about Hungary. This is demonstrated both by the structure, as well as by the content of the work.

Structurally, Somogyi's *Küldetés* is divided into five parts, each of which is sub-divided into a certain number of chapters. Each of the five parts deals with a different problem area or phase of Hungarian history, which fit into Somogyi's conception of Hungarian historical evolution. The five parts contain fifty-one chapters, which adds up to roughly twenty-five chapters or lectures per semester.

Contentwise, the five chapters in Part I are devoted to such fundamental matters as the nature of civilization, history, and man, the development of human civilization, the nature of the Eurasian nomadic empires and their relationship to the sedentary civilization of Europe.

The seven chapters in Part II start out with a discussion of the ethnic and linguistic development of the Magyars, continue with their proto-history before the conquest of the Carpathian Basin, and finally end up in the conquest itself and the subsequent establishment of the medieval Christian Hungarian Kingdom. This part contains much that is new in Hungarian proto-historical scholarship. Professor Somogyi even considers — and then basically discards — the so-called "theory of the Sumerian origins of the Magyars," which has been proposed by a number of mostly self-trained historians and linguists, and enjoys considerable popularity among the general public.[14] Somogyi's coverage is particularly good in the area of the socio-political system, and the material and spiritual culture of the Magyars. This reader would have probably given more attention to the theory of the "double conquest" proposed by Professor G. László in Hungary, which holds that the "Late Avars" of 671 were in fact Magyars.[15] He would also have discussed the institution of the "double kingship," and along with it the role of Prince Kurszán as the supreme, if perhaps nominal ruler of the conquering Magyars.[16] Attention may also have been given to the theory of "Southern" Moravia, proposed by Professor I. Boba of the University of Washington,[17] and to G. László's theory of the possibility of two separate Moravias in the ninth century. But these developments are so recent, and their acceptance or non-acceptance so tenuous, that their inclusion may simply have confused the readers. Certainly none of the relatively recent Western syntheses have anything to say about them.

The remaining three sections (Parts III–V) of Professor Somogyi's *Küldetés* deal with the history of the close to nine and a half centuries since the death of Hungary's first Christian king, St. Stephen, in 1038. Part III covers the period between 1038 and 1433, Part IV the period between 1433 and 1699, and Part V the period from 1699 to our own days.

The above periodization of Hungarian history is rather unorthodox. The usual dates are connected with the Christianization of Hungary in 1000 A.D., and the destruction of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom by the Ottoman Turks in 1526. But in Somogyi's view of Hungarian historical evolution, his new periodization scheme does make a great deal of sense. For the foundation of medieval Hungary was basically a long process that began with the Magyar conquest and came to fulfillment with the rule of St. Stephen. Thus, his death can in fact be regarded as the end of that foundation process, which established her firmly in the community of European states.

The next turning point in Somogyi's scheme — King Sigismund's coronation as Holy Roman Emperor in 1433 — is perhaps less easily understood and defensible. But in his scheme it still falls into place. It was roughly around that date when Hungary assumed her "mission" as one of the main defenders of Europe and Christianity against the Ottoman Empire and Islam. In fact, from the mid-fifteenth century on, the primary determining factor in Hungary's history was the advancing Ottoman Turkish power, or more specifically, the Ottoman-Christian duel that was shaping up and fought for the next two and a half centuries largely on Hungarian soil.

The Turkish presence in Hungary ended basically with the Peace Treaty of Karlowitz of 1699. This treaty also initiated a new chapter in Hungary's history, and set her upon a new course that was characterized by a growing search for national self-determination. This Hungarian "search for freedom" is the dominant theme of the fifth and final section of Somogyi's synthesis. It is a theme that characterized Hungarian history under Habsburg rule, as well as during the past six decades, when the Magyars were subjected to German and Russian pressure and domination.

Throughout his coverage of the history of the past one thousand years, the author pays considerable attention to Hungarian constitutional, social and cultural developments — which is completely in harmony with his interest and his scholarly background.

In addition to what has already been said, the dominant themes that run through Somogyi's synthesis are his religiosity and his belief in the ordained mission of his nation. Undoubtedly, this is an idealist view, which, if combined with his traditionalism, may not appeal to many of the so-called "modern" historians. But it is a respectable view, that may even be called "refreshing" in this age when the historical sciences are dominated by various far-out materialist, quantitative, psychohistorical, and a multitude of other "modernistic," but also hopelessly chaotic and mostly ephemeral orientations.

Somogyi's text of about 550 pages is supplemented by nearly 100 pages of appended material. These include linguistic and genealogical tables, lists of Hungary's monarchs, statesmen and prime ministers, ruling princes of Transylvania, the number and names of counties at various stages of Hungary's administrative development, as well as a detailed name and subject index. There are also a number of maps and illustrations in the text itself.

No single historian agrees with all of the conclusions and approaches of another historian. And this will also be the fate of Professor So-

mogyi's synthesis of Hungarian history. The views and conclusions he presents here are the results of his own experiences in the study of Hungarian history. But whatever one's agreement or disagreement, the *Küldetés* is a worthy synthesis of Hungarian historical evolution that deserves the attention of all historians. It combines the more traditional and idealist philosophy of its author with the up-to-date research results of Hungarian historical sciences, and does so with the needed scholarly detachment, and without prior ideological commitment to any deterministic philosophy. Should it ever be published in an English version in a slightly revised form, it could serve as a healthy idealist counterpart to the recent English language Marxist synthesis of Hungarian history that appeared under the editorship of E. Pamlényi.[18]

NOTES

1. László Szalay, *Magyarország története* [History of Hungary], 6 vols. (Leipzig, 1852 1854 and Pest, 1857–1895); Mihály Horváth, *Magyarország történelme* [History of Hungary], 6 vols. (Pest, 1860–1863; 2nd ed., 8 vols., 1871–1873); Ignác Acsády, *A magyar birodalom története* [The History of the Hungarian Empire], 2 vols. (Budapest, 1903–1904); Henrik Marczali, *Magyarország története* [History of Hungary] (Budapest, 1911); Bálint Hóman and Gyula Szekfű, *Magyar történet* [Magyar History], 8 vols. (Budapest, 1928–1934; 7th ed., 5 vols., 1941–1943); and Sándor Szilágyi, ed., *A Magyar nemzet története* [The History of the Hungarian Nation], 10 vols. (Budapest, 1895–1898). The main Hungarian authors of the latter volumes were: H. Marczali, A. Pór, G. Schönherr, V. Fraknói, I. Acsády, D. Angyal, G. Ballagi, S. Márki, and G. Beksics.
2. See above.
3. Alexander Domanovszky, *Die Geschichte Ungarns* (München and Leipzig, 1923); Ferenc Eckhart, *Magyarország története* (Budapest, 1933) and its English version, *A Short History of the Hungarian People* (London, 1931); Miklós Asztalos and Sándor Pethő, *A magyar nemzet története* [The History of the Hungarian Nation] (Budapest, 1933); István Szabó, *A magyarság életrajza* (Budapest, 1941), and its German version: Stefan Szabó, *Ungarisches Volk. Geschichte und Wandlung* (Budapest and Leipzig, 1944); and Dominic G. Kosáry, *A History of Hungary* (Cleveland and New York, 1941).
4. *Magyarország története. Egyetemi tankönyv* [History of Hungary. University Textbook], 4 vols. to date (Budapest, 1961–1975). Of the four volumes, the first deals with Hungarian history up to 1526, the second between 1526 and 1790, the third between 1790 and 1849, and the fourth between 1849 and 1918. The authors and editors include well over a dozen prominent Hungarian scholars.
5. *Magyarország története* [History of Hungary], ed. Erik Molnár, 2 vols. (Budapest, 1964; 2nd ed., 1967; 3rd ed., 1975).

6. *Magyarország története* [History of Hungary], editor-in-chief Zsigmond Pál Pach, projected 10 vols. (Budapest, 1976–). So far only vol. 8 dealing with the interwar period (1918–1945) has appeared in print under the editorship of György Ránki. It is a massive volume of 1,400 pages.
7. *A magyar nép története* [The History of the Hungarian People], G. Heckenast *et al.* (Budapest, 1951; 3rd ed. 1953); *A magyar nép története* [The History of the Hungarian People], E. Pamlényi *et al.*, 2 small vols. (Budapest, 1954); and Mátyás Unger and Ottó Szabolcs, *Magyarország története* [History of Hungary] (Budapest, 1965; 2nd ed., 1976).
8. Dominic G. Kosáry and Steven B. Várdy, *History of the Hungarian Nation* (Astor Park, Florida, 1969). Várdy added the section on the period between 1918 and 1968.
9. Gyula Miskolczy, *A magyar nép történelme a mohácsi vésztől az első világháborúig* [The History of the Hungarian People from the Battle of Mohács till World War I] (Rome, 1956).
10. Ödön Málnási, *A magyar nemzet őszinte története* [The Candid History of the Hungarian Nation], 2nd ed. (Munich, 1959).
11. Mihály Ferdinándy, Gyula Miskolczy, Sándor Gallus and Béla Szász, *Magyar történelem* [Hungarian History] (Cleveland, 1957).
12. On Ferenc Somogyi, see S. B. Várdy, *Modern Hungarian Historiography* [East European Monographs, No. 17] (Boulder and New York, 1976), pp. 192, 195, 274, 275.
13. On Somogyi's activities in Cleveland see S. B. Várdy, "Hungarian Studies at American and Canadian Universities," *Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies,* vol. II, no. 2 (Fall 1975), pp. 104–105.
14. For two English language works on this theory see Ida Bobula, *Origin of the Hungarian Nation* (Gainesville, Florida, 1968), and Sándor Nagy, *The Forgotten Cradle of the Hungarian Culture* (Toronto, 1973).
15. Gyula László's most significant relevant works are: *Hunor és Magyar nyomában* [In search of Hunor and Magyar] (Budapest, 1967); *A honfoglalókról* [About the Conquerors] (Budapest, 1973); and *Vértesszőllőstől Pusztaszerig* [From Vértesszőllős to Pusztaszer] (Budapest, 1974).
16. György Györffy first came up with the idea of the "double kingship" and Kurszán in 1955 in his study entitled "Kurszán és Kurszán vára" [Kurszán and the Castle of Kurszán], in *Budapest régiségei,* vol. 16 (Budapest, 1955), pp. 9–40, which he later republished in his *Tanulmányok a magyar állam eredetéről* [Studies on the Origins of the Hungarian State] (Budapest, 1959).
17. See Imre Boba's two works: *Nomads, Northmen and Slavs* (The Hague, 1967), and *Moravia's History Reconsidered* (The Hague, 1971).
18. *A History of Hungary,* ed. Ervin Pamlényi, translated by László Boros, *et al.* [Compiled under the auspices of the History Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences] (London, 1975). This work is basically a shortened and revised version of the work listed in note 5.

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The Folk Traditions of Rural Hungary
A Photographic Record

Veronika Gervers-Molnár

Elindultam világ útján: magyar népszokások [I Set Out on the Highway of the World: Hungarian Folk Customs]. By Péter Korniss. With a preface by Sándor Csoóri, and ethnographical notes by Ferenc Novák. Budapest: Corvina (1975). ISBN 963 13 1051 5.

Hungarian folk culture, customs, and art have been studied extensively by scholars since the mid-nineteenth century, and have been a major subject taught in the departments of ethnography at several Hungarian universities. The richness of this culture has inspired writers, musicians, dancers and other artists as well as enthusiastic amateurs, who all found in it a Source, a 'Fountain of Life'. On the other hand, the material culture has been carefully collected by museums, and the folklore preserved in writing and on tapes. Against this background, Korniss' volume stands out as a new and possibly last effective attempt to save the essence of Hungarian rural life and the reality of folk customs.

Korniss, a photographer of exceptional talent with a particular interest in human subjects, introduces the "reader" of his book to a selection of traditional customs, still alive in the late 1960s and early 1970s, in eleven photographic essays of over a hundred pictures. Some of these essays are connected to the great religious festivities of the year, Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost, which recall the theatrical plays of the Middle Ages as well as certain elements of a much earlier, pre-Christian past. Other customs, which to a great extent survived in children's games, are purely pagan in character. In a few essays, the emphasis is on such major events in a human's life as marriage and death; while elsewhere the secular festivities of rural life are depicted, as the harvest of the grapes, the 'dance house', or the ceremonial dressing of a young girl for Sunday.

Illustration on opposite page: Shepherd from Szék [Sic]. Kolozs County [Jud. Cluj], Transylvania, Romania. 1967.

After a plain title page, each essay is presented to us without words. Everything is concentrated into series of black and white photographs, which have and need no captions. Korniss' pictures have an incredible capacity to depict the events as well as the sentiments of all participants. Though they are still photographs, they contain all the movements of the happenings. The viewer senses the slowness or quickness of the dance at the 'dance house', and can hear the rhythm of the music. One feels the splash from the full buckets of water with which young men drench village girls on the morning of Easter Monday, a custom which preserves the rites of an ancient fertility cult to celebrate the coming of spring.

We are also introduced to innumerable faces of old and young among the many different types of Hungarians. Each of these faces is caught in a special enduring moment, and each expresses the lively, human background in which these beautiful, old customs have survived for centuries, if not for millenia. In a 'dance house' of Szék village in Transylvania, we feel the excitement and anticipation of girls and young men, their happiness at being together and of dancing, the origin or constancy of a romance, the sadness or uncertainty of some, and the half-formed desires and wishes towards the unknown. We see the paid musicians playing, apparently unconcerned, in a corner of the room; a lonely man dancing a solo; and those shining eyes which discover each other at the petroleum light in the semi-dark house.

In another essay, we sense the deep feeling of sadness and mourning over the dead, and the bareness of the cemeteries. In the small Transdanubian village of Csököly, we see a group of old women dressed in white linen garments. The tradition of white mourning, which has also survived in parts of nearby northern Yugoslavia, is well known from ethnographical studies. But Korniss' pictures are the first to show the Csököly women in their somewhat unusual white mourning outfit, not as a curiosity, but as an expression of the tragic dignity of mourning and remembrance. Looking at the old women praying together at home, or going through the village towards the cemetery, one cannot help but recall Dürer's vivid description of an Antwerp procession in 1520, in which widows walked together in white garments:

> A very large company of widows also took part in this procession. They support themselves with their own hands and observe a special rule.

Illustration on opposite page: Women mourning in white. Csököly, Somogy County, Hungary. 1970.

> They were all dressed from head to foot in white linen garments, made expressly for the occasion, very sorrowful to see. Among them I saw some very stately persons.

Indeed, the origins of the white mourning outfit of Csököly go back to a medieval western European tradition.

In contrast to the Csököly custom, the funeral of a young man from Rimóc is shown in the almost total blackness of the night. Alongside his open coffin, mounted at home, black mourners pray and sing their monotonous chants while slowly counting the beads of their rosaries. In their black head-kerchiefs pulled over their faces, and with their hands — rough from work — clasped in prayer, these women are the motionless guardians of the dead, since the body may never be left alone before interment. All this is unforgettable for, quite apart from the funeral, the figures in the photographs become symbols of death and sadness.

The customs and events which Korniss portrays in his book have been photographed by innumerable photographers, ethnographers, and amateurs since the early days of the camera. Many such pictures have been published in both popular and scholarly works, or were exhibited, and made into postcards. Korniss, however, is the first and only photographer to succeed in catching the very essence of Hungarian country life, and to depict it with the reality of which only the camera is capable. Yet there is more to these pictures than photographic equipment and skill. Korniss works at the highest level of artistic sensitivity and with great technical know-how. Instead of forming a new and particular photographic style, he allows the liveliness of his subjects to overcome "composition", "construction", cut-outs and enlarged details, and the use of different lenses for various effects. Indeed, while he has obviously used all the possibilities of his camera and of his profession, we are not aware of the "photographic" side of his pictures, but rather identify ourselves with the people in them.

Individual depictions of special moments have been done by many photographers throughout the world past and present. Their "results" can often be compared to the sensitivity and skill of Korniss. But instead of catching the beauty or interest of an occasional moment, Korniss devoted himself to the depiction of a series of individual themes within a single setting. The result is a continuous photographic story of Life through the traditional customs of villages in Hungary and Transylvania.

Illustration on opposite page: The rites of Easter Monday. Acsa, Pest County, Hungary. 1970.

Because of the economic and social changes of this century, and particularly the drastic changes of the last few decades, the life style and ancient customs of the past are on their way out in Hungary, as almost everywhere else in the world. The abandonment of villages by the young in search of the financial and material advantages of the cities and industrialization, and the speed of transportation and communication are cutting the life line of old traditions. These traditions are already almost extinct in most places where "culture" has been exchanged for "civilization". In fact it is surprising that Korniss was able to find so many lively "fossils" of the past. But all these glimpses of rural life are on the wane. Some activities, still common only a decade ago, have now disappeared. Many of the photographs in the volume could not be taken again.

The photographic record, which Korniss provides, is of invaluable significance in exhibiting the human aspects and realities of traditions, which heretofore were only preserved through the frequently unimaginative, generalizing nature of ethnographical studies. Korniss' approach with the camera recalls the work of Béla Bartók on Hungarian folk music. Without Bartók and his followers, the many-sided musical culture of a nation on the borders of East and West would not have survived. Furthermore, Bartók could never have composed his own works without first having carefully studied folk music and being imbued with its great artistic imprint. Without Korniss' photographs, we would certainly be much the poorer also. With the passing of those generations which experienced these traditional customs, we would only be aware of them through scholarship. That, however, could hardly give the rich spontaneity, the happiness and sadness behind the traditions, which his photographs preserve in an artistic manner.

One can but hope that Korniss will publish many more volumes in the future from the thousands of pictures he has taken. It is a mission which should be and which is appreciated by the general public as well as by artists, ethnographers and historians. It is hardly surprising that in little over a year, more than 20,000 copies of this unique book were sold in Hungary alone. Its message, nevertheless, speaks not only to Hungarians but to the world, and his pictures can be understood in their human content without any special knowledge of the customs which they depict.

Illustration on opposite page: Old People's Day. Mezőszilas, Somogy County, Hungary. 1960's.

It should be added that for the historian and ethnographer, a valuable summary of each custom is given in an appendix, in which the names of the villages and the year when the photographs were taken is carefully noted. A poetic preface by Csoóri introduces the reader to the uniqueness of these photographs, and to the real significance of Korniss' approach and art.

Some of the photographs reproduced here are from the book, while others are in the possession of the reviewer.

Illustration on opposite page: Girl from Kazár. Nógrád County, Hungary. 1969.

Illustration on the back of this page: Early morning at Szék [Sic]. Kolozs County [Jud. Cluj], Transylvania, Romania. 1960's.

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Book Reviews

A középkori Magyarország rotundái [The Rotundas of Medieval Hungary]. By Vera Gervers-Molnár. Müvészettörténeti Füzetek [Publications of History of Art], No. 4. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1972. Pp. 95.

Among the publications of art history, sponsored by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Professor Gervers-Molnár's study about the round churches of medieval Hungary is the fruit of ten years of research on a heretofore little explored territory of early Romanesque architecture. While the work deals primarily with the round churches of Hungary, it also offers, in twenty-five pages, a brief but comprehensive account on the origins and development of this particular architectural type and its most important examples in East Central Europe, notably in Dalmatia, Moravia, Bohemia and Poland.

The *rotundas* or centrally planned round churches represent a specific group of the early Romanesque churches in Central and Eastern Europe. The origin of this group, according to the author, can be traced back to one single prototype: Charlemagne's palace chapel at Aachen, consecrated by Pope Leo III in 805, which formed part of the imperial palace-complex. While the palace bore reminiscences of the first Christian emperor, Constantine the Great, and his Sacred Palace in Constantinople, the imperial chapel and later burial place of Charlemagne soon became a symbol of the new empire of the West, and presumably it was modelled after the *Chrysotriclinos* or Golden throne-chamber of the imperial palace of Byzantium. Both, the palace and chapel, served ideologically to stress the equality of Charlemagne's imperial authority with that of the emperors of Byzantium. From a technical point of view, however, the direct prototype of the Aachen chapel was the Church of San Vitale in Ravenna, erected in the sixth century during the reign of Justinian I, and itself probably following Byzantine models. Thus, in the view of Professor Gervers-Molnár, the Carolingian palace and chapel of Aachen are spiritually and from a technical point of view linked to the Byzantine tradition. While her theory emphasizes the influence of the Aachen chapel (and indirectly Byzantium) in the devel-

opment of the Central and East European rotundas, less attention is given in this context to the early Christian circular churches in Rome, like the Church of Santa Costanza, or the Church of San Stefano Rotondo, or one of the best preserved monuments of the Antiquity, the great circular hall of the Pantheon, later consecrated as a Christian church under the name Santa Maria dei Martiri. Here the question inevitably arises, how much if any influence can be attributed to these late antique and early Christian models in the development of the round churches of Central Europe, since the architects of Charlemagne must have been familiar with them.

In addition to the Aachen chapel, the earliest, best preserved and most significant round church in East Central Europe is in Zadar (Zara), Dalmatia, the Church of San Donato, built early in the ninth century and thus contemporary with the Aachen chapel, or only a few years younger. In the construction of the San Donato church "the influence of West and East met each other," asserts the author. Yet its role in the development of later round churches in the East Central European area still remains inconclusive.

The larger part of the book deals with the round churches of Hungary, discussing in great detail the origin, architectural and functional characteristics of altogether 64 rotundas, all of them following the Central European pattern. There are also described a few monuments whose origin is uncertain, and their architectural characteristics defy the classification.

Most of the round churches in Hungary were built in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. After the disaster of the Mongol invasion of 1242, during the general reconstruction of the country, the new Gothic style eliminated this form of the Romanesque from church architecture.

The earliest round churches in Hungary followed closely the pattern of the palace chapel of Aachen, and served, like their prototype, as royal chapels, attached to the royal residences. Another smaller group of round churches in Hungary were built near seigneurial castles, as court chapels for the use of feudal lords. From the end of the eleventh century on, the round churches became more frequent in Hungary and they served in great number as ordinary parish churches in the villages. The author examines in great detail the different characteristics of these churches, classifying them with respect to the form or number of their apses, the form of the choir, the presence or absence of a tower, etc. We are offered the systematic description of over 40 such parish churches, some of them existing in ruins only, from the territory of the old historical Hungary, and all of them reflecting the influence of a general

Central European pattern of round churches, modelled after the chapel of Aachen. Direct Byzantine influence is demonstrable in one round church only, or rather from its description dating back to the early nineteenth century, since the church itself was demolished in 1805. There are also a few round churches which belong to a group possibly affiliated with models of the Near East, perhaps Palestine or the Caucasus, where round churches existed already in the seventh century. One such church in Hungary, at Karcsa, in the eleventh century belonged to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, and it is the assumption that it was they who brought this particular type of centrally planned church to Hungary.

This book, the product of remarkable research, offers a wealth of well organized data and information about its subject. It is completed by a "Summary" in English, and its usefulness is enhanced by numerous sketches and photographs of the most important round churches of the area in discussion.

University of Bridgeport Andor Urbanszky

The Corvinian Library. History and Stock. By Csaba Csapodi. Trans. by Imre Gombos. Studia Humenitatis, I. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1973. Pp. 516.

This volume is truly a labor of love. Dr. Csaba Csapodi has devoted almost a lifetime to the history of the Bibliotheca Corviniana, the famous library of the Renaissance king of Hungary, Matthias Corvinus (1458–1490). His patient and exhaustive research, assisted by his scholarly wife Klára Gárdonyi Csapodi, have enriched Hungarian Medieval and Renaissance studies for decades. The large number of articles describing their thorough search for lost volumes of the Corvinian Library attest to their success. A few years ago they also published, with the assistance of UNESCO, a superbly illustrated volume (*Bibliotheca Corviniana. The Library of King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary*, Budapest, Corvina Press, 1969), which summarized the state of their research at that time.

Dr. Csapodi's latest work is a definitive study on this subject and will be, in all probability, the last word on the library of King Matthias for several generations. It is a reference book of inestimable value. The work is divided into two parts. In the first section the author discusses the history of the library, its size, development and destruction, as well as the previous estimates of its stock. The second part consists of the

reconstructed *Repertorium* of the volumes, which according to the author, were part of this famous collection.

In the discussion of the growth and decline of the Corvinian Library, Csapodi sees four distinct periods. The first stage of development extends from the election of Matthias in 1458 to 1472. The king probably had a few books of his own at the beginning of this period and might have inherited volumes from his father, János Hunyadi, and from the collections of previous Hungarian kings. Yet, the number of books Matthias had in 1458 could not have exceeded 100 volumes. Thus this collection, which eventually surpassed almost all libraries of its time, with the exception of the Vatican, had a most modest beginning. Under the influence of Archbishop Vitéz János, his nephew the poet Janus Pannonius, and the Italian humanist Galeotto Marzio, King Matthias began earnestly to collect a library. The first period in the history of the Bibliotheca Corviniana ended with the disgrace and tragic death of both Vitéz and Janus Pannonius and the acquisition of almost all of their books by the king through confiscation. This is how, for example, many of the Greek volumes of Janus became part of the royal collection. Csapodi estimates the number of volumes to be between 500 and 600 by the end of this phase. The second period covers the years 1473 to 1484. After a slow start the number of volumes increased, especially after the arrival of Queen Beatrix of Aragon, and reached about 1,000 books. The third stage, 1485–1490, witnessed the peak of development in the history of the collection. After the capture of Vienna in 1485, Matthias Corvinus was at the height of his power, spent lavishly on books abroad and employed scribes and illuminators at Buda, so that the yearly increase of codices is placed at about 150. Thus the total number of books in the royal library proper is estimated at about 1500 to 1600. To this number the author adds 300–400 incunabula and calculates that about 150 volumes were ordered but never delivered to Buda due to the sudden death of the king. Csapodi concludes that the total stock of the Bibliotheca Corviniana ranged between 2000 and 2500 volumes. These numbers seem a little inflated and a more conservative estimate would be more realistic. The fourth and final stage extends from the death of Matthias in 1490 to the Battle of Mohács (1526). This period can be characterized as one of lingering decay. Not only did the successors of Corvinus neglect the continued growth of the collection, but some volumes were squandered, previous orders remained undelivered and the scriptorium of Buda fell into decay. Following the fateful battle of Mohács, Suleiman the Magnificent entered the city of Buda in early September of 1526. The bulk of the Corvinian Library was removed at

that time to Istanbul, where many of the volumes were forever lost. A few hundred tomes, mainly theological and ecclesiastical in orientation, escaped the fate of the magnificent royal collection, and were later found in one of the basement rooms of the ruined royal palace. This group of books was subsequently mistakenly identified with the Corviniana collection, although Csapodi points out that they belonged to the Royal Chapel and not to the Royal Library.

The *Repertorium* covers almost 350 pages and shows meticulous scholarship. There are 1040 items enumerated by Dr. Csapodi and they are arranged alphabetically by authors. Each entry contains the name and identification of the author, whether the volume is an authentic Corvinian codex, place of preservation, date and origin, physical description (i.e., size, script, decorations, illuminations, heraldic signs, binding), possessor, complete bibliography, and in some cases an illuminating special note about the history of the particular volume. Also useful are the Appendices, especially I and II, where a concordance of previously used numeration of Corvinian volumes is given, and an alphabetical list of places of preservation is provided. The volume also has an excellent bibliography.

In the reconstruction of the probable content of the library, Dr. Csapodi included not only the authenticated Corvinian volumes but also a number of other books. Among these are codices which belonged to Queen Beatrix and King Wladislas II, volumes dedicated to Matthias and the Queen, books copied at the request of the king as gifts for others. Also included in the *Repertorium* are items of probable authenticity, volumes mentioned by the Italian humanist poet Naldo Naldius as being in the king's collection, and books probably used by the historians Antonio Bonfini, Petrus Ransanus and János Thuróczy in the writing of their own contemporary accounts of the history of Hungary. The ecclesiastical books found in 1686 in the ruins of the palace are also included in this list, although it is probable that they were never part of the Royal Library. Here again, a more conservative approach and greater discrimination would have strengthened the author's position.

If we consider that János Csontosi, one of the first great scholars to seriously attempt a reconstruction of the stock of the Bibliotheca Corviniana, knew of only 108 codices in 1881, we can truly appreciate the immense success of the detective work of his successors, especially the monumental achievement of Dr. Csaba Csapodi. This volume is a welcome addition to the growing number of excellent books published in western languages by the Akadémiai Kiadó of Budapest.

Youngstown State University László Domonkos

Tolerance and Movements of Religious Dissent in Eastern Europe. Edited by Béla K. Király. Series: East European Monographs, Number 13. Copyright by *East European Quarterly,* Boulder, Colorado. New York: Columbia University Press, 1975. Pp. xii + 227.

The book under review contains thirteen separate essays by twelve contributors on a topic that has not really been treated by American East European scholarship: religious tolerance and dissent in East Central Europe.

Not counting the introductory essay by H. J. Hillerbrand, which has been prepared specifically for this volume and contains general reflections on the topic of the book, the twelve remaining essays have all been prepared as lectures for several independent symposia between the years 1971 and 1975. These essays are organized around three themes: 1.) religious intolerance, 2.) religious dissent within the Jewry, and 3.) religious tolerance in East Central Europe.

Of these three themes, the second is perhaps the most self-contained, in that the two essays that deal with it both concentrate on a rather limited aspect of East Central European history: an inner controversy within the Jewish community of the area. The "hostile phase" of the controversy between the Hasidim and the Mitnaggedim is treated by M. Wilensky, and the "phase of dialogue and reconciliation" by N. Lamm.

The other two themes are treated in five essays each. Of the five essays on intolerance, three deal with this question primarily from the vantage point of Czech history (the essays by F. G. Heyman, P. Brock and M. S. Fousek), and one each within the context of Austrian (R. A. Kann) and Hungarian history (B. K. Király).

This system of apportionment also holds true for the theme of religious tolerance, where three of the essays deal with the tolerant nature of "Pax Ottomanica" (E. K. Shaw, S. J. Shaw, and S. Fischer-Galati), and only one each with the Polish (A. G. Duker) and Hungarian (B. K. Király) aspects of this question. (It should perhaps be noted here that S. J. Shaw's contribution is closer to a brief commentary on the Ottoman *millet* than to an independent essay on par with the other contributions.)

Of these thirteen contributions by twelve authorities, the two that deal with Hungarian developments were both written by the editor of the volume, Professor B. K. Király of Brooklyn College. Although it would be desirable, lack of space does not permit us to do more than to give a brief summary of their content and of the author's conclusions.

The first of these essays, entitled "Protestantism in Hungary between

the Revolution and the *Ausgleich,*" (pp. 65–85) centers largely on the so-called "Protestant Patent of 1859," and on the Hungarian reaction to the same. This short-lived Patent was basically an attempt on the part of the Austrian authorities of the period of post-revolutionary absolutism (1849–1860) to limit the traditional Protestant autonomy in Hungary. Although based partially on Josephinism, the motivation behind it was largely political. So was the Hungarian reaction to it. Irrespective of their denomination, all Hungarians regarded this Patent as simply another attempt at curtailing Hungarian political and individual liberties, and they reacted to it accordingly.

Given the almost simultaneous defeat in Italy, Vienna could hardly do anything, but to retreat. And thus this Patent, which was repealed after only eight and a half months, hardly did more than to aggravate the already tense Austro-Hungarian relations. On the other hand, by shaking up the Viennese leadership, it may have contributed to the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867.

Professor Király's second contribution, "The Sublime Porte, Vienna, Transylvania and the Dissemination of Protestant Reformation in Royal Hungary" (pp. 199–221), is basically a brief analytical history of the rise of Hungarian Protestantism in the sixteenth century. It covers this development right up to the Law of 1608, which granted religious freedom to the Protestants, and an almost equal treatment with the Catholics.

Following the lead of some of Hungary's great Reformation historians, Professor Király perceives this Protestant victory to have been the result of a number of interdependent factors. He sees the most significant of these as (1) the Ottomon conquest of Central Hungary, (2) the impact of the nearly independent and mostly Protestant Transylvania upon Royal Hungary, and (3) the consolidation of the gentry's dominance, or in other terms, the nobility's successful defense of their "constitutional liberties" against Habsburg centralism.

Professor Király concludes his essay with the statement that "the direct and indirect consequences of Protestantism in Hungary were progressive for intellectual life, education, culture and constitutional liberty, and were retrogressive in the social sphere." (p. 209). While much of this statement would be acceptable to most historians, I personally would qualify the last part of his conclusions. It is true that the gentry's dominance—in addition to securing all of the above liberties—also led to such reactionary social developments as the enserfment of the peasant masses. But this "second serfdom" was more the result of the general social and economic tendencies throughout East Central

and Eastern Europe of that period, than the result of any specific developments in Hungary. For this very reason it was not limited to areas under Protestant influence. In fact, the only areas of East Central Europe that were free from "second serfdom" were those under Ottoman control. And this was so precisely because of the tolerant and egalitarian nature of the Ottoman system during the height of its power; a fact that has also been pointed out by Professors E. K. Shaw, J. S. Shaw, and S. Fischer-Galati in their respective contributions to this volume.

The book ends with a useful list of the biographies of ten of the twelve contributors. (For some reason, the biographies of M. S. Fousek and E. K. Shaw were not included.) But it lacks a name and subject index, which would have enhanced its usefulness considerably.

All in all, this work under the editorship of Professor Király is a good start in the right direction, and the author-editor should be complimented both for his own contributions, as well as for his efforts in putting this pioneering volume into the hands of American scholars.

Duquesne University S. B. Vardy

A magyar irodalom fogadtatása a viktoriánus Angliában, 1830–1914 [The Reception of Hungarian Literature in Victorian England, 1830–1914]. By Lóránt Czigány. Translated from the English by Bálint Rozsnyai. Irodalomtörténeti Füzetek 89 [Literary History Booklet No. 89]. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1976. Pp. 287.

Literature is a form of art which is bound more to the original language than any other art forms (painting, sculpture, music, etc.). It is of course possible to translate literary works, but the translated versions always lose something of the original flavor. This is all the more so, when the literature in question is the product, and therefore a reflection of a small self-contained world. Such is usually the case with literatures of small nations which use minor languages. Having been enclosed into their small world, and having been constantly subjected to the pressures and dominance of larger nations, they are usually less able to look upon problems from a universal perspective. For this reason, their literature is also more self-contained, has less universal application, and consequently—notwithstanding their innate merits—cannot be fully appreciated by the outside world.

To this must be added the problems connected with translation.

Literary works written in one of the major languages are usually translated into minor languages by some of the best literary artists of these nations. But this is not true conversely. Major literary figures of one of the major nations seldom take the trouble to study one of the minor languages simply for the sake of translating allegedly great literary works. Thus in most instances, these translations are done by second and even third line literary figures, or by enthusiastic devotees whose native tongue is other than the major language into which they translate.

The Hungarian language also belongs to the category of minor languages. Moreover, it has the drawback of being totally different from all of the Indo-European languages. And the fate of Hungarian literature is bound to the fate of the Hungarian language. Thus, although it has produced a number of great literary figures—particularly in the area of lyrical poetry, its achievements are basically unknown and unappreciated outside of Hungary. It is true that the works of a number of significant poets and novelists were in fact translated into several major languages, but their impact was generally slight and short-lived. This is equally true for the German-speaking world that was the first to discover Hungarian literature already in the 18th century, as well as for the English-speaking world, that did not come to this discovery until the Hungarian Reform Period of the 1830's and 1840's.

The earlier German discovery had already been treated in a number of noteworthy studies by such 20th century scholars as Gusztáv Heinrich, Róbert Gragger, József Turóczi-Trostler, Antal Mádl and others. The reception of Hungarian literature by the English-speaking world, however, had been barely touched until the appearance of the book under review.

Dr. Lóránt Czigány's effort is a commendable one for two reasons: first, because this is the first major effort to analyze and to summarize Anglo-Hungarian literary connections, and more specifically the reception of Hungarian literature in Britain during the 19th and the early 20th century; and second, because—due to the lack of noteworthy studies in this area—much of the work is based on original research. The result is an outstanding overview of this whole question up to the period of World War I.

Dr. Czigány divided his work into six chapters, each of which describes a specific phase in this development. The first is a brief introductory chapter that places the problem into a proper setting and discusses the level of English awareness about Hungary in the period between the 16th and 19th centuries. Chapter II concentrates on the pioneering efforts of Sir John Bowring whose *Poetry of the Magyars*

(1830) and other writings were largely responsible for making the English reading public aware of the existence of Magyar literature, even though many of his translations were weak and misleading. The following chapter is devoted to the writing of those pioneer British travelers who visited Hungary during the Hungarian Reform Period, wrote about their experiences, and thus aided the spread of knowledge about Hungary, Hungarian culture, and Hungarian literature. The most productive of these was Julia Pardoe, whose *The City of the Magyar* (1839–1840) also contained a summary and selection of Hungarian literature. This is followed by a chapter on the activities of the Hungarian immigrants, who took advantage of the popularity of the Hungarian cause to introduce the British public to some of the better specimens of Hungarian literature. Among others, they were responsible for introducing Baron Joseph Eötvös to the English reading public. Eötvös's *The Village Notary* was the first Hungarian novel that attained a degree of popularity in England. The chapter on the achievements of the Hungarian immigrants is followed by separate chapters on Sándor Petőfi and Mór Jókai. The latter of these became by far the most popular Hungarian writer in England. In fact, as Czigány correctly asserts: "He was the only one [among Hungarian authors] known [to the British reading public] not through a political sympathy for the Magyars, but rather through his personal enchantment of the readers." Jókai reached the height of his popularity in England around the turn of the century, and then it suddenly came to an end.

Czigány asserts—and rightly so—that contrary to the popular belief in Hungary, Hungarian literature never reached mass popularity in England. Moreover, even those authors that did reach a degree of popularity, did so for reasons other than the real or alleged innate literary value of their works. Initially, this interest was fueled by the search for the exotic; and later also by the activities of the post-1849 immigrants and by the general sympathy for the Magyar cause. Thus Eötvös's *The Village Notary* was read primarily because of its political content and implications. And even Jókai's popularity proved to be temporary. It too was based largely on the search for the exotic and for the romantic in an age of realism and naturalism. As soon as this enthusiasm for the exotic and the romantic waned, Jókai's popularity also came to an end. Following Jókai's brief entrance into the English-speaking world, no other Hungarian author scored such an achievement, and Hungarian literature remained—and is still today—basically a *terra incognita* for the average English (and American) reader.

Dr. Czigány performed an excellent and valuable job in bringing all

these details together. His achievement is all the greater, as he has no real predecessors. Except for slight articles and occasional references in studies dealing with Anglo-Hungarian relations, no one has dealt with this topic as yet. We can only wish and hope that someone will do a similar study on the reception of Hungarian literature in North America. Dr. Czigány's work should also appear in English. In that case it may be advisable to bring it up to date by including the scholarly publications since 1965, which is the date of the completion of his manuscript.

Robert Morris College Agnes Huszar Vardy

People in the Tobacco Belt: Four Lives. By Linda Dégh. Ottawa: National Museum of Man, Mercury Series, Canadian Centre for Folk Culture Studies, Paper No. 13, 1975. xx, 277. 10 plates. $3.50.

This volume is of compelling interest for two reasons. First, as a restatement of the author's theory of folklore studies as applied to an interpretation of immigrant life in North America. As here developed, this conception not only defines the viewpoint of the folklorist, but suggests a holistic perspective for historians, ethnologists and in fact for all students of North American cultures. Secondly, the volume makes available four fascinating life histories of Hungarian immigrants to Canada, enriched by the discriminating notes and comments of the internationally known folklore scholar. These documents constitute valuable primary sources of Hungarian immigrant life and of Canadian social reality. But beyond that they demonstrate how the approach proposed by Linda Dégh can result in a refined interpretation of the immigrant experience. Not only students of Hungarian immigrant life, but all scholars interested in the interaction of cultures can benefit from the reading of this volume. For this reason, this publication of the National Museum of Man can be considered a landmark discussion of North American immigrant and ethnic studies.

The author outlines her conception of folklore research in the introduction. The first point discussed is the interpretation of life histories as sources of folklore and cultural expression. A refined and accurate interpretation of these documents requires, in the view of the author, the consideration of three essential criteria. In the first place, the integrity of these testimonies as original, personal and reflective statements of a life experience must be safeguarded. Secondly, in recording statements, maximum freedom of expression must be assured to the re-

spondent and the role of the interviewer must be minimized. Thirdly, care should be taken to arrange a natural setting for the interview, primarily by encouraging a spontaneous conversational tone and interaction with family members.

Another indispensable rule is to interpret the personal life of the respondent in the context of the cultural environment in which he lives and acts. This requires the scholar to realize the relationships and images between the individual ethnic culture and the larger society. The author suggests that in the Canadian case this would require an awareness that "people are conscious of their ethnicity and are as proud of their ethnic adherence as they are of their Canadian citizenship . . . there is lively communication between them without causing a merger and general discoloration of ethnic features." (p. xiii.)

Interpretations of life histories must also be attentive both to the general patterns and deeply personal elements communicated. Obviously, life histories provide us with information on the process of immigration. Yet, as the author reminds us, "the biased interpretation of factual events reveals both human creativity and the diversity of aspects of the dry facts recorded by historians." (p. xi.)

Finally, Linda Dégh defines the specific immediate context in which immigrant life can be studied most fruitfully. That is the interaction between region and ethnic community, a concept she has discussed in an earlier work.* Region is seen as the particular occupational, economic, social, historical, and geographical context of the host country in which the social existence of the immigrant has evolved. An examination of the regional context is particularly important in interpreting the life rhythm of immigrant groups and their adaptation to the new society. In previous investigations, Linda Dégh has related the life of Hungarian immigrants to the Calumet region of Northern Indiana. In this study she interprets four Hungarian immigrants in the context of the tobacco farming district of Ontario. Her attempt to relate personal experiences to this particular environment explains to a large extent the vitality and realism of the source materials recorded.

The main body of the volume presents the text of the four life histories with the author's notations. Each personal statement provides the full text of the interview as translated by the author. In addition, each statement is accompanied by an introduction to the present environment of the respondent, an ethnographic description of the narration, and an analytical appraisal of the folklore, language and personality of the narrator.

It appears most useful to comment on the personal statements by

reviewing their contributions to several key issues of Canadian immigrant life. It should be added that these comments reflect not so much the viewpoint of the folklorist, but that of the historian of immigrant settlements. Such a viewpoint will suggest that these documents should be of interest to all students of the immigrant experience.

The first obvious value of these personal statements is their confirmation of the general process of immigrant life, illustrating a specific sequential pattern. Three of the statements reflect the generally familiar pattern of immigrants who arrived in Canada in the 1920's. They inform us that they settled in the western provinces as agricultural laborers. Then followed a period of transition, characterized by search for satisfactory employment, marriage, adjustment to the new society, migration, and in many cases acute dissatisfaction. Finally all three immigrants settled in the Ontario tobacco belt. They entered the stage of retirement there at the time of the interviews. Within this common pattern, however, an infinite number of personal, occupational, temporal, and locational variations appeared. These variations constitute the crucial explanation of the motives, lives and meanings of immigrant life as reflected in these personal histories.

One of the highly significant variations is that of motivation to emigrate to Canada. These personal testimonies tell us a great deal about this issue. The three testimonies suggest that the generally familiar motive of East European peasant migration was involved: to earn money for the payment of debts and for the purchase of landholdings in their native land. Two cases, however, reveal an additional, highly prevalent motive that became important as a result of World War I. The annexation of formerly Hungarian territory to Rumania forced many Hungarians, particularly of military conscription age, to leave Transylvania and to emigrate to Canada. One respondent explained:

> You were asking: why did we come here from Transylvania? Because the Romanians treated us abominably. And they ran away so that they could dodge the draft. There were many of us here from Transylvania, only fifty were my friends from the neighbor communities and none of them served in the Romanian army. All were about eighteen or twenty years old . . . There were 320 of us on the same boat. . . None of them were over twenty. . . They mistreated us in the Romanian army and of those who came to our village after discharge, one became deaf, they broke the nose of the other. (p. 235.)

Another theme reported in these personal testimonies is the critical period of the transition stage between arrival in Canada and permanent settlement. For some, this period was brief and merciful, as in the case

of the respondent who purchased his tobacco farm ten years after arrival. Others spent decades migrating and working in the western provinces. The second respondent spent more than thirty years in the agrarian areas of Saskatchewan and Alberta, experiencing numerous hardships, disappointments and constant discouragement before finally settling down in the tobacco belt in 1958 at the age of 60. Obviously these two immigrant lives are vastly different. While the former rightly considered his transitional phase a prelude to successful tobacco farming, the second informant spent virtually his whole life in a series of occupational misadventures. Still another case is that of an intelligent and clever Székely immigrant. Assisted by an extensive network of Transylvanian kinsfolk, he found urban employment near Montreal throughout the 1930's, enabling him to purchase a tobacco farm in 1941. He remembered his period of transition as a period of deep personal and economic satisfaction. Such an experience played a role in his success as a tobacco farmer and entrepreneur.

The most complex issue raised in these personal histories is the question how success and failure as an immigrant can be explained. Stated more specifically, what elements are responsible for determining the fulfilment or failure of immigrant hopes for a better life? At least three elements or circumstances appear to be decisive. First is the crucial role of family-kinship networks. They assist arriving immigrants in adjustment to Canadian life, but also provide vital information, advice, personal companionship, and economic support. John Kósa, the most perceptive student of Hungarian immigration to Canada, has documented the unquestioned importance of this process.** The personal life histories recorded by Linda Dégh confirm the key role of these networks in the success of immigrants. The most convincing example is that of the Székely immigrant noted earlier: throughout his Canadian life strategically placed relatives or villagers assisted him in Alberta, Montreal and Delhi.

Second, it is vital for the immigrant to relate to the regional socio-economic environment. The tobacco belt offered favorable opportunities to immigrants capable of disciplined work and entrepreneurship, particularly if they entered the area in the 1930's or 1940's. A combination of circumstances related to the characteristics of the region explain these opportunities. Economic conditions, land prices, social ties among those who settled earlier, good advice received, length of land tenure determined in significant ways success or failure.

Thirdly, as the author emphasizes, the social ethic of the immigrant played a role. The fourth respondent in her collection, a peasant family

who came to Canada after 1956, had great difficulties adjusting to the commercial, profit-centered, non-supportive economic and social scene in Canada. Throughout their life they had preserved the puritan, village-oriented, non-commercial ethic of the impoverished proud peasant. In Communist Hungary, they had lived a community-centered life in a Budapest industrial district. After several misadventures, they obtained a share-tenancy in the tobacco belt. Their deeply held social views, forbidding commercial speculation and profit-centeredness, coupled with their social and psychological isolation in Canadian society, produced a sense of failure and discouragement, which persisted even fifteen years after their arrival in Canada.

We have commented on only some of the most visible issues raised in these immigrant life histories. They demonstrate the rich informational and conceptual contributions of this form of immigrant source material to an understanding of Canadian and North American immigrant experience. They suggest also that the proposed theory of research outlined by Linda Dégh presents a viable and refined avenue of exploring the interaction between immigrant and North American cultures.

* Linda Dégh, "Approaches to Folklore Research Among Immigrant Groups," *Journal of American Folklore,* 79 (1966): 551-556.

** John Kósa, *Land of Choice: The Hungarians in Canada.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957.

Ohio State University Paul Bődy

Én is voltam jávorfácska.... * By Sári Megyery. Paris: Magyar Műhely, 1975. Pp. 383. $8.00.

Ours is the golden age of memoirs, but Sári Megyery's autobiography is more than mere reminiscence of yet another immigrant. It is a thorough exploration of a tantalizingly exciting life, an authentic mirror of an equally fascinating era and a valuable document about several outstanding figures of the Hungarian literary renaissance between 1920 and 1938. The writer, like Puck, hops from lover to lover, from country to country, mesmerizing the reader who dizzily follows the meteoric career of this extraordinary woman. Ambivalence in her attitude is apparent throughout the book: she alternates between yearning nostalgia and sharp criticism of her social class. She delivers her chronicle with scathing sincerity; thus her story becomes a moving human credo as well as reliable literary source material.

Part I describes her childhood at the beginning of the century among the Hungarian gentry. It is a world in which dullness, greed, gluttony, corruption, pride and prejudice prevail. The protagonists, her relatives, are grotesque, ancient dames, gallant country squires, antediluvian phantoms who belong to a wax museum dedicated to immortalize a sunken society. With gentle irony and loving understanding, the author delivers her bold indictment and gradually removes the masks from each actor of the drama. Her grandfather, the highly respected judge, a champion of justice, turns out to be an ardent anti-Semite; his wife, the noble *grande dame,* is a stingy, petty, nagging snob. Her elegant aunts stand naked as shallow coffee-klutch damsels whose major preoccupation is to catch rich, preferably aristocratic husbands for themselves and their nieces. This is a world of Kálmán Mikszáth or Jane Austen. The young Sári, perpetually discontent in this suffocating atmosphere, is driven by an internal force to break away.

Her sympathies are generous, her descriptions throb with passion in the portrayal of her parents. The weak, unhappy, hen-pecked, sensitive father, a prominent lawyer, is caught in the web of an agonizingly bad marriage. Since he lacks ambition and refuses to climb the social ladder, his wife becomes almost paranoid. A typical product of the gentry, she is a supreme hostess, a card-playing, flirtatious society queen, a sycophant, more concerned with pretense and propriety than substance. Her obsession with rank, position and never-enough-money drives the family to despair.

The home boundaries could not hold the exquisitely beautiful, precocious Sári too long. After she enrolls in an acting studio, she is soon discovered by major producers. At the age of 19, Sacy von Blondel (her new stage name) gets a contract with the Usher firm in Berlin, acts in Teinhardt's theaters and becomes a superstar, leading lady in 49 movies.

But she remains unfulfilled in spite of her glamorous life. In quest of something more meaningful, at the zenith of her career, Miss Blondel quits acting and returns to Budapest to dedicate her life to literature. In a short time she publishes one book after another; novels, volumes of poetry, collections of essays: *Csak a fényre vigyázz* [Beware of the Light Only], *A szerelem a szerelmesé* [Love Belongs to Lovers], *Végkielégítés* [Final Settlement], *A vendég* [The Guest], to mention only a few. In addition, she contributes to a number of newspapers and magazines. Though lacking in serious depth, her pen moves with the same ease as she did before the cameras.

In 1938 she travels to Paris to sign a contract for a book, never returns to Hungary, marries a distinguished playwright, André Lang, and

begins her academic career. After attending the Sorbonne and Cambridge, she launches her new books in French and English.

Part II may be entitled: "In the Shadow of the Gods." During her stay in Budapest, the blonde beauty is quickly embraced (both literally and figuratively) by the chief members of the *Nyugat* [West] literary circle. The ensuing chapters recount her friendship with Dezső Kosztolányi, Ernő Szép, Frigyes Karinthy, Ferenc Molnár, Lajos Zilahy, Sándor Márai, Lőrinc Szabó and scores of others. These portraits are highly sensitive and full of venerating compassion.

The true historical value of the book, however, is provided in the third part, which contains hitherto unpublished private letters written by the most prominent men-of-letter. These epistles were replies to a questionnaire prepared by the author in 1936 as a project, sponsored by a literary club. The question was: "How is a poem born? Give your solution to the mystery of creation!" All the addressees answered immediately. One cannot help being moved by some of these confessions. "A poem is a terribly monumental thing!" sighs Karinthy, the sensational humorist. He was the first to reply, followed by the above-mentioned writers and many more.

These rare, valuable literary documents were found accidentally after the war in an old chest. The entire material was donated to the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

The book is free of pathos, clichés and mannerism. Although some sentences are ungrammatical, the style is colorful and vivid revealing the author's enthusiasm for the Magyar tongue. In the introduction she writes: "My sole motivation for writing this memoir was my love for my native tongue! I have tried to protect it for decades with an almost schizophrenic passion from the influence of my adopted languages." After living abroad for forty years, the writer succeeded splendidly.

Sári Megyery emerges as a warm, generous, courageous person, a forerunner of Women's Liberation, who maintained her humanism and integrity in all circumstances. In her merciless reviewing of the failures of her kinfolks, and the exploration of the predicament of a woman in that doomed society, she has produced a powerful record of a long-gone world, a notable contribution to Hungarian literary history and a fascinating, highly readable book.

* The title, "I Too Had Been a Tiny Maple Tree. . ." comes from Kosztolányi who playfully called the writer a "tiny maple tree."

Clara Györgyey

Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies, Vol. IV, No. 1 (Spring 1977)

Review of Reviews

Egyházi társadalom a középkori Magyarországon [Ecclesiastical Society in Medieval Hungary]. By Elemér Mályusz. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1971. 398 pp.

This study . . . is the result of ten years of a research conducted between 1934 and 1944, and put in its final form only twenty-seven years later. There is no indication that more recent material has been added to the original research . . . [T]he aim of the book is to demonstrate that the structural division of the clergy in medieval Hungary, its life, activities, the rivalries among its various strata, as well as the deep gap which existed between the upper, middle and the lower clergy, reflected the structure and nature of the contemporary feudal society of Hungary. The prominent role, significance and merit of this ecclesiastical community was that it provided, almost exclusively, the framework for the development of an intellectual segment which, at least until the advent of the renaissance period, was missing in the secular community of the feudal society.

The book discusses in great detail, on the basis of original documents, papal tax-records and testaments of individual clergymen, the sharp contrast in the social and economic status between the upper and middle clergy (bishops and canons) and the lower clergy (parish priests). Although the bishops frequently held important state positions, their education corresponding to the highest contemporary standards, and were granted large feudal estates, the so-called "private church" (the parish priests) served the spiritual needs of the village community. The village priest was almost illiterate, his knowledge of Latin extended only to the indispensable parts of the liturgy, and his economic basis was usually a small piece of land donated by the local gentry-landowner. . . .

Thematically the strongest, most coherent part of the book deals with the monastic clergy. In Hungary, like elsewhere, the monastic orders during the feudal era were the centers and carriers of cultural, intellectual and literary activities. Among them the Benedictine order had a significant role in the collection and preservation of manuscripts. One of their oldest monasteries, Pannonhalma, possessed already in the

eleventh century, a collection of eighty codices, among them the famous Pray-codex which contains the earliest extant text in Hungarian vernacular: a funeral oration. Particularly interesting is the discussion of the Pauline order which apparently is the only genuine Hungarian order, founded in the thirteenth century near Pécs and approved by Pope Urban V in 1367. One of its vicars in the sixteenth century was instrumental in introducing the spirit and the teachings of the Devotio Moderna, and Thomas Kempis' *De Imitatione Christi.* Among the mendicant orders the Dominicans occupied a prominent place in the religious and cultural life of medieval Hungary. . . . More importantly, the Dominicans maintained several schools of higher education. One of them, the *studium generale* in Buda, early in the sixteenth century, had the privilege to confer the university degree of a *magister.*

In view of the exceedingly large amount of detail, the monograph sometimes is lacking in lucidity and calls for improvements in the organization of the material. Nevertheless it is a veritable treasure-house of information for every scholar who is interested in the study of the life and activities of the medieval church in Hungary.

Andor Urbanszky (University of Bridgeport), in *East Central Europe,* Vol. 1, No. 2 (1974).

A History of the Habsburg Empire. 1526–1918. By Robert A. Kann. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974. xiv, 646 pp. Maps. $25.00.

Professor Kann's new work is well-organized and based upon an extensive and, in many cases, exhaustive knowledge of sources in Western languages, particularly German. The author surveys the development of both the Austro-German and the Hungarian parts of the monarchy from the Turkish and religious wars of the sixteenth and first half of the seventeenth centuries through the First World War in a style that is clear and succinct.

Geographically, the emphasis throughout the volume is on the Austro-German regions, and more often than not, the problems of the monarchy are seen from Vienna as the center. . . . There are, of course, good reasons why Vienna should be at the heart of things, and the broad view Kann gives us is valuable, but in his preface he has drawn attention to the fact that the development of the monarchy can be fully understood only if the various political units and ethnic groups that com-

posed it receive proper attention. I don't think he has granted them equal time.

The non-German nationalities are generally dealt with in cursory fashion. To take the first half of the nineteenth century as an example, the Czechs probably get the fullest treatment, as in the discussion of the nationality problem in the chapter covering the period 1815–79. On the other hand, there is little depth to the discussion of social and political realities in Hungary in the decades preceding the revolution of 1848....

As for subject matter, emphasis is given to political and administrative history and foreign affairs. There are some very good chapters here, particularly those concerned with the political evolution of the monarchy from 1648 to 1748 (in which Kann argues convincingly that the monarchy's beginnings as a great power should be dated from 1648 rather than 1700–1748), the reforms between 1740 and 1792 (which he treats as a single, unified period), and finally the *Ausgleich* and its ramifications, Austrian political life and administration, 1879–1914, and the history of the First World War—all of which are detailed and balanced accounts. Economic questions are by no means neglected, but they are accorded less importance and space than politics and foreign affairs. Cultural matters are not well integrated into the whole, and, except for the Austro-Germans, they tend to become catalogs of authors and their works. . . .

[T]he book, as a whole, is a useful addition to the literature in English on the Habsburg monarchy; indeed, it is the most extensive account we have for the period covered. The narrative is supplemented by a long, well-arranged bibliographical essay, stressing works in German, English, and French, and a valuable appendix containing population and nationality statistics and maps.

Keith Hitchins (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) in *Slavic Review,* Vol. 35, No. 1 (March, 1976).

Comenius and Hungary. Essays. Éva Földes and István Mészáros (editors). Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1973. 177 pp., 68 plates. $11.00.

In commemoration of the three hundredth anniversary of the death of Jan Amos Comenius (J. A. Komensky, 1592–1670) many conferences were held throughout Europe in 1970 and a vast literature has been published since 1970 on this distinguished scholar.

Comenius and Hungary embodies the material of the conference

under the joint sponsorship of the Pedagogic Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO held at Budapest and Sárospatak, November 23–26, 1970. Sixteen scholars participated, twelve of whom represented Hungary; three, Czechoslovakia, and one, West Germany. The conference dealt primarily with Comenius' stay at Sárospatak, that little-explored period of 1650–1654. With the use of primary sources, Comenius's personality and works were fitted into the context of political and intellectual history of seventeenth-century Europe in general and Hungary in particular. All sixteen lectures shed in some way new light on the activities of this great educator. . . . Among the highlights is Sándor Maller's (Secretary General of the Hungarian UNESCO Commission) lifelike portrayal of the scholarly development and maturation of Comenius from his early youth to his death. . . .

Some of the contributions are not of a sufficiently scholarly level, but without exception they all offer a worthwhile addition to Comenius studies. The volume is indispensable to scholars concerned with the educator's variegated activities in Hungary. There is but one aspect the conference did not even touch upon; it is Comenius' influence on Hungarian pedagogy, which, since the Sárospatak period, has catapulted. . . .

Sixty-eight contemporary illustrations, one map, a well-compiled dictionary describing at length personages and institutions of Comenius' Hungary, a list of his works published in Hungary, and useful bibliographical notes enhance the scholarly value of *Comenius and Hungary.*

Francis S. Wagner (Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.) in *East Central Europe,* Vol. II, No. 2 (1975).

Szabad királyi városok gazdálkodása Mária Terézia korában [The Housekeeping of Royal Free Towns in the Age of Maria Theresa]. By István Kállay. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1972. 200 pp.

This book is about the administrative and financial housekeeping of the royal free towns of Hungary during the reign of Maria Theresa. After Kállay describes the governing institutions of the towns, he becomes an accountant reporting the incomes and expenses of the towns in question. As can be expected, therefore, the book is important, but as unreadable as a corporate report.

The municipal governments delegated the authority to supervise economic affairs to a committee of the town council, to the town judge, to the major, or to combinations of the above with the notary also called in at times. Yet the burghers exercised considerable voice in town affairs through their elected representative, the *tribunus plebis,* whose authority increased during the period under consideration. He was present at the allocation of the war taxes, took part in the review of the town's accounts, and, significantly, could report directly to the Royal Chamber in Pozsony in matters of dispute. The everyday duties in economic affairs were handled by the Stadtkammerer, who unlike the *tribunus,* was a paid official, but who could be either elected by the burghers or appointed by the council. Under his supervision there were as many as twenty-five inspectors and officials of varying importance, from the Militarcasse Inspector to the Marktrichter and the Waldmeister.

Kállay relates the duties of each of these officials, then discusses the incomes and expenditures of the towns in detail. He divides the incomes into five categories: 1) authorized by royal patents, i.e., wineries, breweries, mills, brick manufacturies, butchers, tariffs on goods entering the town, etc.; 2) accrued from interests on loaned capital or rents on leased real estate properties owned by the towns; 3) income from manors, villages, forests, commons, hunting, and fishing rights; 4) derived from official functions such as fines; 5) house taxes, printing, pharmacies, mines. The greatest share of the income of the towns was from the sale of wine, beer, and from house taxes. . . .

Kállay also asserts that the royal free towns accumulated substantial liquid assets which were not invested into industry or commerce, but were used for "usury" (p. 124). Since borrowed capital can be invested as well by the borrowers, the role of the towns as credit-generating institutions may have had substantial effect on investments, hence on the economic growth of Hungary. This possibility was not adequately explored by Kállay.

The economic growth of the royal free towns is another consideration ignored, even though the data indicate a substantial increase in economic activity. . . .

It is clear, in sum, that Kállay is uncomfortable as an economic historian, but is at his best when describing the administrative institutions of the towns. The book is more useful, however, for the data it contains on the economic activity of nineteen royal free towns. . . .

John Komlós (University of Chicago), in *East Central Europe,* Vol. II, No. 2 (1975).

Österreich-Ungarn und der Französisch-Preussische Krieg, 1870–1871. By István Diószegi. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1974. viii, 311 pp. $15.00.

Students of nineteenth-century foreign policy have every reason to welcome this translation of István Diószegi's book, published in Hungarian in 1965. Based upon extensive research . . . it is the first thorough study of the Dual Monarchy's preparations to intervene in the Franco-Prussian War, its attempts to work in the French interest when such intervention became inadvisable, its efforts to block South German adhesion to a new German imperial structure, its unsuccessful diplomacy during the crisis caused by Russia's abrogation of the Black Sea Clauses of the treaty of 1856, and the cumulative effect of these events upon the direction of Austro-Hungarian policy after the spring of 1871.

The key figure in this story is Franz Ferdinand Graf Beust, who was a minister in Saxony from 1849 to 1866, and Emperor Franz Joseph's foreign minister from 1867 until his retirement from politics in 1871. Metternich once called Beust a political tightrope walker, and Mr. Diószegi confirms the aptness of this description by recounting the way Beust pursued his hazardous course above the heads of the contentious political factions of his country. Although the factions had sharply divergent views on foreign affairs, Beust assured himself of their joint support at the beginning of his Austrian service by following a firmly anti-Prussian policy, which appealed to the resentment of the Court party over the defeat at Königgrätz, the anti-Bismarck prejudice of the Austrian liberals, and the fears of Prussian expansion that were rife among the Hungarian followers of Deák and Andrássy. But support for this line was not always reliable (the Deák party was more afraid of Russia than of Prussia, and the liberals were susceptible to the appeals of German nationalism), and external circumstances made it, in the long run, unsupportable. Prussia's defeat of France altered the European balance so completely that the Austro-Hungarian government felt compelled, by May 1871, to seek an accommodation with Prussia and, subsequently, with Russia. The government also began to think in terms of finding compensation, at Turkey's expense, in southeastern Europe. . . .

Gordon A. Craig (Stanford University) in *Slavic Review,* Vol. 35, No. 3 (September 1976).

Magyarország az első világháborúban, 1914–1918 [Hungary in the First World War, 1914–1918]. By József Galántai. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1974. 453 pp.

Professor Galántai's work on Hungary's participation in World War I fills a significant need for a comprehensive study on this subject. Its main value lies in its methodical and well-documented coverage of all the important aspects of the war pertaining to Hungary, but placed within the broader framework of international relations and internal conditions within the Monarchy. One should not look for controversies, new approaches, or profound personal characterization of the leading statesmen in the book, but its steady evenness and scholarly reliability are adequate compensations.

Nevertheless, there is one part in Professor Galántai's work where he strikes out boldly to offer a radically new interpretation of why Count István Tisza, prime minister of Hungary, abandoned his initial opposition to the war. According to the author, Tisza was primarily concerned about a potential invasion of Transylvania by Romania, and he gave his consent to the war only when Romania's neutrality seemed to be assured and Germany appeared willing to adopt a bulgarophile policy. Such a willingness was a crucial turning point in maintaining Bulgaria as a counterweight to Romania, and, thereby, an effective deterrent to a possible aggression by Romania.

Although Professor Galántai's logic is beyond challenge, the conclusion he draws is at least partially incorrect. Tisza was undoubtedly worried about the exposed position of Transylvania, and he did constantly urge a foreign policy line which assigned an increasingly important role to Bulgaria as the pivot of Austro-Hungarian influence in the Balkans. However, Tisza's concept was a long-range one because he was well-aware that Bulgaria was still suffering from the debilitating consequences of its defeat in the recent Second Balkan War. . . .

Much of the fear of a possible Romanian attack on Transylvania was based on the constant factor of the hostility of the Romanian public towards Hungary, and on the recent Russian-Romanian rapprochement, which increased rather than diminished the risks involved in any armed conflict. Yet, Tisza drowned his fears and eventually joined the war party, because a barrage of German messages made it appear that to let the opportunity of settling the account with Serbia slip would have incurred German displeasure, and perhaps even the eventual break-up of the German-Austro-Hungarian alliance. Tisza, to whom German power was the principal guarantor of Austria-Hungary's assumed great-

power status, could accept such a risk less than the risk entailed in a war. This explanation is, of course, the "conventional" one, but it still stands in the reviewer's opinion. Therefore, Professor Galántai's interpretation cannot be accepted in terms of its single-minded exclusiveness. Nevertheless, he correctly emphasizes Tisza's frantic search for a foothold in the Balkans, demonstrating that his foreign policy, although forcefully pursued, was severely limited by the scarcity of his available options, given the implacable hostility between Hungary and its Southern Slav and Romanian neighbors.

Gábor Vermes (Rutgers University, Newark) in *East Central Europe,* Vol. 2, No. 2 (1975).

Az ellenforradalom nemzetiségi politikájának kialakulása [The Formation of the Nationality Policy of the Hungarian Counterrevolution]. By Béla Bellér. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1975. 290 pp.

With the Treaty of Trianon, Hungary was transformed from a multinational state, where barely fifty per cent of the population was Hungarian-speaking, to a rump country, one-third of its former size, where almost ninety per cent of the people were Magyar and only three per cent could not speak Hungarian. Thus, a long book on Trianon Hungary's nationality policy would seem, at first glance, to be painfully beside the point. A closer look, however, reveals that, despite the somewhat misleading title, Béla Bellér's study deals with an important aspect of Hungarian domestic and foreign policy in the 1920s, namely, the revisionist aims of the Horthy regime.

Only a small part of Bellér's book is devoted to Hungary's nationality policy per se. . . . It could not be otherwise, for with the Treaty of Trianon "the nationality question" ceased to be a real issue. In 1918, when the Károlyi government established the Ministry of Nationalities, the problem of accommodating dissident nationality groups was pressing. With the signing of the Treaty, territorial autonomy was no longer in question, and even cultural autonomy lost much of its political and practical significance.

Bellér's study of Trianon Hungary's nationality policy suffers from ideological clichés—for instance, that the post-revolutionary regime was fascist and that "the nationality policy of the Hungarian Soviet Republic was based on the teachings of Marx, Engels, and Lenin and on the historical experiences of the Great October Socialist Revolution."

At times, he is unduly harsh on the Budapest government, as when he criticizes the regime for not accepting the provisions of the Treaty of Trianon months before the Hungarian peace delegation arrived in Paris. His valuational conclusions are often undocumented and in seeming conflict with the facts. For example, after stating that 65.2 per cent of those participating in the Sopron plebiscite of 1921 voted for Hungary and that, even considering irregularities, Hungary was the clear winner, he announces (without further explanation) that "the victory was not glorious." . . .

The greater and more valuable portion of the book is devoted to the undercover propagandistic activities of the Ministry of Nationalities. Although the avowed goal of the Ministry was the protection of the rights of Hungary's minorities, the very budget of the Ministry is telling: the Ruthenian department, nominally in charge of 1,500 Ruthenians in Hungary, received exactly the same portion of the budget as did the German department, responsible for 551,211 Hungarian subjects of German origin. The Ministry was not so much a clearing house for minority affairs within the country as it was a vehicle for Hungary's revisionist aims.

The attention of the Ministry was first directed to the Slovak question. Its zeal was understandable. In November 1919 František Jehlička, a close associate to Andrej Hlinka, leader of the Slovak People's Party, arrived in Budapest, claiming to speak for his imprisoned party chief. He revealed that the Slovaks would vote for reunion with Hungary if Hungary, in turn, would grant them territorial autonomy. In January 1920 the officials of the Ministry, in long bargaining sessions with Jehlička, hammered out the provisions of the proposed autonomy. At the same time, with the assistance of the Ministry, a network of pro-Hungarian Slovak émigré groups was planted both in Hungary and in Poland. In addition, Magyarone Slovaks living in Slovakia received subsidies for their pro-Magyar propaganda campaigns inside the Czechoslovak Republic. Soon, similar networks were established to work for Ruthenian autonomy.

Bellér provides some fascinating details about Hungary's endeavours to promote Slovak and Ruthenian reunion with Hungary. Unfortunately, he does not deal with the diplomatic repercussions of these ill-conceived and often badly executed ventures. In themselves, they were simply desperate, foolish schemes. But they led to exaggerated fears of Hungary's designs on her victorious neighbours and, in this way, contributed significantly to the early isolation of Hungary and to the formation of an anti-Hungarian combination, the Little Entente. When,

in 1922, the Ministry's doors were closed forever, the Hungarian government acknowledged that its propagandistic schemes had failed and that any revision of the Treaty of Trianon would have to be postponed.

Eva S. Balogh (Yale University), in *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism,* Vol. 3, No. 1 (Fall, 1975).

A magyar polgári történetírás rövid története [The Short History of Hungarian Bourgeois Historiography]. By Emma Lederer. Budapest: Kossuth Könyvkiadó, 1969. 197 pp.

Hungarian Historiography and the Geistesgeschichte School. By Steven Béla Várdy. Cleveland, Ohio: An Árpád Academy Publication, 1974. 96 pp. $4.00.

Gyula Szekfű (1883–1955) occupies a pivotal importance not only in the development of Hungarian historiography but also in the political history of twentieth-century Hungary. The contradictory course of his life mirrored his country's changing fortunes, or rather misfortunes, and the controversy surrounding his major works, *Három nemzedék* (Three Generations) and *Magyar történet* (Hungarian History; with Bálint Hóman), was, and is, political as well as scholarly. Both of the books under review attest, however reluctantly, to the intellectual and political significance of his remarkable career.

Emma Lederer's short history of what she is pleased to call "bourgeois" historiography exemplifies the high quality of post-1956 Hungarian Marxist research. Based on her series of university lectures, the book is an admirable introduction to the generally unphilosophical practice of Hungarian historians, Szekfű notwithstanding, from the Revolution of 1848–49 to the end of the Second World War. Lederer maintains that this period witnessed significant progress in research techniques, accompanied by increasingly retrograde theoretical constructions. The brief prefatory chapters on Western European historians and philosophies of history focus on Germany because "in the theory and practice of history, German historical science exerted the primary, if not the only influence on the entire development of Hungary's bourgeois historiography." (p. 25). In the principal chapters Lederer analyzes the Hungarian Positivist School — for want of a

better name — of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries before turning her attention to Szekfű and the *Geistesgeschichte* School of the inter-war years.

While personally sympathetic with Szekfű, . . . Lederer indicts him on two counts. According to the first count, the *Verstehen* method employed by Szekfű is irrational and the importance he attached to spiritual-intellectual history is *ipso facto* reactionary. The second count states that Szekfű's anti-Semitism and Magyar chauvinism perverted his historical judgment and served not to increase understanding, much less to promote progress, but rather to buttress the nefarious policies of the Horthy government.

It is difficult to see how any fair-minded jury could find Szekfű guilty on the first count. The method proposed by Wilhelm Dilthey is not irrational in the sense Lederer suggests; it is a discipline designed to study phenomena judged to be beyond the range of scientific reason. Further, her contention that the basic assumption of the *Geistesgeschichte* School — that *Geist* ("Spirit" or "Mind") is the stuff of history — is "reactionary" rests on her commitment to Marxism. Non-Marxists may therefore be forgiven for dismissing this charge.

The second count is more serious. In *Három nemzedék* Szekfű elevated anti-Semitism to a principle of interpretation; in attempting to account for the "catastrophic" Hungarian revolutions of 1918–19 he suggested that Jewish radicals had carried the logic of pre-war liberalism to its ultimate conclusion. Now even if, as I believe, Szekfű's well-known preference for Széchenyi and "conservative reform" can be defended, his analysis of the "three generations" from the Reform Era to the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy cannot. . . .

Steven Béla Várdy's book comprises the Hungarian text, with English summary, of an address delivered to the Árpád Academy in Cleveland. The author's aim is a modest one; he wishes to refute those who, like Lederer, argue that Szekfű and the *Geistesgeschichte* School were without serious challengers in the period between the wars. While acknowledging the ascendancy of *Geistesgeschichte,* he insists that other schools of history were very much alive. Of the various anti-*Geistesgeschichte* schools discussed, Várdy thinks most highly of the Ethnohistory (Népiségtörténeti) School and its principal representative, Elemér Mályusz.

The argument is persuasive, even though the need to present it is a measure of the length of the shadow cast by Gyula Szekfű. Be that as it may, this fine monograph, which includes an excellent bibliography,

serves notice that the appearance of Várdy's English-language work in progress on the history of Hungarian historiography will be a publishing event of importance.

Lee Congdon (Madison College) in *East Central Europe,* Vol. II, No. 2 (1975).

Environmental Deterioration in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Edited by Ivan Völgyes. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974. xvi, 168 pp. $14.00.

While the momentum of the environmental movement in the West seems to have slowed a bit, it appears to be accelerating in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. This is to be applauded because the challenge there is as great or greater than that which exists in the West. Unfortunately, most Westerners are still uninformed about just how serious the problem is in Communist countries.

Environmental Deterioration in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, while repeating and even republishing much of the material that has become available about the Soviet Union, does offer some new material in English about Eastern Europe. The chapter by György Enyedi is a forthright statement about conditions in Hungary. David Kromm reports on a public opinion survey which he supervised and which, among other things, revealed a striking awareness by low income residents of the pollution problem of Ljubjana, Yugoslavia.

Leslie Dienes provides details for Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia, and shows just how serious environmental disruption is in these three countries. For example, Budapest, as of 1972, dumped as much as two-thirds of its sewage into the Danube without even primary treatment. Furthermore, because most of the homes in Eastern Europe are heated with poor quality soft coal, the level of sulfur concentration in the air during the winter is far above the levels in most other parts of Europe and the parts of the USSR where central heating is used. . . .

Except for the section by Ihor Stebelsky on soil erosion and dust storms, and the section by Philip Micklin on the Caspian Sea, much of the material on the USSR either has already appeared in print (and sometimes in the same articles by the same authors) or is not especially insightful. . . .

Marshall I. Goldman (Wellesley College), *Slavic Review,* Vol. 35, No. 1 (March 1976).

Ungarn. Geschichte und Gegenwart. Eine Landesbiographie. By Denis Silagi. Second Edition. Hannover: Verlag für Literatur und Zeitgeschehen, 1972. 168 pp.

Silagi's study was designed to be a national character sketch — "a living picture" as the author puts it — rather than history in the orthodox sense. Silagi believes that recent events offer better insights and clearer perspectives than the history of more distant happenings. Consequently, most of the text covers developments after World War II. Only thirty pages are devoted to events antedating the eighteenth century, and the period terminating with World War II is disposed of in only twenty-five pages. . . .

To what extent does a survey such as this serve a useful function? Superficial readers might be content with matters as they stand. Two brief paragraphs on Széchenyi, and only one on Kossuth, might suffice for the literary browser. Serious scholars would certainly expect a more circumspect coverage, as well as adequate documentation and a bibliography comprising at least major works written in the most prevalent Western languages. All these ingredients are missing, unfortunately, to the detriment of this otherwise interesting account. . . .

On the whole, Silagi's survey follows a moderate course between the two extremes of traditional and Marxist historical exegesis. Although the author betrays an occasional pro-Magyar and anti-Communist bias, his is a sensible and fair account of the history of a nation which has always been plagued by partisan and extremist interpretations. This study should be of some interest to the educated German public, whereas the scholar will find it of lesser significance, because of its relative superficiality and lack of documentation. Several useful maps and a guide to Magyar pronunciation for German speakers round out this modest contribution to the history of Hungary.

Thomas Spira (University of Prince Edward Island) in *East Central Europe,* Vol. 2, no. 2 (1975).

Soziologie und Gesellschaft in Ungarn. Edited by Bálint Balla. Stuttgart: Ferdinand Enke Verlag, 1974. 4 vols. 160, 128, 186 and 154 pp.

Professor Balla has translated and edited these four separate volumes on society and sociology in Hungary. Hungarian-born and educated,

Balla now teaches sociology at the Institute of Social Science, Technical University in West Berlin.

Next to the Poles, the most interesting sociologists in eastern Europe are undoubtedly the Hungarians. Since 1960 one can speak of the revival of Hungarian sociology whose characteristic feature is empirical research. These volumes describe social reforms, social problems, political bureaucracy, and the mechanism of economic laws. Through them we have a clearer view of the phenomena of "interest-plurality" and "interest-conflicts" within Hungarian society. This thorough analysis is based not on abstract theories but on case-studies and concrete data.

These volumes contain original contributions by well-known Hungarian scholars on socialist society in Hungary. Balla introduces the volumes with a detailed essay on the nature of Hungarian sociology. He believes there is something unique about Hungarian society which distinguishes it from others in East Europe. We would not dispute that each society has its own peculiarities, but, on one point Balla is mistaken. The monolithic political and economic system prevailing in East European countries has created problems which are common to them all. . . .

It is most appropriate . . . to mention some of the themes discussed in these volumes: the history and state of Hungarian sociology, the Marxist approach to the problem of social structure, development of Marxist sociology in socialist countries, the role of sociology in political leadership, the sociological problems of division of labour in the family, social structure and school system, sociological problems of new housing settlement, and how organized irresponsibility endangers the system of decision-making.

Peter Raina (Osteuropa-Institut, Free University of Berlin) in *Canadian Slavonic Papers,* Vol. 18, No. 2 (June 1976).

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Watson Kirkconnell
1895–1977

Watson Kirkconnell, scholar, teacher, publicist, poet and translator, died this February in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. Born in Port Hope, Ontario, he received his university education at Queen's University in the nearby city of Kingston, and at Oxford University. Professor Kirkconnell's teaching career began in Winnipeg's Wesley College where, between 1934 and 1940, he was the chairman of the Department of Classics. From 1940 to 1948 he served as chairman of the Department of English at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario. From 1948 to 1964 Professor Kirkconnell was President of Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. During his academic career he also served as national secretary, chairman and president of several learned societies and institutions, including the Canadian Authors' Association and the Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Throughout much of his life Kirkconnell had been involved in civic affairs. During the turbulent 1930's and 1940's he fought against the new totalitarian ideologies, especially communism. He was also a devoted and effective spokesman for Canada's European immigrant ethnic minorities.

Kirkconnell had a special interest in Hungarian culture both in Hungary and in Canada. His love for Magyar poetry resulted in several volumes of verse translation, the most notable being the *Magyar Muse* (1933), and the monumental but, alas, still unpublished *Hungarian Helicon* (1,180 pages in manuscript).

His devotion to things Hungarian involved Kirkconnell in the work of the *Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies* first as a contributor and, from 1975 to his death, as one of the journal's mentors and its Honorary Editor.

Watson Kirkconnell, O.C. (1968), M.A., Ph.D., D.ès L., D. Litt., L.H.D., D.P.Ec., LL.D., F.R.S.C., prided himself with having won numerous highly coveted academic and literary honours; with competence in several, diverse disciplines; with familiarity with some fifty languages; and with a list of publications almost unmatched in length and scope. With his passing our journal has lost a devoted adviser and

friend; Hungarian-Canadians, a loyal and effective spokesman; and the world of learning, a scholar of extraordinary achievements and range of interests.

In a forthcoming issue our journal will pay a special tribute to this remarkable man.

(NFD)

OUR CONTRIBUTORS (continued from page 2)

IVAN SANDERS received his B.A. and M.A. from the City University of New York, Brooklyn College, and his Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from New York University. At present he is associate professor of English at Suffolk County Community College, Selden, Long Island, N.Y. Professor Sanders' studies and articles on Hungarian literature, as well as on other literary topics, have been published in *The New Republic, The Nation, Commonwealth, America, World Literature Today* (formerly *Books Abroad*), *East European Quarterly, The Polish Review* and *Hungarian Book Review* (Budapest). His Hungarian-language essays and reviews have appeared in *Valóság, Nagyvilág, Helikon* (Budapest) and *Új Látóhatár* (Munich). His translation of György Konrád's novel *The City Builder* [A városalapító] will be published by Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich in the fall of 1977.

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3. Persons wishing to review books for the *Review* should get in touch with the Editor.

4. Persons wishing to prepare review articles—either detailed discussions of a single book or a review of some area of Hungarian studies—should get in touch first with the Editor.

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Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies

special issue:

HUNGARIAN POETRY AND THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD: A TRIBUTE TO WATSON KIRKCONNELL

essays, reviews and verse

translations by

N. F. Dreisziger
Thomas R. Mark
Enikő Molnár Basa
Timothy Kachinske
Zoltán Máté
and
Watson Kirkconnell

Vol. IV, No. 2 Fall 1977

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OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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(continued on page 222)

Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies, Vol. IV, No. 2 (Fall 1977)

Editor's Foreword

It is difficult to decide in what way appropriate tribute can be paid to a departed mentor, in this case our journal's Honorary Editor. We could have planned the publishing of a book of essays, a kind of belated Festschrift, *as an expression of our last respects and sorrow. But such an ambitious undertaking would have involved years of preparations and could have strained our meagre financial resources. As an alternative we chose to dedicate one of the* Review's *issues to Watson Kirkconnell's memory, and fill it mainly with essays and reviews fitting for the occasion. Accordingly, in the first part of this issue we feature studies on subjects that had been dear to Kirkconnell in his lifetime: Hungarian poetry and verse translation. The exception is the first article which examines the historical significance of Kirkconnell's literary and other-than-literary activities as far as Canadians of Hungarian background are concerned.*

In Part II of this issue we are proud to offer a taste of Kirkconnell's verse translation from Hungarian. Our sample is taken from his rendering of János Arany's epic poem, Toldi, *into English. The poem celebrates the exploits of Miklós [Nicholas] Toldi, a Hungarian lad of legendary strength, during the middle ages. A complete version of Kirkconnell's translation of* Toldi *will be published separately by the Hungarian Readers' Service as soon as circumstances permit.*

The third part of this special issue contains book reviews in the various fields of Hungarian studies. Although most of them do not relate to the realm of poetry or literature, it was thought best to print them in this volume rather than in the spring issue of 1978.

Many people have worked hard to make the appearance of this special issue possible. Drs. E. M. Basa, Joseph St. Clair and Stephen Scheer, as well as Mr. Maxim Tábory have each helped with the adjudication of one or two of the manuscripts. Professor Thomas Spira spared much of his valuable time to do most of the copy editing. Mrs. Hope Kirkconnell has sent us pictures of her late husband. Janet Kirkconnell supplied us with the manuscript of her late father's rendition of Toldi. *Dr. F. Harcsar has performed many of the innumerable chores involved in getting this volume on our subscribers' desks. To each of them we extend our thanks.*

We also wish to acknowledge the offer of financial support which has been received from the Hungarian Helicon Society of Toronto, and the "matching grant" which has been provided by Ontario's Department of Culture and Recreation.

Kingston, October 1977 *NFD*

Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies, Vol. IV, No. 2 (Fall 1977)

Watson Kirkconnell: Translator of Hungarian Poetry and a Friend of Hungarian-Canadians

N. F. Dreisziger

Friends of Small Nations

One of history's lessons is that, without outside help, small nations and weak minorities often become the victims of international or national political conflicts as the Second World War amply illustrates. Contrary to common belief, the victimization of defenceless groups has not been confined to totalitarian states; often democratic societies are also guilty. Even the history of Canada, one of the world's most peaceful countries, contains examples of unprovoked acts against minorities. One has only to recall the treatment of British Columbia's Japanese residents during World War II.

In the history of mankind the sufferings of small nations and minority groups have been prevented or diminished through help coming from one or more of the great powers. At other times, influential individuals have come to their aid. True, most of the time help was contingent on economic or political concessions. Occasionally, however, aid had no strings attached. That influential statesmen, publicists and academics have been able to do a great deal for small nations and minorities, has been demonstrated many times in history. Two British publicists, R.W. Seton-Watson and H.W. Steed, for example, effectively promoted the cause of Czech independence during the closing years of the First World War. Hungary too, has had such influential sympathizers abroad. One of these was the English newspaper magnate, Lord Rothermere. Another was Professor C.A. Macartney, the Oxford historian and the author of several books on Hungarian history. It is less commonly known in the world, and not even in Canada, that Hungarians, especially Hungarian-Canadians, also had a Canadian friend: Watson Kirkconnell, teacher, scholar, poet and publicist who until his recent death lived in retirement in the quiet university town of Wolfville, Nova Scotia.

Kirkconnell's work in the field of verse translation from the Hun-

garian is generally known by the educated public in Canada and abroad. What is much less known is the fact that his activities in connection with things Hungarian transcended the realm of poetry and literature and had political as well as social significance. His non-literary contribution to the Magyar cause has not been the highly visible variety. Whereas Seton-Watson's and Steed's pro-Czech efforts helped in the creation of Czechoslovakia, no such cataclysmic events resulted from Kirkconnell's work on behalf of Hungarians. But this should not detract from the significance of his work. Since his accomplishments cannot be appreciated without an understanding of the general Canadian context and the development of the Hungarian community in Canada, it is to these themes we must turn.

A Young Nation

The Canada of Kirkconnell's early years was a young, developing nation, characterized above all by a growing spirit of nationalism. Although Canada was bi-national, French and English having co-existed here for many generations, Canadian nationalism was not one that transcended ethnic and cultural differences. In fact, it may be said that two distinct nationalisms existed in Canada at the time, one among English-speaking Canadians, and a different one among French-speaking Canadians. This left no room for Canadians whose background was neither English nor French. One prominent English-Canadian, Principal George M. Grant of Queen's University, remarked at the time that "in order to be Canadian an inhabitant of the country had to be 'British';"[1] while the chief spokesman for French Canada at the time, Henri Bourassa, complained that it was never the intention of the founders of Canadian Confederation to turn this "partly French and partly English country" into a land of refuge for the "scum of all nations."[2] The "British" nationalism of English-speaking Canadians, the "bicultural" national vision of Bourassa and his followers, and the Quebec-centered parochialism of other French-Canadians left little room for the masses of immigrants that were arriving to Canada from central and eastern Europe.

But the immigrants kept coming. Over-population, economic problems, and social pressures forced them to leave their native lands and seek new opportunities in what was the last great frontier of agricultural settlement in the New World: the Canadian prairies. Foresighted statesmen in Ottawa, such as Clifford Sifton, Minister of the Interior from 1896 to 1905, welcomed east and central European agriculturalists as

the best possible settlers who would in time create prosperous farms out of the prairie wilderness.

The appearance in the Canadian West of large groups of strangely dressed people with stranger names, speaking unintelligible languages and following alien traditions, alarmed many English Canadians, just as their influx alarmed Bourassa. Was Western Canada destined to be dominated by people incapable of adjusting to Canadian traditions and developing loyalty to Canadian institutions and government? Such fears, expressions of nativistic antagonisms towards the immigrants, were rampant in the Canadian West. The First World War, a conflict which raised human emotions to unprecedented heights, served to reinforce these hatreds, especially toward immigrants who came from the lands of the Central Powers. During the war, these newcomers were designated as "enemy aliens". Because Austria-Hungary was one of the principal Central Powers, Hungarian-Canadians fell into this category.

The hatreds caused by the war were still not forgotten when Canada plunged into one of the worst crises of its domestic history, the Great Depression. Starting in 1929, the crash caused unparalleled hardships for most Canadians. During the worst years of the economic crisis one out of every four adults was unemployed. Thousands of worried men wended their way through the country, going from factory to factory, mine to mine, seeking non-existent jobs. Prairie farmers were also badly hurt. The price of farm products hit all time lows. In 1932, wheat sold for only 32 cents a bushel, its lowest price in centuries.[3] The drop in farm income was aggravated by a series of natural disasters. For many years, severe drought plagued the southern portions of Alberta and Saskatchewan, causing not only near-total crop failures, but also and more importantly, soil erosion. The drought, the soil erosion and other natural calamities such as grasshoppers caused nine successive years of almost total crop failures in some areas of the prairies.[4] The chronic and nation-wide unemployment, the collapse of the West's farm economy, resulted in a bitter competition for jobs and all means of income, a struggle in which newcomers often ended up as losers.

The Depression was hardly over when the Second World War began. The emotional strain of the conflict rekindled some of the prejudices built up during the First World War. Hungary again found herself in the camp at war with Canada. Nevertheless, during this war the lot of Hungarian-Canadians was better than it had been during 1914–18. The Second World War was followed by the Cold War. Fortunately, the domestic situation, while not free from economic recessions accompanied by unemployment, brought much greater economic security for

the vast majority of Canadians. The postwar decades also witnessed the gradual decline of nativistic antagonisms against immigrant ethnic groups. At long last, "New Canadians" could enjoy a greater share of the wealth, and a greater degree of security that their new homeland had to offer.

The Magyars in Canada

The first small groups of Hungarians arrived in Canada in the second half of the 1880's, but it was not until the turn of the century that they began to migrate to this country in significant numbers. According to the very unreliable statistics of the 1911 census, there were 11,648 of them in Canada that year.[5] The First World War stopped their influx, but the gates were opened again during the 1920's. Between 1924 and 1930, a veritable flood of Magyars came to Canada, especially to the prairie provinces, driven by a mixture of political and economic considerations. Following the Great War, the peacemakers dismembered historic Hungary. The economic situation of truncated Hungary was very weak. She had some industries but very little in the way of mineral and energy resources; and she had much agricultural land but few markets for produce. But worst off were those Magyars whose homes were transferred to the successor states: Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and an enlarged Romania. Hungary could absorb only a few of these unfortunate Magyars. The United States, the traditional recipient of Hungarian immigrants prior to 1914, virtually closed its gates to East European migration after the war. Canada remained one of the few countries to admit Hungarians.

The victims of the postwar dislocations in central Eastern Europe began arriving in Canada in the mid-1920's. Although many of these newcomers were really political refugees, they were not admitted as such. They came as agricultural labourers, even though some of them had been craftsmen, landowners and members of the professions. Along with these refugees from the successor states came many poor peasants and landless farm workers who left impoverished Hungary mainly for economic reasons.

During the Great Depression, Canada's gates were once more shut to large-scale immigration; but return to normalcy after the Second World War meant that the country could again admit a great number of immigrants. In this period Hungarians came in two distinct waves. At the end of the 1940's, the so-called "displaced persons" arrived. They were political exiles of the war and of its immediate aftermath. Less

than a decade later they were followed by the "refugees," the participants and victims of the 1956 anti-Communist uprising in Hungary. Their arrival swelled the number of Hungarians in Canada to 126,220 by the time of the 1961 census.

The Struggle for Survival

Until recently, the lot of Canada's Hungarian immigrants had been difficult. The early settlers had endured many hardships and deprivations before getting their homesteads established. Although after many years of hard work in an inhospitable climate many of them had achieved freedom from material want, they suffered continued spiritual, cultural and social deprivation. Except for the fortunate few who had settled in fairly compact Hungarian colonies, the majority continued to live in the isolation of their prairie farmsteads, far removed from centres of ethnic cultural and religious life.

The condition of the Hungarian worker was probably even less enviable. A labourer was buffeted from one lumber camp to another, or from one mine to the next. In times of unemployment he was often entirely without income. Unless he settled in a city, he could hardly maintain any meaningful contacts with Hungarian religious or social organizations.

The Depression exacerbated the situation of both immigrant farmers and workers. The former lost most of their income, the latter sooner or later forfeited their jobs. True, the farmer would not starve, unless he defaulted on his debts; but the labourer was confronted with the grim task of feeding himself and his family without any income. To add to the newcomer's predicament, recent arrivals who went on relief risked deportation. Not until the war years and the postwar period did the economic situation of Hungarian-Canadians improve markedly. The return of normal climate and prosperity to the prairie farms brought relief for the agriculturalist, while the growth of employment in the cities ended the labourer's plight. The rapid growth of Canadian manufacturing also meant that an increasing number of Hungarian-Canadians could settle in urban centres. There, because of greater concentration, they often had their social, cultural and religious needs satisfied as well.

Discrimination

The struggle for the daily loaf of bread was not the only problem

confronting Hungarian-Canadians. The nativistic feelings of English and French Canadians, their suspicions toward certain immigrants, was a fact which no Magyar immigrant to this country could escape. Worse still, these antagonisms were often transmuted into outright discrimination. As has been mentioned, during the First World War immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe were classified as "enemy aliens" and were denied the right to vote in federal elections. In the 1920's Hungarians were placed in the "non-preferred" category by immigration authorities. While some Hungarians were victims of official discrimination, others were plagued by sheer ignorance about ethnic groups. In 1937, for example, an insurance company refused to provide fire-damage coverage to Hungarian farmers. Apparently, the officials of the firm had confused Hungarians with Doukhobors whose incendiary habits were public knowledge.[6]

Discrimination by governments and private companies may have hurt the immigrant's pride and pocketbook, but it probably did not have a very damaging effect on his psyche. For many newcomers, the experience of being mistreated by bureaucrats and employers was not entirely new. Hungarians from the successor states had already been subjected to similar if not worse treatment. Those directly from Hungary were often also acquainted with discrimination. As impoverished peasants or landless labourers they had been at the bottom of their former country's social ladder. What most Hungarian immigrants had not tasted before, and what was a new and discouraging experience for them in Canada, was what might be termed personal discrimination: rejection by co-workers, and neighbours, by people of their own social rank and educational achievement. Such treatment, however infrequent it might have been, was a bitter pill to swallow for most Hungarian-Canadians.

If discrimination was a discouraging experience for the adult immigrant, it was even worse for his children. Born in Canada, these "hyphenated Canadians" grew up assuming that they would be treated as equals. Their disappointment was all the keener when they discovered that, no matter how emphatically they rejected their parents' values and habits, they were not accepted as full-fledged Canadians. The frustrations of a second-generation Hungarian yearning for acceptance into Canadian society are skillfully depicted in John Marlyn's novel *Under the Ribs of Death*. The novel's hero, Sándor Hunyadi, has one aim in life: to become "Alex Hunter," an English-Canadian businessman. His rejections no doubt resemble those that many Hungarian-Canadians had experienced in striving for social and economic betterment.

Sociologists have yet to explain satisfactorily the causes of discrimination toward Hungarians and other Canadian immigrant ethnic groups.[7] Undoubtedly, fears generated by the influx of masses of immigrants with strange mores and customs, the rivalry for material advancement, the passions generated by two world wars, have probably been the most important ones. But there were, it seems, other factors as well. These were the beliefs, widely held in Canada during the first half of this century, that some immigrant groups lacked culture and were incapable of developing loyalty to Canada.

The first of these beliefs, that central and eastern European immigrants were uncultured, was held by Bourassa who maintained that newcomers to the Canadian West were the "scum of all nations." The ability of immigrant-dominated Western Canada to remain loyal to Canadian traditions and ideals was doubted by no less a person than the noted teacher, writer, and humorist, Stephen Leacock. In his essay "Canada and the Immigration Problem," Leacock expressed the fear that a Canadian West "of whose inhabitants vast masses stand in no hereditary relation to the history of Canada. . ." may lack the "restraining influence experienced by the existence of a common history. . ." to keep it in Confederation.[8] The belief that immigrants often espoused radical ideologies was publicly endorsed in Section 98 of the Canadian Criminal Code, which provided for the deportation of newcomers *suspected* of radical affiliations and activities.

Canada's immigrants in general, and Canadian-Hungarians in particular, could do little to dispel the largely erroneous views of native Canadians about them. The masses of underprivileged and often poorly educated peasants that had flocked to the Canadian West from the 1880's to the late 1920's were incapable of generating a cultural life the calibre of which would have impressed the Canadian public. The few intellectuals among New Canadians who managed to come to Canada in spite of the government's "farmers only" admission policy were preoccupied with eking out a meagre living and, when they had time to write, they did so in their own language. Their works remained unknown to most Canadians.

Immigrants also had difficulty disproving their alleged potential disloyalty to Canada. Public declarations of fidelity convinced very few people. Not until the Second World War did Hungarian-Canadians demonstrate their "Canadian" patriotism by enlisting in the Armed Forces in large numbers. But even this failed to convince the more suspicious. Accusations of radicalism were also difficult to refute especially since, during the Depression, a number of bitter and frus-

trated immigrants had become converts to radical ideologies. Their activities were more likely to attract the attention of the English language press than the work and views of the majority of immigrants who were satisfied with the Canadian system of government.

The immigrants' greatest problem was that their self-assessment as a cultured, loyal, and moderate group was not shared by the Canadian public. The newcomer's boasts about the greatness of his own cultural heritage could easily be misinterpreted as mere bragging and his insistence that he loved his adopted land, not taken at face value. Canadians had to be convinced by fellow Canadians whose impartiality could not be questioned. Fortunately for New Canadians in general and Hungarian-Canadians in particular, a few Canadian individuals were willing to undertake this task. Perhaps the most notable among them was Watson Kirkconnell.

Watson Kirkconnell

Kirkconnell was born in the town of Port Hope, Ontario, in 1895. His mother, in Kirkconnell's own words, had a "highly diversified ancestry," whereas his father descended from an ethnic group noted for giving so many distinguished sons and daughters to Canada: the Scottish. An industrious student with a gift for languages and mathematics, the young Kirkconnell completed his high school education in Lindsay, Ontario. In 1913 he entered Queen's University in Kingston earning his B.A. and M.A. degrees in Classics. Following three years of war service and a prolonged illness, Kirkconnell entered Oxford University to earn a degree in Economics as preparation for a career in journalism.[9] But a journalist he did not become. In 1922 he accepted a teaching post in Winnipeg's Wesley College. The appointment turned out to be the beginning of a distinguished academic career, which included a stint as Head of Wesley College's Department of Classics (1939 to 1940), as Professor of English and Department Head at McMaster University in Hamilton (1940 to 1948), and, finally, as President of Acadia University (1948 to 1964).

What brought Kirkconnell in touch with several New Canadian groups was his passion for verse translation. He developed this predilection rather late in his youth. His talent for languages and English versification had been evident in primary school. He combined the two talents for the first time during his stay at Queen's University, when he was given a class assignment to translate Latin verse into English prose. In his memoirs, Kirkconnell relates that he accomplished the task in

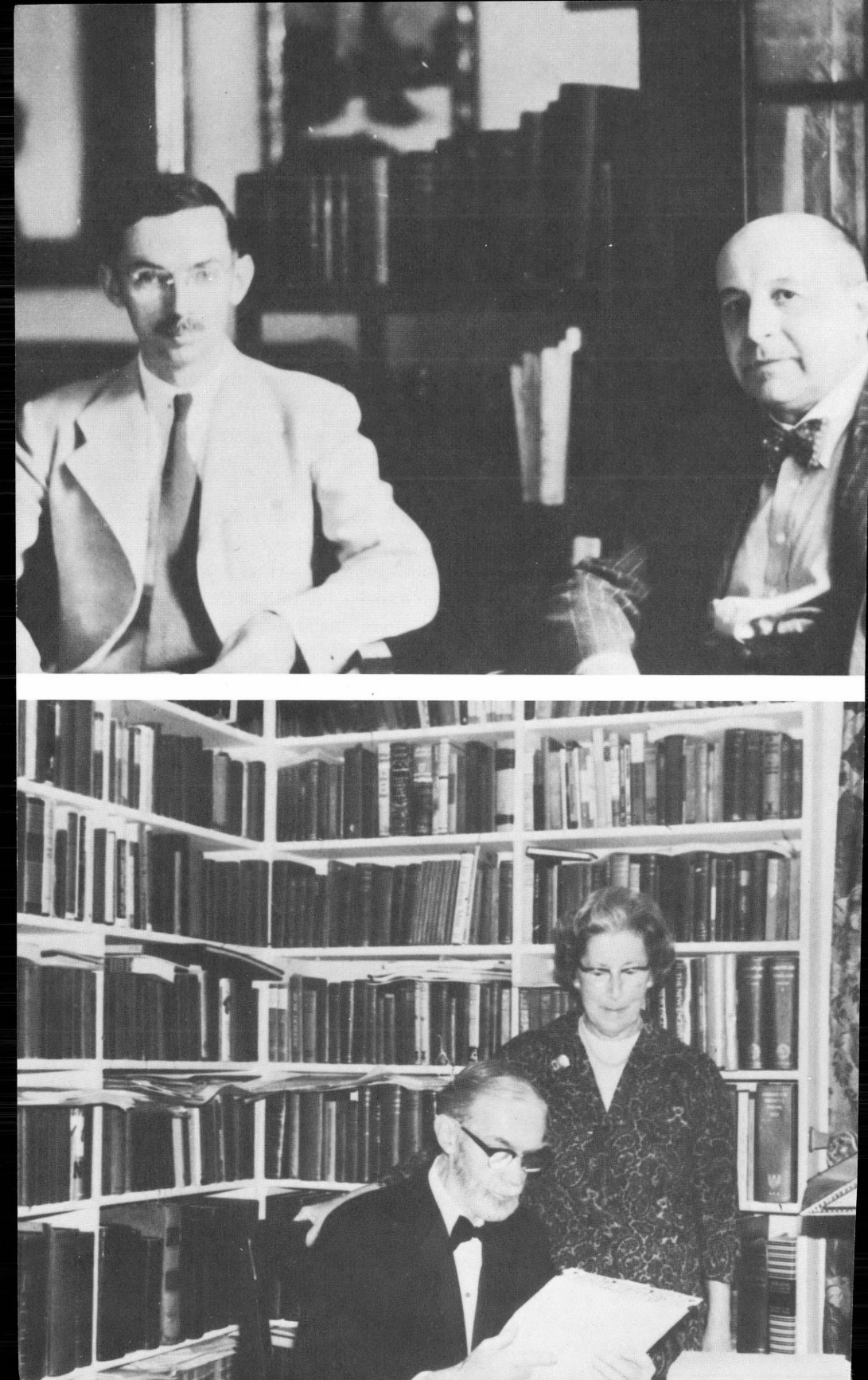
fifteen minutes, and spent the rest of the hour versifying the translation. He found that the "metre flowed" from his pen "almost as freely as prose."[10] But this incident did not inspire a systematic effort at verse translation. It was only during the second half of the 1920's that he became involved in translating European verse into English and developed intimate ties with Canadians of European background. Kirkconnell's first encounter with New Canadians came in 1922, when on his return voyage from England he found himself surrounded by immigrants from many parts of Europe. Scattered throughout this large group, comprising mainly agricultural workers, Kirkconnell found several well-educated refugees from Eastern Europe's civil wars and revolutions.[11] He was apparently impressed and took an interest in them but after arriving in Canada lost contact with them.

In September of the same year, Kirkconnell began his teaching career in Winnipeg. During his first three years in this busy centre of immigrant life, the young university teacher did not develop close contacts with New Canadians. What led to Kirkconnell's life-long friendship with Canada's European immigrants was involvement in verse translation.

Kirkconnell turned to this type of scholarly activity for solace when his wife died after giving birth to twin sons. In the lonely, long months that followed, Kirkconnell made plans for translating samples of Europe's best poetry into English "as a memorial" to his departed wife.[12] This was a monumental plan, beset by many difficulties, not the least of which was the lack of suitable grammar books and dictionaries. Kirkconnell was also saddled with incredulous publishers who at first refused to believe that anyone could master scores of foreign languages, and translate the poetry of numerous European nations. Only after internationally recognized experts of European linguistics ascertained the quality of Kirkconnell's translations was a publisher found. Kirkconnell's first volume of verse translation, *European Elegies*, appeared in 1928.

A Philosophy of Ethnic Relations

At first, verse translating served Kirkconnell only one purpose: it helped to "deaden the pain of great bereavement."[13] But soon the task assumed greater significance. As he expressed it in his memoirs: "it opened doors for me into new worlds of imaginative experience."[14] It also launched Kirkconnell's career as a verse translator. This activity gained him new acquaintances, initially mainly among the academic



and literary elite in several European countries. But in time, it also led to his close and life-long association with New Canadians, and among them, Hungarians.

Kirkconnell was first attracted to the Icelandic community of Manitoba. Two of his Wesley College friends, Skuli Johnson and Olafur Anderson, were Canadian-Icelanders; so were many of Kirkconnell's students. The College library was well stocked with books on Icelandic grammar, poetry and literature. It is not surprising that the first volume in Kirkconnell's projected series of translations from the national poetries of European peoples was the *North American Book of Icelandic Verse* (New York: Carrier and Iles, 1930). "My anthology," wrote Kirkconnell many years later, "proved to be a key to the hearts of the Canadian Icelanders."[15]

Closer links with the world of immigrant ethnics wrought a change in Kirkconnell's approach to popularizing the European cultural achievement. His first work in the field of verse translation, *European Elegies,* had a potential to serve the interests of Canadians of European background, but this had not been Kirkconnell's original purpose. The young scholar's subsequent publications had different motives. In his next general work, *The European Heritage* (London and Toronto: J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1930), Kirkconnell deliberately set out to combat ignorance, the "mother of intolerance," as he put it in the volume's preface. He wrote further:

> Saxon and Slav, Norseman and Celt, all have gifts that have been proved great in the annals of civilization; but sincere co-operation, whether in the New World or in the Old, becomes humanly possible only as men realize the worth of their fellow men.[16]

The volume, some two hundred pages of appreciative comments about the cultural achievements of European nations, undoubtedly generated a warm respect for European cultures in the hearts of his readers. Such sentiments were bound to benefit Canada's European immigrants.

In addition to writing a survey of European history, Kirkconnell began publicising the works of New Canadian poets.[17] His most substantial publication dealing with this poetry was *Canadian Overtones* (Winnipeg: Columbia Press, 1935), an anthology of verse translated

Illustrations on the opposite page, top: Kirkconnell and Tivadar Edl in Budapest, 1938. Bottom: Watson and Hope Kirkconnell in their Wolfville, Nova Scotia home, ca. 1976.

from the "Canadian poetry" of Icelandic, Swedish, Norwegian, Hungarian, Italian, Greek and Ukrainian poets. The preface identified Kirkconnell's purpose: to "reveal to English-speaking Canadians a transient but intensely significant phase" of Canada's national literature. Then he stunned his readers by stating that, during the past three decades, the published poetry of New Canadians had exceeded in bulk "all Canadian poetry published in French; while in Western Canada . . . this unknown poetry has surpassed that of Anglo-Canadians both in quantity and in quality."[18] Kirkconnell also used the preface to explain his own views on ethnic-native relations. He observed that Canadian attitudes toward immigrants had passed through two "ignorant and discreditable phases." At first many Canadians considered immigrants as "European coolies", who were good only for back-breaking work that no one else wanted to perform. Later, Canadians showed a patronizing interest in the newcomers' folk-costumes and folk-dances, aspects of their culture which were no more than "picturesque incidentals which have about as much vital share in their lives as the kilt and the Highland fling have in that of the average Scotch-Canadian." Kirkconnell hoped that by knowing of New Canadian poetry, the native-born would develop a "third and much truer attitude" towards these people as "beings breathing thoughtful breath."[19]

In the preface to *Canadian Overtones* Kirkconnell revealed, for the first time, his concept of a Canadian multi-ethnic identity. New Canadian poetry would help to develop in future generations of Canadians a "Canadianism nourished by pride in the individual's racial past." A person with an awareness of his ancestry and pride in his forebears' achievements was a better citizen of his country. "As a Canadian, he is not poorer but richer because he realizes his place in a notable stream of human relationship down through the centuries."[20] Kirkconnell had only contempt for the person who denied his ancestry. He who claimed to be "one hundred per cent" Canadian "is commonly one who has deliberately suppressed an alien origin in order to keep the material benefits of a well-advertized loyalty." There was no chance of "noble spiritual issues from such a prostituted patriotism." It was regrettable that this type of behaviour was encouraged by the "ignorant assumption" of many English-Canadians that an alien origin was the "mark of inferiority." "He who thinks thus," Kirkconnell continued, "is a mental hooligan."[21]

Kirkconnell realized that the development of a general Canadian multi-ethnic awareness could only come through a change in public

attitudes to immigrant minority cultures. This change could be achieved only with the help of civic and educational institutions:

> Our national holidays might well be given over to such pageantry (including, perhaps festivals of drama, poetry, and music) as would emphasize the co-operative existence of the distinct racial groups in our population. Our schools might give ample recognition to their history and culture. Our universities might foster their languages and literatures. . .[22]

He also believed that the state had a responsibility in preserving the "full potentialities of our several peoples."[23] In expressing this view, Kirkconnell anticipated by some four decades the concept of government-supported multicultural programmes.

The Hungarians of Winnipeg

By the time Kirkconnell developed these basic ideas about ethnic-native relations and a multicultural Canadian identity, he was in increasingly close contact with the Hungarian community in Canada, particularly with the growing and important Hungarian colony in Winnipeg. During the 1920's Winnipeg, that growing, polyglot prairie metropolis, was the largest centre of Canada's "new immigration". It was here that the masses of freshly arrived immigrants rested before setting out for their homesteads on the edge of Canada's ever expanding frontier of agricultural settlement. But while the newcomers were moving toward the fringes of the prairies, other immigrants were making their way to the city: disappointed farmers, labourers, craftsmen and merchants who had somehow entered Canada despite Ottawa's restrictions on non-agricultural immigrants.

By the time Kirkconnell's professional career had begun, Winnipeg was the busiest urban centre for Canada's Hungarian community. Magyar immigrants had started to settle in the city at the turn of the century. During the next two decades their numbers increased. By the mid-1920's they had a few organizations of their own, including a Presbyterian congregation, a Roman Catholic parish, and a sick-benefit insurance society. Other clubs, serving social and recreational purposes, would spring up a few years later. This community soon became one of the most influential in Canada and produced what may be called Canada's Hungarian elite. Steamship and railway ticket agents, priests and ministers as well as other members of the very small New Canadian middle class frequented the city and settled there as circumstances permitted. Even more important, from the point of view of the Hun-

garian community of Western Canada, was the establishment of a permanent weekly newspaper, the *Kanadai Magyar Újság (Canadian Hungarian News).*[24] Toward the end of the decade, the Royal Hungarian Consulate opened in the city. These events established Winnipeg as the undisputed centre for the intellectual and political life of Canada's Hungarian community.

Translating Hungarian Poetry

The development of cultural and intellectual life within Winnipeg's Hungarian community and Professor Kirkconnell's work in verse translation made contact between the young scholar and the city's Hungarian elite inevitable. Indeed, it was Kirkconnell's prolific activities in this field that attracted the attention of Béla Báchkai Payerle of the *Canadian Hungarian News.* Having read Kirkconnell's translations from Magyar in *European Elegies,* Payerle encouraged Kirkconnell to publish a separate volume of verse translation from Hungarian. Payerle would assist with deciphering the original Magyar text. In 1930 this venture resulted in a manuscript entitled "North American Book of Magyar Verse."[25] Since the Depression brought many publishers to near ruin or bankruptcy, the volume's publication became impossible for the time being. Installments were printed in the *Canadian Hungarian News,* and later in Payerle's English-language magazine, the *Young Magyar-American.* A small anthology of poems was published as "A Magyar Miscellany" in the prestigious, London based, learned journal, the *Slavonic and East European Review.* Little is known about the reactions of Hungarian-Canadians to Kirkconnell's translations, but the response from Hungary was positive. Congratulatory letters came from poets and scholars, and in 1932 one of the Hungarian learned socieites, the Petőfi Társaság, elected Kirkconnell to honorary membership.[26]

Meanwhile, the obstacles blocking more ambitious publication schemes were being slowly overcome. In 1932 Lord Rothermere, the English newspaper publisher, visited Winnipeg and contributed $200 to defray the cost of printing Kirkconnell's collection of Magyar poetry. The Hungarian government advanced $500 for 500 copies intended for distribution in Hungary. The Hungarian Consul in Winnipeg, István J. Schefbeck (Petényi) also made a cash contribution. The noted Hungarian writer, Ferenc Herczeg, lent his prestige by writing the introduction. Payerle did the typesetting with his own hands, gratis. In January 1933, *The Magyar Muse* at last became available.[27]

During the next several years, additional translations from Magyar poetry followed. Work was started on the expansion of *The Magyar Muse* into a two-volume manuscript, intended for a new, enlarged edition. A translation of János Arany's epic, *The Death of King Buda,* was published in 1936 with the help of the Cleveland-based Benjamin Franklin Bibliographical Society, an organization dedicated to publishing books on Hungarian subjects. The translation of Arany's epic was followed by a work on Hungarian grammar, *Primer of Hungarian,* published in installments in Payerle's *Young Magyar-American.* Then came still more studies and translations, published from time to time in the *Slavonic and East European Review,* and elsewhere.[28]

In 1936 Kirkconnell helped in the launching of the *Hungarian Quarterly.* The journal was the brain-child of Count István Bethlen, one of Hungary's elder statesmen. Its primary purpose was to offer the British and North American reading public a journal which would convey information on Hungary's cultural life, political problems, and aspirations. Kirkconnell was one of the journal's first contributors. His article, "Hungary's Linguistic Isolation," expressed the hope that the periodical would serve as an "open window," through which the world could "gaze into Hungary's lonely tower of linguistic isolation" and see there "the vital personality of a gifted people."[29]

With the blessing and financial backing of individuals and institutions in Hungary, the *Hungarian Quarterly* prospered for several years. The Second World War saw its demise. Since then, attempts to revive it have failed primarily because of the lack of adequate financial resources. Although more than a generation has passed since the original *Hungarian Quarterly* folded, it has yet to be replaced by another periodical of the same scope and quality, and dedicated to similar ideals.[30]

During and after the Second World War new concerns, additional duties and changed circumstances prevented Kirkconnell from devoting as much time and effort to verse translation from Hungarian as before. His work continued, but more sporadically. In 1947, an anthology, "Little Treasury of Hungarian Verse," appeared, followed more than a decade later by translations of the Premonstratensian canon László Mécs's poetry. Next came an anthology of the "freedom fighter" poetry of "Tibor Tollas" and others. But systematic work in this field could not be undertaken until after Kirkconnell's resignation from the Presidency of Acadia University in 1964. In 1967, he completed one of his old projects, a translation of Arany's *Toldi.* He also started work on still another, more complete anthology of Magyar verse. Next fol-

lowed translations from other, more recent Hungarian poets, such as Dezső Kosztolányi, Lajos Kassák, Milán Füst, József Erdélyi, Lőrinc Szabó, Gyula Illyés, Sándor Weöres, Attila József, Zoltán Zelk, Miklós Radnóti, István Vas and Ferenc Juhász.[31]

Kirkconnell's aides and collaborators in this massive work were Payerle and his wife, and a post-1945 arrival, Maxim Tábory. His scholarly "mentors" in this period were three émigré academics: Dr. George Gömöri of Darwin College, Cambridge; Dr. Ádám Makkai, of the University of Illinois; and Dr. George Buday from England. The new anthology, comprising some 1,200 pages in manuscript, was completed in 1973. Its publication by the University of Toronto Press would have cost $28,000, which made publication commercially unfeasible.[32] A request for a grant from the multicultural programme of the Department of the Secretary of State in Ottawa has been supported by a number of Hungarian cultural organisations, but the quest has not been successful thus far.

Political Writings

During and after the Second World War, Professor Kirkconnell became involved in a very different kind of literary activity. Realizing the importance of the burning issue of the age, he plunged into political controversies and produced a series of books dealing mainly with the menace of totalitarian ideologies, the attitudes of New Canadians to political radicalism, and the Canadian war-effort. This type of writing was probably considered unbecoming to a scholar of classics and literatures. Undoubtedly Kirkconnell earned the disdain of some of his academic colleagues who preferred to weather the storm in the isolation of the "ivory towers" of the universities. In a way, however, Kirkconnell's wartime writings were not a major departure from his pre-war work; his polemical tracts helped New Canadians, just as his verse translations had during the 1930's. Both activities helped to gain respect for Canada's European immigrants.

One of the factors which prompted Kirkconnell to embark on political writing was his desire to confront and combat the growing influence of international Communism in Canada. He became aware of this danger during his residence in Winnipeg, a city reputedly the centre of radical leftist activities in inter-war Canada. Some of this reputation was well deserved; the city had its share of radical activists, but at no time was it ripe for a Bolshevik revolution *à la* 1917 — not even in 1919, during the notorious general strike. Radical influence in Winnipeg

seems to have been inversely related to the economic prosperity of the city's populace. Radicalism waxed during the post-war slump, and waned during the prosperous mid- and late 1920's, only to re-emerge with a vengeance during the Depression. Indeed, during a public lecture at the University of Manitoba during the early 1930's Kirkconnell encountered a "solid platoon of Communist hecklers" in his audience. They obviously disagreed with what he had to say on "How Russia is Governed."[33]

Kirkconnell's war of words against Canada's Communists did not start in earnest until the outbreak of the Second World War. From the fall of 1939 until the spring of 1941, he condemned the Communist Party's attitude toward the Canadian war effort. This was the period of Nazi-Soviet collaboration, initiated by the Molotov-Ribbentrop Non-Aggression Pact of August 1939. During this time, the Communist Party of Canada refused to support Canada's war effort, evidently on orders from Moscow, and, indeed, engaged in anti-war propaganda. Kirkconnell assailed the Communists in three of his wartime books: *Canada, Europe and Hitler* (1939), *Twilight of Liberty* (1941) and *Seven Pillars of Freedom* (1944). He also warned about the Communists' real aim: "Whatever the outcome" of the war in Europe, he predicted in 1941, the Communists will work "for the break-up of the present order in North America. . . ."[34]

It is difficult to judge the Canadian public's reactions to these statements. Some of Kirkconnell's contemporaries who had not already been convinced of the Communist menace probably remained incredulous and did not believe him until 1945 when Igor Gouzenko revealed the existence of an extensive Soviet espionage network in North America. The Communists' reactions to Kirkconnell's wartime writings were emphatic and vociferous. Canada's Moscow-controlled press, comprising nearly a dozen newspapers published in almost as many languages, denounced him as an agent of Nazi Propaganda Chief Goebbels, and ridiculed him in numerous tasteless cartoons.[35]

The Hungarian language newspapers of the Communist Party of Canada participated fully in the campaign of vituperations against Kirkconnell. The war of words between the outspoken professor and the Hungarian Communists had started in 1943 when Kirkconnell refuted the public claim by Steve Szőke, editor of the *Kanadai Magyar Munkás (Canadian Hungarian Worker)* that his paper was not a Communist Party organ. Against this assertion Kirkconnell cited a 1931 resolution of the Communist Party of Canada which established the *Munkás* as one of the party's mouth-pieces.[36] After this exchange,

which took place in the pages of the popular weekly *Saturday Night*, the editors of Canada's Hungarian-language Communist press refrained from further public debate with Kirkconnell and contented themselves with name-calling. In 1944 they called Kirkconnell a "mad dog," and asserted that his *Seven Pillars of Freedom* contained all the "crafty intrigue, perversion and falsehood of this notorious professor."[37]

Whereas Kirkconnell's anti-Communist writings were designed mainly to warn the Canadian public against the dangers of a Moscow-controlled Left, some of his other pronouncements during these years served to help Canada's immigrant minorities. Many Canadians still regarded central and eastern European immigrants with suspicion. Such suspicions were particularly widespread during periods of crisis. In the troubled 1930's, for example, radical tendencies intensified among most Canadian groups, especially the country's immigrants. This is not surprising, because these people tended to suffer the most. It was the most recent arrivals who were least equipped to cope with economic difficulties and psychological stress. Indeed, it is a wonder that not more immigrants became radicalized. But the few who did were noisy; and they confirmed many native Canadians' suspicions and increased their fear of all immigrants.

The outbreak of the Second World War heightened these suspicions. Many native Canadians would not believe that immigrants from enemy countries could be depended upon to support the Canadian war-effort. Hungarians were included among those suspected of latent disloyalty, even though their home country was late and reluctant in joining the Axis war-effort, and Hungarian-Canadians repeatedly declared their loyalty to Canada.[38] But the general public did not believe such declarations. Fortunately for Canada's Magyar residents, Professor Kirkconnell undertook the task of convincing his fellow countrymen that Hungarians, like Canada's other central European immigrants, were neither dangerous radicals nor potentially disloyal subjects.

Kirkconnell devoted more than a third of his book, *Canada, Europe and Hitler*, to this subject. He conceded that Canadians of continental European descent, unlike their English-speaking compatriots, had no particular affection for Britain. But Kirkconnell maintained that this fact did not mean that these immigrants were disloyal to Canada. In fact, their allegiance, like that of French-Canadians, was first and foremost to Canada. A thorough examination of the public and press statements of Canada's ethnic groups of European background led Kirkconnell to conclude that:

> While some of the groups have been seriously exposed to the propaganda of Communism and Fascism, and a minority among them have even succumbed to such external pressure, the majority, by reason of these very attempts at penetration, are all the better aware of the challenge to democracy and liberty involved in the rise of Hitler.[39]

New Canadians in general, and Hungarian-Canadians in particular, were fortunate during the war to have had a spokesman like Kirkconnell.

Popularizing New Canadian Literatures

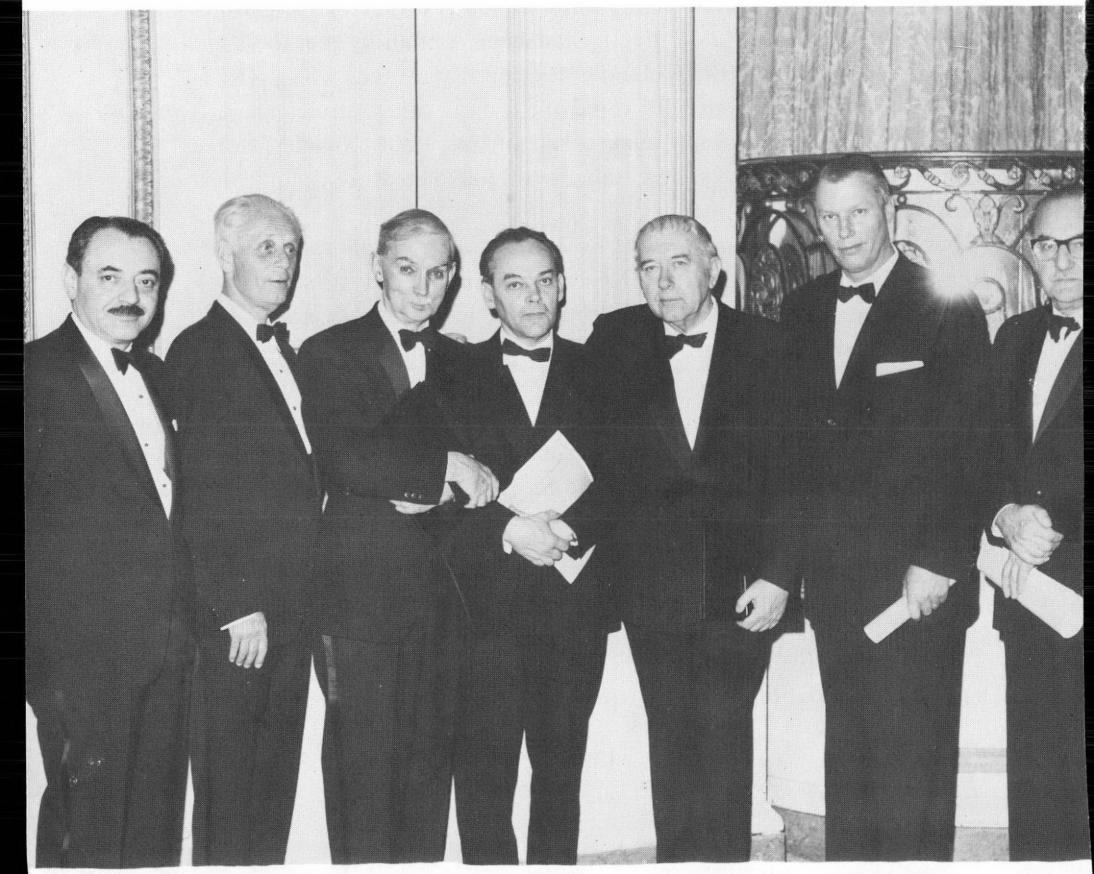
Still another way in which Professor Kirkconnell assisted Canadians of European background was to encourage and popularize the works of immigrant poets and writers. He himself discovered the richness of the virtually unknown non-English and non-French Canadian literature almost by accident. Canadian texts of literary history and criticism never even mentioned works written in other than English or French. The country's immigrants were presumed to have no literary tradition of their own. But Kirkconnell found that a section of Wesley College's library was filled with books and journals written in Icelandic, produced by authors in both Iceland and Canada. Further investigation revealed that much Icelandic poetry had been written by members of Manitoba's compact little Icelandic community. Later, when Kirkconnell acquainted himself with some of the city's other ethnic groups, he realized that Winnipeg's Magyars, Ukrainians, Poles, Swedes, Norwegians, Germans, Greeks, and Italians were also creating their "considerable literatures."[40]

The discovery of a new, wealthy branch of Canadian literature prompted Kirkconnell to study New Canadian letters systematically. He began to amass his own collection of literature produced by Canada's European immigrants, to seek out their poets and writers, and to start accumulating biographical and bibliographical information on them. In 1935 he published an anthology of New Canadian poetry, to be followed by a series of studies on New Canadian *belles lettres,* published mainly in the *University of Toronto Quarterly*. In his memoirs, Professor Kirkconnell evaluated the literature of New Canadians as follows:

> Taken together, these minor literatures present an unrivalled picture of human predicament, of lives uprooted from a country and planted afresh with difficulty in Canadian soil.[41]

The volume of this literature was so extensive that, by the time he retired


GEORGE WASHINGTON AWARD
DR. WATSON KIRKCONNELL



from teaching in 1968, Kirkconnell had accumulated some 2,000 volumes of New Canadian books. The priceless collection has been recently deposited in Acadia University's library.[42]

Only a small proportion of this collection consists of works written by Hungarian-Canadian authors. The earlier volumes include the poets Gyula Izsák, Sarolta Petényi, and Rózsa Páll Kovács, as well as the journalist Gusztáv Nemes and the historian Pál Sántha. The post-1956 collection of Hungarian works is more voluminous. It is filled by the poetical works of Ferenc Fáy, András Tamás, Márton Kerecsendi Kis, and others, the anthologies published by the Canadian Hungarian Authors' Association (Kanadai Magyar Irók Köre) under the editorship of János Miska, as well as other works published by Hungarian authors in Canada often with the help of such organizations as the Calgary-based Széchenyi Society and the Helicon Society of Toronto.[43]

Expressions of Gratitude

During his long and distinguished career Professor Kirkconnell had been honoured by universities, learned societies, governments and civic and ethnic organizations. He had been awarded honorary degrees by over a dozen Canadian and European universities. Decorations and other honours were bestowed on him by the Order of the Icelandic Falcon, the Order of Polonia Restituta, the Royal Society of Canada, the Polish Academy of Literature, the French Historical Institute, the Humanities Research Council of Canada and other learned societies and civic associations.

Hungarians have also paid tribute to him. Kirkconnell's verse translations of Magyar poetry earned him homage from many poets and scholars in Hungary.[44] Following his invitation to join Hungary's Petőfi Society in 1932, another literary academy, the Kisfaludy Society, also voted him membership. This Society also bestowed on Kirkconnell its

Illustrations on the opposite page, top: Kirkconnell receiving the American Hungarian (Studies) Foundation's George Washington Award at the Plaza Hotel, New York City, April, 1967. Watson Kirkconnell and Zoltán Gombos. Bottom: Kirkconnell and other celebrities at the same function: from left to right: Paul A. Radnay, Hans Selye, Watson Kirkconnell, György Kepes, Marcel Bauer, Donald S. Harrington, Alexander Nekam. Photography by Bela Cseh, New York.

"Medal of Honour" for eminent work in Hungarian literature outside of Hungary. In 1938 he was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Debrecen during that institution's quatercentenary celebrations.[45]

With the coming of the war and the installation in Hungary of a regime hostile to Kirkconnell's political ideals, paying further homage to his person was no longer possible there. Hungarians elsewhere continued to show their appreciation. Soon after the 1956 Revolution, Winnipeg's Hungarian Literary Society made him an honorary member. Soon thereafter, Toronto's Helicon Society presented him with a medal at one of its gala affairs. After the ceremonies Professor Kirkconnell demonstrated that his gifts were not confined to the realm of scholarship and writing: he also had a talent for dancing the *csárdás*.[46] Still later came the Gold Medal of Freedom, awarded to Kirkconnell by the Hungarian Freedom Fighter Association. And in 1967, at a banquet in New York City's Plaza Hotel, he was presented with the George Washington medallion of the American Hungarian Foundation.[47]

These honours have been undoubtedly only a partial expression of the North American Hungarian community's gratitude. Further statements and deeds of appreciation came from private individuals, acquaintances, and scholars; mostly from men of a generation which, like Kirkconnell himself, had known another Hungary and had learned to appreciate poetry and literature. It remains to be seen whether a new generation of Hungarian-Canadians will cherish Kirkconnell's work as much as the old did. Hopefully, it will. After all, thanks to his work, the descendants of immigrants will have a chance to read the poetry of their ancestral land long after they have forgotten the language of their forefathers.

An Appreciation

During his long career, Professor Kirkconnell displayed a boundless capacity for work, and a limitless interest in Canadian public affairs. His accomplishments in the field of Hungarian poetry and literature and his involvement with Hungarians in Canada and elsewhere constituted only one aspect of a career filled with constant activity and a great variety of achievements. For Hungarian-Canadians the results of this small aspect of his work were very significant. In the realm of poetry, Kirkconnell functioned as an interpreter of the Hungarian nation's soul, not only to Canadians, but to the whole Anglo-Saxon world. His verse translations and other scholarly writings brought the literary genius of

Magyar poets and writers to the reading public of Canada and other English-speaking countries. This has substantially helped to enhance the Magyars' reputation in this country and elsewhere.

The improvement of the reputation of Hungarians was particularly important in Canada where, until recent times, the general public regarded immigrants from central and eastern Europe with a great deal of reserve and even disdain. Given the natural proclivity of the native-born in any country to receive newcomers with suspicion, the Canadian public's lack of confidence in and respect for immigrant groups is understandable. These attitudes were just another difficulty newcomers had to endure. For the sake of a healthier atmosphere in Canada's political, civic and social life, these attitudes had to be eliminated sooner or later.

The overcoming of nativistic antagonisms towards immigrants was a difficult process. Each newcomer individually and each ethnic group collectively had to prove to the native-born that, far from constituting a threat, immigrants were an asset to Canada's economic, political and cultural life. In this struggle for acceptance some newcomers were helped by the fact that they could learn English or French faster because their own mother tongues were similar. Other groups may have had a reputation established in agriculture, or craftsmanship, or business, or arts and culture, even before their members began migrating to Canada in large numbers. Hungarians were not so fortunate. Magyar is a Ural-Altaic language, hence Hungarian newcomers tended to learn English or French more slowly than immigrants speaking Germanic or Romance languages. Canadians knew nothing or next to nothing about Hungary's culture, and could learn little about it from poorly educated peasants who rarely learned more than a few words of English. Educated Hungarians were, on the whole, not admitted to Canada until after 1945, and those who managed to land here despite regulations had little time to preach the excellence of their people's cultural heritage. Until the post-World War II period, moreover, Canada's Hungarians lived in isolation, or at best, in scattered, small communities, which were unable to generate a cultural life which would gain the appreciation of the public at large. Unable to prove their value and their cultural equality to the native-born population, Canadians of Hungarian background survived the first half of the twentieth century as victims of nativistic prejudice, and subsisted as second-class citizens in a land of freedom and plenty. For most of them it was a difficult and degrading experience. As a result of a combination of factors, gradually their lot improved. No doubt, one of these factors was the work of Watson Kirkconnell.

The extent of Kirkconnell's success in modifying Canadian attitudes to European immigrant groups cannot be assessed with any degree of certainty. But it is true that these minorities received better treatment during the Second World War than they did during the First. This was no doubt partly the result of Kirkconnell's work. His memoirs reveal that during the war many "Anglo-Canadians" favored the closing down of the entire ethnic press.[48] That this did not happen was probably the result of Kirkconnell's emphatic statements, made especially at the outset of the war, that all European immigrant groups were loyal to Canada. Rather than branding Germans, Italians and Hungarians "enemy aliens", and restricting their freedoms, the Canadian government established the Committee on Co-operation in Canadian Citizenship. The Committee, working under the jurisdiction of the Department of War Services, aimed at fostering good relations with all European immigrant ethnic groups. Though not an "insider" in Canadian decision-making during the war, Kirkconnell probably exerted considerable influence with policy-makers in Ottawa. That senior officials respected his views is indicated by the fact that he was consulted in the planning of what later became the Citizenship Branch of the Department of the Secretary of State. In fact, when the bureau was established, he was offered its directorship. It is characteristic of Kirkconnell's love for the unhindered exchange of views that he declined the honour. As an academic he would retain greater freedom to speak out on national issues.[49]

After the war, Ottawa's more enlightened attitudes toward ethnic groups gained expression in the policy adopted regarding the ready admission of central and eastern European immigrants. Indeed, during the late 1940's and the early 1950's thousands of so-called Displaced Persons came to Canada to escape war-torn Europe's harsh conditions. Many of these were Hungarians. Their arrival greatly augmented the numerical strength of Canada's Magyar community. The fact that many of the newcomers were educated professionals helped to enhance the standard of the cultural life of Hungarian clubs and associations throughout Canada. It is not surprising that the 1950's saw the genesis of what will probably be remembered as the Golden Age of the Canadian-Magyar ethnic group: the post-1956 decades.

By this time Kirkconnell had retired from active public life. Troubled by advanced age, poor health, and deteriorating eyesight, he no longer had the strength to participate in public controversies. Despite these handicaps, however, he continued his verse translations and scholarly writing, and to assist his Magyar friends in every way possible. Indica-

tive of his helpful attitude and unwavering faith in Canada's Hungarian-Canadian community was his response to the planned launching of an English-language journal dealing with Hungary and Hungarians on a scholarly level: the *Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies*. Whereas many Hungarian academics refrained from associating themselves with a venture the success of which could not be guaranteed in advance, Professor Kirkconnell shelved every doubt and much more urgent projects, and promptly produced an article for the *Review*. A year later, when asked to become the journal's honorary editor, he consented without hesitation or delay.

The achievements of many men are not appreciated during their lifetime. To some extent, this is true of Professor Kirkconnell's work. True, he has been showered with honours and distinctions; but most of these expressions of thanks and appreciation were extended in recognition of his literary and scholarly activities. But the significance of Kirkconnell's work exceeds the realm of literature and poetry. This is especially true as far as Hungarian-Canadians are concerned. He has served us not only as the translator of the Magyar nation's soul to the English-speaking world; he has been one of the most dedicated and most effective benefactors of the Hungarian-Canadian community as well.

NOTES

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1. Quoted by R. C. Brown and R. Cook, *Canada 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974), p. 28.
2. Quoted *ibid.*, p. 74.
3. H. B. Neatby, *The Politics of Chaos, Canada in the Thirties* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1972), p. 28.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
5. Under the heading "Hungarian" the 1911 census included not only all former residents of the multinational Kingdom of Hungary, but Lithuanians and Moravians as well.
6. *Ibid.*, 1 June 1937. On learning of its mistake, the company apologized and lifted its restrictions.
7. For a general work on the subject of prejudices in Canada see David R. Hughes and Evelyn Kallen, *The Anatomy of Racism: Canadian Dimensions* (Montreal: Harvest House, 1974).

8. S. Leacock, "Canada and the Immigration Problem," *National and English Review*, April 1911, pp. 316-37. Partially reprinted in Howard Palmer (ed.) *Immigration and the Rise of Multiculturalism* (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1975), pp. 46-51.
9. Watson Kirkconnell, *A Slice of Canada: Memoirs* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), Chapters I and II.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 259.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
13. Watson Kirkconnell, *European Elegies* (Ottawa: Graphic Publishers, 1928), p. 9.
14. Kirkconnell, *A Slice of Canada*, p. 59.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 263.
16. Watson Kirkconnell, *The European Heritage: A Synopsis of European Cultural Achievement* (London and Toronto: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1930), p. v.
17. Kirkconnell's addresses relating to New Canadian themes which he delivered before learned societies were his lecture "A Skald in Canada," delivered before a meeting of the Royal Society of Canada, and "The European-Canadians in Their Press," read before a meeting of the Canadian Historical Association. There was also his article "Canada's Leading Poet, Stephan G. Stephansson, 1853-1927," *University of Toronto Quarterly*, Vol. II (January, 1936).
18. Kirkconnell, *Canadian Overtones*, p. 3.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
23. *Ibid.*
24. The *Kanadai Magyar Újság* was founded in Kipling, Saskatchewan in the early 1920's. Later it moved to Winnipeg. Watson Kirkconnell, "A Canadian Meets the Magyars," *Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies* I (Spring and Fall 1974): 1. Previous Hungarian newspapers in Canada, the *Canadai Magyar Farmer* [Canadian Magyar Farmer] and the *Kanadai Magyarság* [Canadian Hungarian] proved ephemeral. The *Kanadai Magyar Újság*, which for many years appeared as a semi-weekly, was published for over half a century before it had to fold because of decreasing revenues and increasing labour and postal costs.
25. Kirkconnell, "A Canadian," p. 2. *A Slice of Canada*, p. 62.
26. Kirkconnell, *A Slice of Canada*, p. 62.
27. *Ibid.*
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 62f.
29. Quoted in Kirkconnell in "A Canadian," p. 5. Later contributions by Kirkconnell to the journal were included in two articles: "The Poetry of Ady" (Autumn 1937) and "Quintessence of Hungary" (Autumn 1938).
30. The *Hungarian Quarterly* was revived in the United States during the early 1960's, but it did not succeed in attaining the respect of North America's academic community. Another journal, the *Hungarian Historical Review* (1969-), lacks an adequate institutional affiliation and publishes studies relating predominantly to Hungarian protohistory. On this subject see Steven Béla Vardy, *Hungarian Studies at American and Canadian Universities* (Ottawa: Hungarian Readers' Service, 1975), reprinted from the *Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies*, 2 (Autumn 1975).
31. Kirkconnell, "A Canadian," p. 11.
32. *Ibid.*

33. Kirkconnell, *A Slice of Canada,* pp. 315f.
34. Quoted *ibid.,* p. 316.
35. *Ibid.,* pp. 316-318.
36. Kirkconnell, "A Canadian," p. 8. *Saturday Night,* 9 January 1943.
37. Quoted in *A Slice of Canada,* p. 318.
38. Hungary's involvement in the Second World War has been the subject of a great number of studies. For a detailed, classic treatment see C.A. Macartney, *October Fifteenth: A History of Modern Hungary, 1929-1945* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1961), 2 vols. For a briefer account see my *Hungary's Way to World War II* (Toronto: Helicon Society, 1968).
39. Watson Kirkconnell, *Canada, Europe and Hitler* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1939), p. 117.
40. Kirkconnell, *A Slice of Canada,* p. 75.
41. *Ibid.,* p. 75f.
42. Letter, Mrs. Hope Kirkconnell to the author, June, 1977.
43. Kirkconnell, "A Canadian," p. 10.
44. For a partial list of these persons see *ibid.,* p. 3.
45. For a full text of Kirkconnell's "diploma" see "A Canadian," pp. 6f.
46. Dr. Ferenc Harcsár, then President of the Helicon Society, to the author.
47. Kirkconnell, "A Canadian," p. 9.
48. Kirkconnell, *A Slice of Canada,* p. 119.
49. Kirkconnell, "A Canadian," p. 8.

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Madách Revisited: Toward a New Translation of the *Tragedy of Man*

Thomas R. Mark

Imre Madách's *The Tragedy of Man* was published in 1861. The following year János Erdélyi launched a full-scale attack on the work in a lengthy essay and thereby precipitated a critical controversy that has continued to our own day. What precisely is the meaning of the fifteen scenes that constitute this strange dramatic poem – in form, a mystery play that traces in a traditional manner the history of Christian salvation from the beginning of creation to the end of the world; in content, an ever-darkening series of vignettes demonstrating the successive defeat and ultimate death of all human aspirations? And then there was the matter of the work's style: halting meters and irregular versification; awkward turns of phrase and unidiomatic constructions; dialectal provincialisms and archaic diction. The constantly recurring charge was that the poet of *The Tragedy* was dwarfed by the thinker. The fact remains that, when *The Tragedy* was staged in 1883 at the National Theater in Budapest, it became an immediate stage success. The dramatic poem thus became a poetic drama. Thus, whatever the stylistic shortcomings of Madách's work, its tantalizing ambiguities, its propulsive momentum, and its cumulative emotional intensity swept before it all adverse criticism. By 1963, at the National Theater alone (not counting the provinces), *The Tragedy of Man* received a thousand performances; it also became a required part of the curricula of most secondary schools. In brief, Madách's work acquired the status of a national classic, both as poetic drama and as dramatic poem.[1]

How does one go about orchestrating a credible English version of such a classic? The first step is to see what previous attempts look like. There have been altogether four English versions of *The Tragedy*, the last having been published in 1963.[2] It is from this version that I quote a passage, taken from Scene XI, the London Scene. Lucifer takes Adam to task for placing faith in the progress of history:

The groaning of the slaves on Egypt's sand
Would not have reached to such a height as this;
And, save for that, how godlike was their work!
And did not once in Athens worthily,
The sovereign people, when it sacrificed
A great man, well beloved, the State to save
From peril might else have threatened it,
If we from such a height all things can view
And tears and idle doubt mar not our sight?

The objection to all this is not that it is light years away from what Madách wrote, or that it makes unintelligible what in the original is eminently clear, but that the whole thing is conceived in that peculiar pidgin English that Victorian orientalists reserved for "Englishing" the Code of Hammurabi. The first requirement, therefore, of a viable English version is that it stay true to the state of the English language of the translator's own day. This is such a truism that I need waste no time elaborating on it.

But what, for purposes of verse translation, *is* the state of English in 1977? We are still very much in that age whose American spokesman made the hero of his *A Farewell to Arms* remark about the "official" vocabulary of World War I: "I was always embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious and sacrifice and the expression in vain. . . . There were many words you could not stand to hear . . . such as glory, honor, courage or hallow. . . ." Hemingway's tight-lipped embarrassment still prevails in Anglo-American literature. Such an anti-romantic, anti-rhetorical attitude stands in contrast to the state of the Hungarian language, not just in Madách's day, but even as late as the 1920's. An anecdote about Babits, dating from the 1920's, makes the point. When asked what Hungarian poem he considered the most beautiful, Babits replied, "Shelley's 'Ode to the West Wind,' in Árpád Tóth's translation." Whether true or apocryphal, the anecdote indicates that the kind of emotional rapture, romantic intensity, and large-scaled rhetorical pathos that characterizes much of Shelley could still find a receptive audience in post-World War I Hungary. How much the more so, then, in the 1860's, when not only in Hungary but elsewhere, too — one thinks of the "serious" passages of Dickens — the oversized rhetorical gesture was an accepted part of literary convention.

Of the three major personae in *The Tragedy*, it is of course Lucifer who is the least subject to the symptoms of this rhetorical convention. I say "of course" because Lucifer, the embodiment of critical rationalism,

employs the tone and vocabulary either of a philosophical realist, or those of a mordant cynic, whose chief illusion is that he is superior to all illusions. Nor is the language of Eve particularly troublesome. Deeply involved as she is in the life of the emotions, Eve is too busy living, as it were, to give vent to what we would consider exalted sentiment. It is Adam, surely, who sets the translator the greatest challenge. Created almost for the sole purpose of being always disappointed, Adam is less a living character than an animated allegorical function, whose hopes-raised, hopes-dashed attitudes pervade *The Tragedy*. Adam's very stance, therefore, is that of an inveterate idealist, a romantic optimist, who moves from age to age, from one social order to another, always seeking the perfect institutionalization of human brotherhood, and always meeting disenchantment. Appropriately enough, his language is filled with words like "pure," "sacred," "noble," "exalted," "radiant," etc. — in brief, all the glittering verbal counters of the storehouse of nineteenth-century rhetoric. The cumulative effect of such terms and expressions is a tendency – one that a translator must somehow cope with — to endow Adam with a naivete and a kind of predictable two-dimensionality that work against his being what Madách intended him to be (and what in the Hungarian he surely *is*): the spokesman for what is best in all of us, the spokesman with whom all of us identify. For a translator to edit such Shelleyesque language out of Adam's lines would be to destroy the very essence of the figure. Accordingly, I have tried, as best I could, to retain the sum and substance of such verbal gestures, but to tone them down wherever I found it possible to do so.

In general, I set myself one major overarching goal: to convey the impact of the original by following closely Madách's own dramatic cadences, hoping thereby to achieve an English approximation of the living voices of my Hungarian model. To this end, I have relied on whatever opportunities are afforded by blank verse — the basic meter of Madách's original Hungarian — to match the English version to the Hungarian one. Too, I have relied on blank verse to give the translation a degree of elevation and a sense of remoteness that I consider the acceptable modern equivalent of Madách's own archaic eloquence. Since much of *The Tragedy* takes the form of dialogue, I thought it best to render such passages in a realistic, indeed, at times colloquial style, using lightly stressed verse, as free as possible from the declamatory — trying thereby to reproduce the easy movement of the original. And, finally, I decided, for better or worse, to render into rhyme only a small part of the lines that rhyme in the Hungarian — *The Tragedy of Man* has 4,114 lines, of which a little more than 600 are rhymed — primarily

because most such lines are imbedded in the blank verse itself, more often than not in non-strategic places, and are so unstressed in their rhymes or so arbitrary in their patterns that the reader scarcely notes their existence as rhymed lines; when he does, he frequently cannot determine whether they are deliberate or merely adventitious. Thus I retained the rhymes only in extended passages of strongly marked rhymes, and even then only if I could do so without violence to the semantic sense. Where this proved impossible, I retained the meter, but not the rhymes.

How well I have achieved my aim, I must let others judge.

SCENE I

(Heaven. The Lord, suffused with the light of glory, sits upon his throne, surrounded by the angelic host, kneeling. The four archangels stand next to the throne. Intense light.)

Chorus of Angels: We hymn hosannas to our Lord on high!
Heaven and earth exult with praise of him
whose word commanded every thing to be
and on whose glance their destiny depends.
He is the all-embracing plenitude
of knowledge and of power and of bliss;
we are but shadows of his radiance.
We glorify him for that endless grace
that granted us this share in his effulgence.
Incarnate is the great eternal thought;
behold, the consummation of creation!
From every thing that breathes, the Lord awaits
a fitting homage to his holy throne.

The Lord: The mighty work is finished — yes;
the engine turns, its maker rests.
For eons it will wheel about its axle
before one cog will need to be renewed.
Up, you guardian-spirits of my worlds, up,
inaugurate your endless orbitings,
and let me once more revel in your grace
as you traverse your rounds beneath my feet.

(To the hushed strains of the music of the spheres, the guardian spirits rush past the throne, wheeling in front of them single and double stars, comets, and nebulas of various sizes and colors.)

Chorus of Angels: Look! see that haughty globe of flame
so proudly flaunting its own light;
and yet, it only benefits
a humble stellar constellation.
But here, this tiny twinkling star
that seems to be a feeble lamp,
is yet, for myriads of creatures,
a world immeasurably great.

Two spheres contend with one another,
bearing down close, flying apart;
this grappling is the splendid brake
that curbs and guides their onward course.
Down thunders that one, striking fear
in all who view it from afar;
but in its bosom multitudes
find happiness and gentle peace.
How humbly this one bears itself:
in time to come — the Star of Love;
may it be nurtured tenderly,
a solace to the earthly race.
Out there, new worlds, as yet unborn;
in here, the tombs of dying ones:
an admonition to the vain,
a comfort to the faint of heart.
In riot and in disarray
a monstrous comet hurtles down;
but, lo! it hears the Lord's command
and sets its crooked path in order.
Come here, dear youthful spirit, come
and bring your irridescent globe
cloaked in white or verdant veils
of alternating dark and light.
Heaven's great blessings be with you!
Go onward, brave and undismayed;
within your tiny boundaries
great ideas will struggle and clash.
Though smiles and tears, the fair and ugly
will take their turns like spring and winter,
these lights and shades will constitute
the Lord's anger, the Lord's favor.

(The guardian spirits of the stars withdraw.)

Archangel Gabriel: You, who circumscribed unending space
by increating matter in the void;
who generated with a single word
all distances and magnitudes,
hosanna to you, Wisdom.

(Prostrates himself)

Archangel Michael: You, who yoked the changeless to the changing,
creating everlastingness and time,
individuals and generations,
hosanna to you, Power.

(Prostrates himself)

Archangel Raphael: You, who radiate beatitude
and summon matter to self-consciousness,
you, who consecrate the universe
communicant of your transcendent wisdom,
hosanna to you, Goodness.

(Prostrates himself)

(An extended pause)

The Lord: And you, Lucifer, standing silent, self-sufficient?
Have you nothing to say in praise of me?
Or can it be my work displeases you?

Lucifer: And what should I be pleased with? That a few
substances, clad with certain properties
that you perhaps knew nothing of
till they revealed themselves to you
— or if you did, you could not alter them —
should now be kneaded pell-mell into globes
that tug and push and jostle one another,
wake to self-awareness in a few worms,
till all of space is filled, till all is cooled,
and only the indifferent slag is left?
If man can con your trick, he too, some day
will bring this off inside his laboratory.
You, for your part, placed man in your large kitchen
and now indulge his bungling clumsiness,
his godlike posturings, his botched concoctions;
but when he comes to spoil your cookery
you'll flare up in a rage — by then, too late.
Yet what do you expect of such a dilettante?
Then again — to what end, this whole creation?
To glorify yourself you wrote a poem,

matched it to this feeble hurdy-gurdy
and listen to the same old tune
creak on and on in endless repetition.
Is it appropriate that such an elder
play games that only children can enjoy —
in which a small spark, crammed into the mud,
mimes its maker, not as faithful likeness,
but only as distorted parody;
freedom pursues fate, and all is devoid
of meaning and intelligent accord.

The Lord: Homage only, not censure, is my due.

Lucifer: I give you only what I can — my essence.
(Points to the angels)
This wretched crew here praises you enough,
and rightly so, for it was you
who gave them birth, as light does to its shade;
but I — I live from all eternity.

The Lord: Ha, insolent! were you not born of matter, too?
Where was your realm, where was your might, before?

Lucifer: I, too, might ask the same of you.

The Lord: What here is bodied forth into existence
has lived deep in my mind, time without end.

Lucifer: Among your thoughts did you not sense the void
that was the obstacle to every being
and that compelled you to create?
This obstacle was Lucifer,
the primal spirit of negation.
You overpowered me, for it's my fate
incessantly to fail in all my struggles,
but then, renewed in strength, to rise again.
You created matter, I won full scope;
side by side with life stands death,
and side by side with happiness, dejection;
by light, the shade, and doubt blights every hope.

I stand, you see, where you do — everywhere;
should I, who know you so well, bow in homage?

The Lord: Ha! seditious spirit, out of my sight!
I could annihilate you – but no! Banished
from every spiritual bond, fight on
among the dregs, a hated alien.
And in your bleak and anguished loneliness
let this one thought torment you endlessly;
shake as you will your dust-forged manacles,
your struggle with the lord is doomed to fail.

Lucifer: No, not so fast; I'll not be lightly heaved
aside, like some shoddy tool, now grown useless.
It was together we created;
I now demand my rightful share.

The Lord (with scorn): Let it be as you wish. Look down
upon the earth, upon the grove of Eden;
there, in the middle, stand two slender trees;
I curse the both of them; now they are yours.

Lucifer: A scanty, tight-fisted dole, oh great lord;
but a bare foot of ground will do for me;
for if negation once can plant its feet
it will subvert your whole created world.

(Sets out to leave)

Chorus of Angels: Be banished from God's sight, forever damned.
Hosanna to the Lord, giver of laws.

NOTES

1. The only full-length study in English of Madách is by Enikő Molnár Basa, *The Tragedy of Man* as an Example of the *Poeme d'Humanite:* an Examination of the Poem by Imre Madach with Reference to the Relevant Works of Shelley, Byron, Lamartine and Hugo. Dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1972. DA133A (1973). Order No. 73-4799. Briefer treatments in English are by Charles Wojatsek, "The Philosophical and Ethical Concept of the Tragedy of Man," *Slavic and East European Studies,* VI, 210-227 (1961), and by the present writer, "'The Tragedy of Man': Salvation or Tragedy?" *Acta Litteraria Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae,* XI, 291-308 (1973).

   Of the enormous number of critical studies in Hungarian, two older ones have attained lasting distinction: Géza Voinovich, *Madách Imre és Az Ember Tragédiája* (Budapest, 1922), and János Barta, *Madách Imre* (Budapest, 1942). In the last two decades by far the most significant critic has been István Sőtér, whose discussions of Madách may be found in *Romantika és realizmus* (Budapest, 1956), *Nemzet és haladás* (Budapest, 1963), *Álom a történelemről* (Budapest, 1965), and, finally, *A magyar irodalom története* (Budapest, 1965), IV, 330-361.
2. All the translations bear the title *The Tragedy of Man.* The names of the translators and the dates of publication are: William N. Loew (New York: Arcadia Press, 1908); C. P. Sanger (London: Hogarth Press, 1933), reprinted in 1955 (Sydney: Pannonia Press); Charles Henry Meltzer and Paul Vajda, 1933 (Budapest), the 4th and final edition in 1960 (Budapest: Corvina); J.C.W. Horne (Budapest: Corvina, 1963).

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The Image of Hungarian Poetry in the English-Speaking World

Enikő Molnár Basa

Hungarian men of letters have always been influenced by Western European literary movements from which they borrowed themes, styles, and ideas, only to naturalize them. Rather than imitate foreign models, they adapted various currents of world literature to Hungarian themes, language and meter (in this respect, especially, the models had great impact), and, to some extent, Hungarian tastes. Latin works of the Middle Ages, for example, received a Hungarian flavor by changing a locale or substituting a king's name. By permitting local customs to slip in also, the universal material immediately gained national coloring. This process was enhanced during the Renaissance and Reformation when Hungary's political position differed greatly from that of the new nation states of Western Europe, and all literary activity naturally mirrored the political and military situation, as well as the religious disputes. The years following the expulsion of the Turks and the Rákoczi Revolution increased Western influences. Not only did German literature — or rather, French Enlightenment through German intermediaries — play a role, but direct contacts with France and the Low Countries also enriched Hungarian cultural life. This era also saw the beginnings of the "backward" *litterati,* i.e., those men of letters who resisted the new trends identified with the Austrian rulers and who maintained the earlier tradition of the *kuruc* poetry with its typical Baroque dualism of spirit and flesh and its echoes of Cavalier poetry. In short, the late Renaissance and the early Baroque received a unique development in 18th century Hungary. The tradition represented by Zrinyi and Balassa was integrated into later tradition through this process of popularization.

English literature gained a prominent position in Hungary only in the latter half of the 18th century. From then on, however, it continued as an important factor, occasionally even eclipsing German influence. Presently American literature seems most popular, but then this is a world-wide phenomenon. The converse, namely English scholarly in-

terest in Hungarian literature, has been far more limited. We can discern a vivid influence of Hungarian themes and point to significant German, Italian and French poets who have come under the spell of Hungarian literature, or at least of a major Hungarian poet, but there is relatively little Hungarian literary influence on England. This might be blamed on the distorted image of Hungarian literature among Englishmen, and also on sheer ignorance. Yet there have been at least three periods when active interest was shown in Hungarian literature.

The first important reference to Hungarian poetry may be found in Sir Philip Sidney's *The Defense of Poesy* (1595). As a diplomat, he had travelled to Vienna and thence to the outposts of the Imperial forces on the Turkish frontier. This journey naturally took him into Hungary, specifically Pozsony (Bratislava), where he was the guest of a Dr. Purkircher; the French diplomat Languet had introduced them. Although Sidney's tutor assumed that the young man's visit would last only about three days, it lasted almost a month.[1] He met Lazarus Schuendi, commander of the imperial forces in Hungary, and in visits to the *végvárak* (outpost fortresses) gathered a lasting impression about military tactics and the life of soldiers in Hungary. Of a romantic and chivalric turn of mind, Sidney seems to have responded eagerly to the stimulus of this lifestyle.

Even more than the military information he gathered, Sidney seems to have valued his literary contacts. "In Hungary I have seen it the manner of all feasts, and suchlike meetings," he wrote in his *Defense of Poesy*, "to have songs of their ancestors' valor, which that right soldier-like nation think one of the chief kindlers of brave courage."[2] The context, it should be noted, was the discussion of lyrical poetry. Sidney defended this genre against those moralists who saw only the work of the devil in the appeal to the emotions. He introduced his discussion with these rhetorical questions:

> Is it the lyric that most displeaseth, who with his tuned and well-accorded voice giveth praise, the reward of virtue, to virtuous acts? who giveth moral precepts and natural problems? who sometimes raiseth up his voice to the height of heavens, in singing the lauds of the immortal God?[3]

Thus, to Sidney, the appeal of these Hungarian songs was in their moral and patriotic tone and in their natural or "rude" style which, he felt, could be compared with the "Lacedaemonians." He conjured Pindar to substantiate his claim that victory in battle was to be celebrated over victory at the tourney. In short, in his contemporary world, Sidney could find heroic poetry that compared with the classical in dignity and nobility only in Hungary.

The mention of the songs of the "végvárak" was not an isolated instance of Sidney's interest. In his long romance *Arcadia*, he mentioned the oriental method of fighting that was practiced by the Hungarian knights or cavalry during the Turkish wars. In fact, his description parallels Bálint Balassa's in "Katonaénekek":

> But this straunge land more straunge conceits did yeeld:
> Who victor seem'd was to his ruine brought;
> Who seem'd o'erthrown was mistress of the field:
> She fled and tooke; he folow'd and was caught.
> So have I heard to pierce pursuing shield
> By parents trained the Tartars wilde are taught,
> With shafts shott out from their back-turned bow.[4]

> Sok vérben fertezvén
> Arcúl reá térvén
> Űzőt sokszor megvernek.[5]

With the generalization typical of many Renaissance authors, Sidney equated Tartars with Turks: the former fit the content of *Arcadia* better, and in any case, little distinction was made between the oriental nations in Renaissance England.

Evidence of Sidney's loyalty to the dying code of chivalry abounded in his works, but so did references to world affairs, notably the Turkish wars. He seems to have been regarded as an authority on Eastern European affairs in England and Queen Elizabeth's interest in the Emperor's situation demanded an awareness of Turkish movement in this region of Europe. Thus, we find numerous references in Sidney's later correspondence attesting to his continued connection with friends in Hungary.

In spite of this auspicious beginning, it was not until the 19th century that Hungarian poetry again aroused interest in England and led to translations of Hungarian works. Language, of course, continued to pose an unsurmounted barrier, but now several popularizers abroad began to interpret Hungarian literature. Admittedly, these mediaries often did more harm than good; but their efforts must nevertheless be acknowledged, for they did bring Hungarian poetry into the consciousness of some of the English and American public. Sir John Bowring, diplomat and businessman, poet and translator, was among the first important intermediaries.

The Hungarian literary historian, János Hankiss, has pointed out the

limitations of Bowring and others: their inability to overcome the "bécsi spanyolfal, amelyre 'Mikosch' vagy 'Ungar Janosch' torzképe volt ráfestve."[6] Bowring had to depend on Carl Georg Rumy, Ferenc Toldy and finally, on Karl Maria Kertbény for his information. Not knowing any Hungarian himself, he used the German anthologies published by these men, or he obtained German versions of Hungarian songs. Since these sources were not critical in their selections, and since the German translations were often inaccurate, Bowring and the others formed a distorted picture. Admittedly, the exoticism of Hungarian literature, real or imagined, was emphasized in the English versions. This is what the readers expected, and this is what they were given. As Hankiss has stated, "A művelt külföldi ragaszkodik a magyar táj idilli zártságának, ember és föld szoros összetartozásának föltételezéséhez."[7]

As early as 1827 Bowring published one of Sándor Kisfaludi's "folk-songs" in the May issue of the *Monthly Review*. Undoubtedly, he was working from one of the many German anthologies or periodicals that carried numerous examples of the suddenly popular "Magyar" folk-song. Later, Bowring turned to Georg Rumy's *Magyarische Anthologie* as a source. It is ironic — and was unfortunate for the acceptance of Hungarian literature in Western Europe — that these sources represented the "distortions" rather than the true poetry of Hungary. They emphasized the sentimentality and exoticism of Pre-Romanticism at a time when both Hungarian writers and European tastes had progressed beyond this. Consequently, while Petőfi and his friends fought against the cheap success of unrealistic and sentimental verse, it was precisely such poems that became known abroad as Hungarian literature.

The ambiguous or divided response to Hungarian literature can perhaps best be illustrated by the reactions to specific works. Bowring's *Poetry of the Magyars*, for example, received generally good reviews. The quality of the translations was uneven, the selection was strongly influenced by popular taste, but the introductory essay on the Magyar language and the estimate of Hungarian literature was surprisingly accurate. Yet, though interest in the book was lively enough, it failed to have any real impact. This occurred chiefly, I believe, because enthusiasm for things Hungarian was mostly emotional, based on English sympathies for the Revolution of 1848–49. Such emotional commitments had a counter-effect, too: *Frazer's Magazine*, departing from the general trend of eulogy, published a review slanted at least as severely in the negative direction which illustrated its thesis by citing garbled letter-sequences purporting to be the Hungarian text.[8] Similarly, the *Athenaeum* displayed prejudice or at least ignorance when it spoke of *János*

Vitéz as "a confusion of aimless marvels, strung together without skill."[9] The reviewer had expected a realistic work and refused to read the poem as the allegorical fairy tale it is.

Inasmuch as Bowring came to rely on Kertbény more and more in his later work, his translations suffered. The false but persistent image of Hungarian literature as primitive, sentimental and exotic owes much to these early distortions. Even the later association with Hungarian émigrés such as Ferenc Pulszky and Louis Kossuth failed to overcome this early impression.

In the 19th century, the impact of the Hungarian Revolution was such that others besides Bowring became interested in Hungary. Both in England and in the United States periodicals carried freely translated versions of Hungarian poetry, especially that of Petőfi. For example, *Howitt's Journal* had already published some of Bowring's verse translations in 1847, and in 1852 the *National Era* printed a few Hungarian poems based on rough English texts given to the journalist and novelist Grace Greenwood by one of Kossuth's aides.[10]

Such popularity, however, only served to reenforce the extant image of Hungary and Hungarian literature and totally failed to draw the attention of any of the major poets — even of those who, like Matthew Arnold, Walter Savage Landor, Charles Swinburne or John Greenleaf Whittier — wrote about the Hungarian Revolution. This is not surprising, given the quality of these early translations of Hungarian works. Not even the translations of the late 19th century and of the early 20th corrected the situation. A gradual change came when two important translators emerged in North America. The first, William Loew, undertook to make the poetry of Petőfi and selected other 19th century poets available to English speakers. His versions were accurate but unpoetic.[11] Watson Kirkconnell's *Magyar Muse* (1933) was better, though the selection was heavily weighted in favor of minor contemporary poets.[12]

As in the mid-nineteenth century political events had inspired a wave of interest in Hungary, so too, in the mid-twentieth century the Hungarian Revolution again drew attention. The anthology, *From the Hungarian Revolution*,[13] edited by David Ray, collected poems on the Revolution by various non-Hungarian poets as well as the poetry of many of the Revolution's participants which had first appeared in Hungarian in the volume *Füveskert*. This, however, was only the beginning; since the 1960's other works have appeared in English: a reprint of Frederick Reidl's *History of Hungarian Literature*, Joseph Reményi's *Hungarian Writers and Literature*, and David Marvyn

Jones' *Five Hungarian Writers.*[14] Such critical studies have done more for the cause of Hungarian belles lettres than volumes of poor translations ever could. They give critical analyses of the best in Hungarian literature, discuss literary movements, and explicate significant qualities in comparative terms. Here, Hungarian poetry is not viewed as an exotic creature but rather as an individual phenomenon of European literature. The same concern is seen in some recent articles that have appeared, and is the thesis of the anthology of modern Hungarian poets published by Corvina and Columbia University Press, and edited by Miklós Vajda.[15]

Some fifty years ago Henri Baldsensperger, one of the founders of the comparative study of literatures, remarked that the middle of the 19th century ought to have been the era of Hungarian literature. This never occurred, but the image of Hungarian literature is finally escaping its limitations: both the "exotic" mold of the past hundred and fifty years and the limitations of purely journalistic interest which too often led only to publication in insignificant and little-read anthologies. A similar but more recent threat, publication chiefly within the Hungarian community without reference to the wider literary scene, also seems to be effectively countered. Hungarian literature now stands a chance of becoming known and appreciated for what it is.

NOTES

* Presented at the first annual Conference of the American Hungarian Educators' Association, Cleveland, Ohio, November 29, 1975.

1. Languet to Sidney, Letter of September 22nd, 1573, quoted in John Buxton, *Sir Philip Sidney and the English Renaissance* (London: Macmillan, 1954), pp. 61 62.
2. Sir Philip Sidney, *The Defense of Poesy*, in *Tudor Poetry and Prose*, J. William Hebel, *et al.*, eds. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1953), p. 819.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Sidney, "First Eclogues (1593), Ec. II. 11:400 430," in *The Complete Works of Sir Philip Sidney*, Albert Feuillert, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939), p. 351.
5. Bálint Balassa, "In laudem confiniorum," in *Összes versei és Szép magyar komédiája* (Collected Poems and His Fine Hungarian Comedy) (Budapest: Magyar Helikon, 1961), p. 550.
6. János Hankiss, *Európa és a magyar irodalom a honfoglalástól a kiegyezésig* [Europe and Hungarian Literature from the Conquest to the Compromise] (Budapest: Singer és Wolfner, 1939), p. 350. Translation: "the Viennese screen upon which was painted "Mikosch" or "Hungarian John" as distorted pictures."

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 545 546. Translation: "The cultured foreigner insists on the idyllic unity of the Hungarian scene, on the assumption of the close unity of man and nature."
8. Review cited in Aurel Varannai, *John Bowring és a magyar irodalom* [John Bowring and Hungarian Literature], Irodalalomtörténeti füzetek, 60 (Budapest: Akadémiai kiadó, 1967), pp. 103 113.
9. *The Athenaeum*, 29 March 1851, p. 350.
10. *Howitt's Journal of Literature and Popular Progress*, II (July Dec., 1847), 28, 237 238; *The National Era*, VI (Jan. 22, 1852; Jan. 29, 1852; Feb. 12, 1852).
11. William Loew, *Gems from Petőfi and Other Hungarian Poets* (New York: P.O. D'Esterházy, 1881); *Magyar Songs; Selections from Modern Hungarian Poets* (New York: Samish and Goldman, 1887); *Magyar Poetry; Selections from Hungarian Poets*, enlarged and revised ed. of the two above-mentioned works (New York: Author-Translator's Edition, 1899); *Modern Magyar Lyrics* (Budapest: Tisza Testvérek, 1926); *Translations from the Hungarian: Toldi; Toldi's Eve; Ballads; Selected Lyrics* (New York: The Cooperative Press, 1914); *The Tragedy of Man by Imre Madách* (New York: Acadia Press, 1881); *Childe John by Alexander Petőfi* (Budapest: Hungarian Studio, 1920).
12. Watson Kirkconnell, *The Magyar Muse; An Anthology of Hungarian Poetry 1400 1932* (Winnipeg: Kanadai Magyar Újság, 1933).
13. *From the Hungarian Revolution; A Collection of Poems*, David Ray, ed. Adapted from the Hungarian *Füveskert*, ed. by Tibor Tollas (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1966).
14. Frederick Riedl, *A History of Hungarian Literature* (Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1963); Joseph Reményi, *Hungarian Writers and Literature; Modern Novelists, Critics, and Poets*, ed. and with an introd. by August J. Molnar (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1964); David Marvyn Jones, *Five Hungarian Writers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966).
15. *Modern Hungarian Poetry*, ed. and with an introd. by Miklós Vajda, foreword by William Jay Smith (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977).

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REVIEW ARTICLE

Hungarian Poetry in English Translation: Two Recent Anthologies

Timothy Kachinske

Hundred Hungarian Poems. Edited by Thomas Kabdebo. Manchester: Albion Editions, 1976. Pp. 125.

Miklós Radnóti, Subway Stops: Fifty Poems. Translated, with an Introduction and Notes, by Emery George. Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1977. Pp. 95.

Hungarian literature has long been *terra incognita* to Western readers. Hungary's linguistic isolation on an Indo-European continent and her history of subjugation to outside imperial powers are often given as reasons. But perhaps the primary reason for Western nescience of Hungarian poetry is the lack of good translation.

This decade has done more than any previous decade to remedy the neglect Hungarian poetry has suffered in the West. Since 1970 individual collections of Petőfi, Illyés, József, Radnóti, Weöres, Pilinszky, László Nagy and Ferenc Juhász have been published in North America and Britain. Also, during the period 1975 to 1980 no less than five anthologies of Hungarian poetry will have been published in English translation. By and large these translations are good. A variety of translation methods have been used. Some are done by native speakers, others by English-speaking poets and scholars who have come to know Hungarian letters, and still others are the result of collaboration between native-speaking Hungarians and English-speaking poets. Thus a variety of voices in translation is afforded the reader, as well as a wide selection of Hungarian poets.

Thomas Kabdebo's *Hundred Hungarian Poems* is an anthology that shows such a variety of approaches to the problem of translation. The list of translators is impressive. Many of the poems in this anthology are the result of partnership between Hungarian-speakers and English-

speaking poets, including such important poets as W. H. Auden, Robert Graves, Michael Hamburger, Ted Hughes, Edwin Morgan and John Wain. Internationally recognized scholars of Hungarian letters, such as George Gömöri, George Cushing, and Watson Kirkconnell, have also contributed translations. And some selections come from Hungarians such as Paul Tabori who have themselves become writers in England and America. Because of the range of translators, a distinct voice in English is assured for each Hungarian poet.

The historical scope of Kabdebo's anthology is ambitious. He includes poets from the Renaissance and Reformation to the present, arranging the one-hundred poems chronologically according to the birth of the author. However, the emphasis of *Hundred Hungarian Poems* is on more recent poets; more than half the anthology is devoted to the twentieth century. Firmly established modern writers such as Ady, G. Juhász, Babits, Kassák, Illyés, Attila József, and Radnóti are of course included. Also, a surprisingly comprehensive selection of contemporary poetry is given. A number of the important poets living in Hungary today are represented – F. Juhász, L. Nagy, Weöres, and Pilinszky all have a poem or two. Kabdebo also includes not-so-often read Hungarian poets living outside the national boundaries of Hungary, thereby expanding the anthology's range. Among these poets are F. Fehér (Jugoslavia), G. Páskándi (Romania), G. Gömöri and Cs. Szabó (England), L. Kemenes Géfin, G. Faludy and F. Fáy (Canada), and A. Makkai (USA).

The anthology is not without problems. Using the Hungarian tricolors red, white and green across the entire cover is an eye-catching idea. Unfortunately, the horizontal colors are inverted, appearing green, white and red — the color arrangement of the flag of Iran. A few typographical errors occur. It is not so bad that József Erdély's Christian name appears with a "d" rather than an "f" in the biographical section "Notes on the Poets" (p. 112). When it is obvious to the reader that a name is misspelled, the error is not so important. But when a typographical error occurs in a line of poetry, as in György Rónay's "The Death of Virginia Woolf," it is not so easy to make allowance. In the line "The weaves are splashing round my hips," "waves" should replace "weaves" (p. 84). This is disconcerting because "weaves" is a noun that fits into the grammatical logic of the line. Without a close reading, a reader could take this line for a clumsy image, which it is not.

Hundred Hungarian Poems could have a more convenient format as well. Since it is designed for the English-speaking reader, it would have been appropriate to follow organizational conventions usually found in

books written in English. A table of contents, for example, would be helpful. As it is, the two title indices located at the back of the book, which list titles alphabetically in English and then in Hungarian, are of limited use. The "Index to Hungarian Titles" is of course essential, but of interest primarily to readers who know Hungarian. The "Index to English Titles" presupposes a knowledge of the title given a poem in translation, and such titles can vary considerably from translator to translator. The reader familiar with Magyar poetry in translation can for this reason find himself nearly as ill at ease using the index as would the novice, since alphabetical arrangement requires knowledge of what one is looking for. A table of contents listing authors' life dates would have been more useful, as well as being appropriate to the chronological arrangement of the book.

Emery George's *Subway Stops* is an important contribution to the growing interest in Radnóti. Hungarians consider Radnóti to be a major poet. Since his death in 1944, many collections of Radnóti's works have been published in Hungary, with some of these collections enjoying several printings. More than a dozen monographs on his life and work have been published by various Hungarian presses, and countless articles about him have appeared in Hungarian journals. Indeed, Miklós Vajda, literary editor of *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, has said that Radnóti is among a handful of Hungarian poets who, had they "written in a language less isolated than Hungarian would now be revered wherever poetry is read." Interest in Radnóti in the United States has grown in recent years. Various poems in translation have appeared in American literary magazines, and in 1972 Harper and Row brought out *Clouded Sky*, a collection of poems from the posthumously published *Tajtékos ég*, translated into English by Steven Polgar, Stephen Berg, and S. J. Marks. This book is out of print.

Subway Stops is the first book in English to offer poems from all seven of Radnóti's books of poetry. The fifty poems are arranged chronologically, and include posthumous works. *Subway Stops* has an appealing format and good organization. The cover is an arresting, full page portrait of the poet's face. A table of contents, a selected bibliography and an introduction — all meticulously prepared — precede the poems.

The introductory remarks begin with an assessment of Radnóti's position in the tradition of Hungarian letters. George compares Radnóti to Petőfi, a comparison he warrants justifiable on both literary and historical grounds. Certainly Radnóti's universality, his active political engagement, and his tragic death appeal to the public imagination. The

fact that he was able to produce such a large body of work, both original poetry and translations, in a short lifetime of appalling hardship and difficulty makes him already a legendary figure in an age rather short on literary heroes. George summarizes his appeal quite succinctly when he says, "He is seen, like no one else of his generation, to have the power of synthesizing such polar extremes as tradition and innovation, the local and the cosmopolitan, the Christian and the classical, most importantly the perennial antagonism, in poetry, between engagement and art."

George notes that critics generally agree that important influences on Radnóti the poet "are found in the enthusiasms of Radnóti the translator." Radnóti studied the Greek and Latin poets, and translated Horace and Vergil. He knew French literature well, and translated Ronsard, La Fontaine and Apollinaire. His French was not limited to academic knowledge, for he and his wife made a number of trips to France, and several poems are prompted by places there, such as Chartres, Versailles and Paris. Radnóti also knew German, and translated Goethe and the German romantics. But Radnóti's native heritage was an equally important influence on him. His university education (culminating in a doctorate) provided a thorough knowledge of the Hungarian literary tradition, and the great nineteenth century Hungarian romantics — Petőfi, Vörösmarty and Arany — stand out particularly as having contributed to his work. The folk song is also a strong influence, and it is not surprising that Bartók was Radnóti's favorite composer.

The introduction concludes with comments on translation problems. George began this project because of "an almost personal feeling that Radnóti deserves an English-speaking audience." Previous translations were found to be "unsatisfactory at best," and he is quite correct in calling the only other volume of Radnóti in English (Harper and Row, 1972) "an extremely slip-shod piece of work." In his own translations, George has aimed at "fidelity in form, pattern, diction, tone, mood, prosody down to sound repetition," a gargantuan task when dealing with languages as unlike as Hungarian and English. All of these things are of course important considerations, but fidelity to meaning (which George does not single out) is also important. For the most part, George is closer to Radnóti's meaning than any previous translator. But problems in meaning do occur, and the principal weaknesses of the translations result from a tendency to sacrifice precise meaning to formal considerations.

George tends to shift Hungarian active verb constructions into the

passive, or into noun phrases in English, thereby weakening the English versions. In "Elegy, or Icon, Nailless," the Hungarian verb phrase *dolgozni nem tud* (he cannot work) is changed into the noun phrase "work is out of the question," which is in fact a cliché (line 13). In "Friday," the verb *elfutottak* (they ran away, or fled) becomes "have taken flight" (line 11). Also in "Friday," the verb *kiöntött* (they overflowed) is changed to the passive "are flooded" (line 22). For the verb *alszik* (it sleeps), which occurs three times in the first two lines of the poem "Night," George gives "are asleep" twice and "is asleep" once. In "Picture Postcards," the verb *torlódik* (to become congested) is changed to the noun phrase "a traffic jam" (line 3). One would guess that George makes verb shifts such as these in an attempt to get more syllables. Although his concern for rhythms is laudable, whatever he may gain in metrical balance is taken from the power of Radnóti's language when active verbs are lost.

Sometimes George sacrifices meaning in his zeal to give a rhyme scheme to his translations. For example, in "Cartes Postales," the Hungarian *ikra* (roe) is given as "roes of eggs" in order to create a rhyme for the word "legs" (lines 4 and 6). The phrase "roes of eggs" is both redundant and not idiomatic. In "Friday," George gives "shiver" to rhyme with "river," thereby inventing the impossible construction "it (April) whips you with . . . shiver" (line 6). To cite another example from "Friday," one might examine the line *vad zápor hullt időnként* (sometimes a wild sudden shower fell). In an effort to give this line consonant rhyme with the word "place," which concludes the stanza, George creates the phrase "erratic dose," something that does not make clear sense in English and bears only a suggestive resemblance to the Hungarian original (lines 18 and 20). In "Letter to My Wife," we find the phrase "the silence in my ears is strident" created to fit with "silent," the last word of the previous line (lines 1 and 2). In Hungarian, the action verb phrase is *üvölt a csönd fülemben,* which translates literally as simply "silence howls in my ears." Faced with a choice between rhyme and meaning, the translator should favor meaning. Contemporary readers instinctively mistrust translations which are too-neatly rhymed, and rightly so, for it is unusual that this can be accomplished without sacrifice.

Though the English of the translations reads smoothly for the most part, a few poems do show, on occasion, insensitivity to connotation and usage in English. The aforementioned "roes of eggs" and "whips you with . . . shiver" illustrate this, and other instances of the problem occur sporadically. In "Cartes Postales," the verb phrase *tükre pattan* is

given as "its mirror snaps" (line 5). The verb *pattan* can mean "snap," but in this particular situation the alternative "crack" would be better English; a broken mirror exhibits cracks, not snaps. Several mistranslations occur in "Night." The Hungarian *a fatörzsben* (in the treetrunk) *a harkály* (the woodpecker) is given as "the snipe in its house" (line 4). The phrase *rózsában* (in a rose) *a rózsabogár* (the rose beetle) is given as "the fly in the rose" (line 5). Were "fly" intended, *légy* would be found in the original. However, flies do not live in roses. The pattern of imagery in the poem, which finds each creature quiet in its resting place, is disrupted. In "Root," George renders the Hungarian verb phrase *nem érdekli* (does not care) as "cares not a hang," a euphemistic colloquialism which jars the native English speaker a bit in the context of the poem (line 11).

George's translations are, however, better than any done previously. The early poems are especially well done. In "Portrait, Angry as Hell," George shows Radnóti's anger with a terseness in English that matches the original. In "Elegy, or Icon, Nailless," George conveys very well the sympathetic energy with which Radnóti writes of a wanderer struck down and crippled by a count's car. In "Love Poem in a Forest," in which Radnóti compares his lover and a forest, George has rendered images with clarity and precision. *Razglednicák*, a series of four short poems written on a forced march only weeks before the poet's death, are among Radnóti's most frequently translated poems, and George's versions are a decided improvement on previous efforts. The ominous, brutal, yet patiently sensitive quality of the poems makes translation especially problematic. A typically difficult phrase occurs in line 18: *az emberek mind véreset vizelnek*. Ruth Sutter, in a translation appearing in *Chicago Review* and *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, translates this as "the water the men make is black with blood." Sutter avoids Radnóti's verb *vizel* (to urinate) and introduces "black," thereby changing the color imagery connoted by *véres* (bloody). The Polgar-Berg-Marks translation is "the men all piss red." This is even further from the original because of colloquial verb usage changing the tone of the line, and the replacement of "red" for "bloody." George's rendering, "Blood shows in every man's urine," comes closest to both the tone and meaning of the original.

Although one may have reservations about the accuracy of occasional phrases in some of the poems, *Subway Stops* is on the whole a respectable piece of work, one which will be welcomed by admirers of Radnóti.

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REVIEW ARTICLE

Hungarian Religious Poetry and Verse Translation

Zoltán Máté

Templomablak. Istenes versek és műfordítások [Church Window: Religious Poems and Verse Translations]. Compiled by Dezső Fükő. Budapest: Református Zsinati Iroda, 1975. Pp. 359.

SUMMARY. The first part of this book contains Hungarian religious poems from the fourteenth century to the present, while the second part is an anthology of classical, medieval and modern European religious poetry in Hungarian translation. The volume also contains a long introduction giving biographical information on the poets whose poetry is featured.

The central theme of the anthology is the relation of man and God. While views about this relation vary from one epoch to the next and from one poet to another, they are basically always positive. In twentieth century poets it often erupts from the deep chaos of the subconscious. "I believe unbelievingly in God Because I want to believe," wrote Endre Ady. To him God was a symbol, "the Great Secret," "Life," which permitted many interpretations. To the poet Lajos Áprily he is the "Lord of Curses and Death." To Gyula Illyés he is the "King of mighty arms" who, in the end, "forgives his enemies."

The poetry of Hungarian poets, especially twentieth century ones, reveals another recurring theme: the fate and mission of the "nation" and the "homeland." This theme is explored at some length in the poems of Lőrinc Szabó and Gyula Illyés.

Like most good anthologies, *Church Window* has few shortcomings. Although the volume claims to avoid any religious partiality, it fails to give appropriate representation to Roman Catholic poets. For instance, not a single poem by László Mécs, the Premonstratensian canon, is offered. Despite this and other minor deficiencies, the book offers a joyful reading of the multi-coloured images of Hungarian religious poetry and verse translation.

* * *

"Nem emel föl már senki sem,
Belenehezültem a sárba.
Fogadj fiadnak, Istenem,
Hogy ne legyek kegyetlen árva."

Egy magáramaradt ember végső kétségbeesésében kiált így fel. Ez az őszinte, emberi megnyilatkozás önmagában még nem lenne különös. S hogy mégis egy tudományos folyóirat hasábjain esik róla szó, annak egyéb oka is van. E sorok írója József Attila, a "szocialista Magyarország" egyik legünnepeltebb és kétségtelenül a legtehetségesebb "proletár költője". A fenti idézet a *Templomablak* című, vallásos költeményeket tartalmazó antológiából származik, amely 1975-ben látott napvilágot Budapesten.

A könyv két nagyobb egységre tagolódik. Az első magyar vallásos költeményeket tartalmaz kronológiai sorrendben, míg az utóbbi műfordítások gyűjteménye. A kötet bevezető verse egy 14. századi ismeretlen magyar költő műve, az "Ó-Magyar Mária Siralom", amely nyelvtörténeti szempontból is páratlan. Balassi Bálint, a magyar renaissance kiemelkedő egyénisége, több verssel is szerepel. Zrínyi Miklós nyelve már a barokk pompa jeleit viseli. De helyet kapott a kötetben Arany János [magyar klasszicizmus], Madách Imre, Gárdonyi Géza, Ady Endre [szimbólikus ábrázolásmód], Babits Mihály, Juhász Gyula, Tóth Árpád [a 20. századi "nyugatos" költők], Radnóti Miklós, Áprily Lajos, Szabó Lőrinc, Illyés Gyula, Weöres Sándor, Devecseri Gábor és a magyar líra sok más kiváló művelője. Az antológia második felét műfordítások teszik ki görög, latin, olasz, francia, spanyol, angol, német, flamand, orosz, lengyel, szlovák, és finn nyelvből. A kötetet egy 30 oldalas ismertetés egészíti ki, amely hasznos információt ad a gyűjteményben szereplő költők életéről és munkásságáról.

A kötet költőinél központi helyet foglal el Isten és ember kapcsolata, viszonya. S ez a kapcsolat költők, korok, "izmusok" szerint változó, de végső eredőjében mégis mindig pozitiv. Különösen a 20. század költőinél tudatalatti mélységek káoszából tör fel a modern ember egyszerű vágya hitre, eszmélésre: "Hiszek hitetlenül Istenben, / Mert hinni akarok, / Mert sohse volt úgy rászorulva / Sem élő, sem halott" — mondja Ady. E vallomás nála különleges nyelvi megformálást is igényel. A névszói és határozói elemek túlsúlyát két ige — a "hinni" és a dinamikusabb, határozottabb "akarni" — tartja egyensúlyban. A hit és hinni akarás kettősségének kidomborítása [mely a lelki feszültség forrása] a

magas és a mély magánhangzójú szavak polarizálásával [a magyar nyelv magánhangzó váltakozás törvényének stiláris alkalmazása] éri el végső kulminációját. Ugyanennek a költői kifejezésmódnak lehetünk tanúi egy másik Ady idézetben is: "akarom, hogy hited akarjam". Az Isten nála "Nagy Titok", mint ahogy az "Élet" is az; egy szimbólum, amely többféle magyarázatot enged meg. Adynál Isten sohasem valami elvont szellem, aminek nincs vágya, célja, tevékenysége. Az ő Isten-képe nem a dolgok végső lényegéről, önmagáról elmélkedő arisztotelészi Isten-fogalom, hanem egy aktiv létező, minek léte valamilyen formában mindig kapcsolatban van a költő életével. Fehér fényben jön, hogy a költő "ellenségeit" leigázza [szövetséges]. Máskor cserélődik a szerep s a költő tér haza fáradtan a vesztett "Élet-csatából". "Mindennek vége, vége: / Békíts ki Magaddal s magammal. . ." [ellenség]. Reményik Sándornál ez az Isten-arc egy "antik szobor" tiszta, nyugodt erejű hasonlatává egyszerűsödik. A költő nem "akar", nem követel többé, csupán nem nyugszik, míg "nem hívja elő" a világ szennye alá temetett hitét.

A hit tárgya, Isten, különböző költői megformálást kaphat. "Átok és Halál ura" [Áprily], aki "kiméri az idők folyamát" [Berzsenyi]. Szörnyű fegyverű király, mert a végén megbocsát ellenfeleinek [Illyés]. Fodornál a definició tágabb, mert feloldja a "Nagy Rend, Nagy Igaz, Nagy Fény" szimbólum rendszerében Isten fogalmát s a viszonyok rendszerének hegeli meghatározásához közelít. Reménytelen az emberekben hinni mert azok eleve kudarcra vannak ítélve, csak az Isten egyedül nem téved. A kálvinizmus ezen alaptétele többször is felbukkan, s a kötet ott a legmélyebb, ahol kételyek, vergődések dominálnak. "S hányatottam, miként a sáska, Mert csak Teneked van erőd... Nem szabad hinni senki másba..." [Ady].

Az antológia gazdag filozófiai gondolatokkal terhelt szóképekben is. A viszonylagos teljesség kedvéért idézzük Áprilyt: "csak a bukdácsoló patakok csevegnek (alliteráció), folyók a torkolatnál csendesednek"; vagy a hasonlatban megfogalmazott platóni filozófiai szemlélet metafórikus rokona Reményiknél. "A világ Isten szőtte szőnyeg, s mi csak a visszáját látjuk itt."

Minden kiváló alkotás tartalmaz bizonyos hiányosságokat s ez érvényes a *Templomablak* című antológiára is. Noha a szerkesztők hangoztatják az előszóban, hogy "minden felekezeti egyoldalúságot kerülve, csupán tartalmi és formai szempontok szerint a magyar költészet egészére kiterjedő gyűjteményt" kívánnak publikálni, ez az igyekezetük csak részben valósul meg. Magyarország lakosságának 65%-a római katolikus, a katolikus költők és versek aránya a kötetben azon-

ban jóval ez alatt az arányszám alatt van. Mécs László például egy verssel sem szerepel. E bizonyos értékrendbeli hiányosság helyenként egyenetlenséget, szinvonalbeli csökkenést eredményez. Lásd Berde Mária ragrímeit: "étket-vétket, sorában-Táborában, stb. . . .

Kutatva a kötet objektiv karakterisztikáját, a figyelmes olvasó előtt a gyűjteményt domináló vallásos költemények mellett, illetve azokat átszőve egy alig látható másik hálózat is feldereng, melyet "magyarság motívumnak" nevezhetünk. Versek, főleg a 20. századi lírikusoktól, amelyek a nemzet, haza fogalmát érintik. Azt a Hazát, ahol "rontás kavarog" és "zavaros a jelen és jövő. . ." [Fodor]. Szabó Lőrincet például örömmel tölti el a II. világháborút követő ujjáépítés, a városok, a vidék gazdagodása, az éles osztályellentétek eltűnése. De a gyógyuló folyamat eszköze nála a szeretet. Hangja elutasító lesz és merész, ha a magyarságtól idegen világnézetre vagy társadalmi rendszerre gondol, mert "nem azért vagy, hogy odaragadj ügyhöz . . . amely nem tiéd. . ."

Elvetélt szabadságharcok, vallásháborúk [ahol nem Istenért, hanem Isten miatt folyt a harc], Magyarország nagyhatalmi pozíciójának elvesztése után a költő feladata, hogy a "messzelátó magyar", a nemzet lelkiismerete legyen "őrizve" egy "nem-enyém vagyont" [Illyés] és megadja a magyarság jövőbeli helyét és szerepét Közép-Európában:

"Áradj belénk hát, oh örök
igazság és szeretet!
Oldozd meg a bilincseket,
amikkel a törzs és vér leköt,
hogy szellem és ne hús tegyen
magyarrá s nőjünk ég felé
testvér népek közt, mint fák,
kiket mennyből táplál a Nap." [Babits]

A *Templomablak* e sokszínű költemény-üvegeinek fény-harmóniája adja a magyar vallásos költészet nagyszerű élményét.

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SPECIAL SECTION

Toldi

An Epic Poem (1846)

by János Arany

translation by

Watson Kirkconnell

in collaboration with

Tivadar Edl

PROLOGUE

"I now remember times long pass'd away,
When the good Nicholas Toldi had his day."
— Ilosvai

As on an autumn night a herdsman's fire
Across the sea-like prairie flashes higher,
So Nicholas Toldi to my gaze is cast
Out of his time, ten generations past.
I seem to see his stateliness of height,
And his stout lance in devastating fight;
I seem to hear the thunders of his voice,
Like the loud tongue that God's deep wrath employs.

That was a man, a hero of the best;
His match lives not to-day from east to west;
If from his grave he rose to you and me,
You'd think his deeds were wrought by sorcery.
Three men to-day could not lift up his mace
Or set his sling-stones or his lance in place;
You would turn pale to see his massy shield
And his gigantic jack-boots, spurry-heel'd.

CANTO ONE

"He lifted, with one hand, a massive pole,
To point the way to Buda, then their goal."
— Ilosvai.

Sun-scorch'd, the spare heath-grass is brown indeed,
Grasshoppers there in lanquid cohorts feed;
Among the bulrush-rootstocks nought is seen
Of sprouting grass; nor is the prairie green.
A dozen farm-hands in the hay-stack's shade
Are snoring, as if all were well array'd;
Yet, empty or half-fill'd, big hay-carts stand
In idleness amid that summer land.

The lean fork of a draw-well, long and bleak,
Looks deep into the well, its draughts to seek.
You'd think it an enormous gnat, whom dearth
Had sent to suck the blood of Mother Earth.
Beside the trough, a herd of oxen lies,
Parch'd, and molested by a host of flies;
But with the noon-day heat the men are spent,
And none draws water for their discontent.

As far as glance can scan the earth and sky,
Only one waking person can you spy;
A mighty pole on his broad shoulder swings,
Although upon his chin no down yet clings.
Fix'd on the high-road is his dreaming gaze,
As if he yearn'd for other, distant ways.
You would consider him a living post,
Set on that hillock where two highways cross'd.

Why do you stand, my fair lad, in the heat?
You see the others snore in soft retreat;
The dogs lie on the grass, tongues lolling out,
And would not dream of chasing mice about.
Haven't you ever felt a wind as hot,
As this, that soon will wrestle on this spot,
And, licking up the road, seem to invoke
From dust a chimney's belch'd-forth clouds of smoke?

Ah, it is not the whirlwind that he sees,
Spanning the long, dun road with mummeries:
For there, beyond the grey dust, with its drums
And glittering arms, a brilliant army comes.
  And as it penetrates the fog of dust,
A sigh from the lad's mouth breaks in a gust.
With eager stoop, he sees the troops draw nigh
As if his soul were focuss'd in his eye.

"O gallant Magyar soldiers, fine and true,
How fain, how longingly I gaze at you!
Where go you, and how far? Perchance to fight?
And pluck in war fame's flowers pearly-bright?
  March you against the Tartars or the Turks
To bid Good-night to them and all their works?
Would I were one of you, and march'd along,
You gallant Magyars, your brave troops among!"

Such was the course of Nicholas Toldi's thought,
And carking furrows through his soul were wrought.
As thus he brooded in his youthful brain,
His heart became convulsed in yearning pain;
  His sire had fought; his brother George he kenn'd
Had grown up with the King's son as his friend,
And at the court, while Nicholas draws in hay,
That rascal proudly whiles his time away.

Meanwhile the troops drew near with martial tread,
Great Endre Laczfi riding at their head;
On his bay steed he sat, a man of note,
With gold embroidery thick upon his coat.
  Behind him rode smart, feather-capp'd battalions
With gaudy saddles on their prancing stallions.
As Nicholas gazes at that gallant corps,
His eyes, with too much gazing, become sore.

"Hey, peasant! Which road leads to Buda-town?"
Asks Laczfi, looking arrogantly down.
Straight to the heart of Toldi goes that word.
It forthwith gives a thump that can be heard.
  "A peasant, am I?" Nicholas mused in hate.

"Who should be squire of this whole estate?
Perhaps my brother George, that fox unstable,
Busy to change the plates at Louis' table?"

"A peasant, am I?" And his rising gorge
Was full of horrid curses against George.
Then whirling his vast pole, without a strain,
By one huge end he seized it, like a cane,
  And held it horizontal with one hand
To point them Buda-ward across the land.
Bands of wrought steel his arm's stout thews resemble, —
The out-stretch'd tree-trunk does not even tremble.

The Palatine and all his army bent
Their gaze on him in sheer astonishment.
Says Laczfi: "That's a man, whoe'er he be!
Come, lads, who'll wrestle now with such as he?
  Or who among you all can hold straight out
That shabby sign-pole of the lusty lout?"
They murmur, discontented: 'twould annoy
A knight to wrestle with a peasant boy.

But who would fight a duel with the thunder
When wind and sultry murk are rent asunder?
Who'd dream of fighting with God's anger warm
And His long, hissing arrow of the storm?
  For only such a one such odds would give,
If he loves God's fair world and wants to live.
For woe to him, in Nicholas' hands bestead!
He'd cry out for his mother, were she dead.

The troops, in thronging pageant, pass him by,
And all pay tribute to his potency;
All speak frank words of kindliness and grace;
All beam upon him with a friendly face.
  And one says: "Comrade, won't you come to war?
That's what a lad like you is valued for!"
Another says: "My good lad, what a shame,
Sired by a peasant, you will be the same!"

The host has gone; its murmurs now are mute,
Borne down the wind; the dust obscures its route.
Home wanders Toldi, full of grieving pride;
The fallow rocks beneath his mighty stride;
  Like some insensate bullock's is his gait;
The glooms of midnight in his eyes dilate;
Like some mad, wounded boar's his wrath persists;
The pole is almost crush'd in his great fists.

CANTO TWO

"And when George Toldi home from Buda
  came,
His younger brother was assail'd with
  blame."

Ilosvai

While Nicholas thus his soul in grief was rending,
At home at Nagyfalu a feast was pending:
The chimneys smoked as if the house were burning;
The sleepy well-prop never ceased from turning;
  Calves, lambs, and sucking-pigs shriek'd out in gloom;
The hen-yard underwent a day of doom;
Maids that were ill had yet no breathing-space,
The hearth was busy as a market-place.

One pour'd much water in a mighty pot,
And there, when on the fire it bubbles hot,
Into that bath the fowls are quickly dipp'd,
Their feathers snatch'd away, their sandals stripp'd;
  One fears that sweating may the lamb befall,
And tears away its jacket, hide and all;
Another maid belards the slender hare,
That fat may drip from his lean carcass there.

One rocks a sucking-pig above a flame
And scrapes away its bristles; here one dame
Brings wine in wooden bowls, or skins instead,
Or in a beechwood trough bears in the bread.

What meant this hubbub in a widow's house
Where none had long been wont such din to rouse?
Was it a wake for Lawrence Toldi's dame,
Or some new feast of bridal for the same?
Has her sad widow'd bed grown dull perchance,
And does her fading body seek romance?

This is no wake for Lawrence Toldi's wife
Nor has new marriage dawn'd upon her life.
But all the cooking, roasting, has been done
Since George comes home, the house's first-born son.

George was a great lord, with a wide demesne,
Treasure in heaps, and contumelious spleen.
Proud guards and well-armed lackeys throng his ground,
And herds of whinnying stallions, packs of hounds.
  He'd come now with a teeming retinue —
A lazy, good-for-nothing, hungry crew —
To gobble half the income, with a curse,
And pocket the remainder in his purse.

In icy tones he did his mother greet —
Who would have poured her soul out at his feet.
"Where is the lad?" he gruffly asks his mother.
No one would dream he meant his younger brother.
  "He's outside with the farmhands, making hay.
I'll send for him at once." — "No, let him stay!"
Shouts George. "No need for him." The mother's heart
Feels a great knife-stab slash its veins apart.

"No need for him" but lo! unhoped, uncalled,
The lad appears. Fierce pangs his spirit scald,
His inmost self still felt the aftermath
Of shameful grief and all-afflicting wrath.
  But what a miracle would Heaven forge!
No word of blame he utters against George.
Something was quieting his soul's deep hate,
Though what it was I cannot clearly state.

When unexpectedly he saw George face him,
His arms, unwilling, opened to embrace him;

But the other pushed him back with scornful pride
And from his worthy brother turned aside.
  Out of the mother's eyes the teardrops run
She steps up to her stony-hearted son,
With trembling lips, hands clasping and unclasping,
But George upbraids her hopes in accents rasping:

"Why, mother do you pet your lapdog so,
And guard your darling child from winds that blow?
Dip him in milk and butter, grant each plea,
A famous blockhead he will grow to be!
  Work on the meadows clamours to be done,
But the young squire here must have his fun!
He, like a dog, smells the fat dinner coming,
And leaves the servants to the work benumbing.

"For him you've always wept, when I spoke out.
He'll grow up nothing but a lazy lout;
Too idle for a peasant, toil he mocks,
Though he could work, as mighty as an ox.
  Just stick him in the window as a show,
And smile with pleasure as you see him grow!"
Loud was the laughter with which George thus spoke
And from the lips of Nicholas sorrow broke:

"Each word you utter is a lie -- or curse —
No jot of truth is in this charge of yours.
I know right well what you would have me be!
May God love you as you are loving me!
  My hopes in field or battle you would mock
And even find my work a laughing-stock.
You rage lest I should share the common bowl!
You'd kill me in a twinkling, by my soul!

"I do not want to linger in your way
And so I'll gladly go from here today.
A hundred miles the world is, up and down,
And so I'm off, to win my own renown.
  But what belongs to me I mean to take!
Hand over, brother, what is my due stake,
My portion of the estate cash, horse and arms --
And then the Lord may bless us both from harms!"

"Lad, here's your share! Don't say you haven't got it!" —
George cried, and struck. His brother's forehead caught it.
But Nicholas Toldi is not chicken-hearted;
Deep in his soul revenge is now imparted.
His eyes, like smitten steel, throw out a spark;
His fist's great bony mace prepares its mark.
And George falls back in fear; his doom is sure
If that one blow his body should endure.

For that one blow would lay him in a den
Where, by God's grace, he'd never eat again,
Where, a cracked bone, shut in a narrow room,
He'd not recover till the Day of Doom.
But in the brothers' strife to intervene
The mother with an outcry rushed between;
Her body shielded George, and yet her fear
Had been for Nicholas and his sad career.

The wild boy feels his muscles' stress uncoil;
He sadly turns his glances to the soil,
And like a man freed from a fever's bout,
From his dead father's home he totters out.
In misery he walked, in answer mute,
Sat in the yard's far corner destitute,
There bent his throbbing head above his knee
And burst out weeping, with no man to see.

CANTO THREE

"With rage against young Nicholas he was
filled
Because a well-loved soldier he had killed."
— Ilosvai

In the old house, the whole crew were elated;
From food and drink men only ceased when sated.
When they rose up from stout George Toldi's board,
His men in throwing spears their zeal outpoured.
Young blood and old wine in their veins upswirled;
In their right hands the wooden lances whirled;

They all teased one another; like wild colts
They romped around in spirited revolts.

George Toldi, after having swilled his share,
Threw his proud self into a soft armchair,
And from the wide verandah watched with pleasure
How his gay troops made merry beyond measure;
  Then marking in a corner the young lad,
His brother Nicholas, all alone and sad,
The sordid instincts of his soul awoke
And to his lumpish louts with spleen he spoke:

"Hallo, boys! See that bustard sorrowing!
He hides his mournful beak beneath his wing.
Roosting is he, or dead? Use your best knack
To bang that plank behind his sulky back!"

As when a hare is tossed among some hounds,
The wanton soldiers' mischief knew no bounds.
The boards behind his head banged loud with spears
While still his earlier sorrow perseveres.
  No mystery was this onset all unblest,
The case was obvious and manifest;
This drastic joke against himself was sped —
Often the missiles hardly missed his head.

Though far from calm, Toldi endured their clangour;
His soul still wrestled with his rising anger;
Then mastered it, and rested in disdain
That these rude varlets sought to give him pain.
  For you must know, these rogues who caused him harm
Could be swept off by his avenging arm,
Like that of Samson that once killed alone
A thousand infidels with one jaw-bone.

For long he kept his temper firm before them;
It seemed his best revenge was to ignore them;
He tried to hide his knowledge of their aim,
And didn't move one ear for all their game.
  But when a spearpoint grazed his shoulder-blade,
His rage flared up in fearful fusillade:
Seizing the millstone-block on which he sat,
He hurled it at his foemen, crude and fat.

The heavy stone flies on: where will it stop?
Upon whose head in thunder will it drop?
Run, Nicholas, run! For death your neck will claim!
Nothing can wash away a murderer's name!
  Out from your father's home your path goes blurred
Like a wild boar's when driven from the herd
Because with his sharp fangs he's slain his fellow
And the others drive him off with gash and bellow.

The mighty stone flew on, and where it fell
It smote a noble soldier clear to hell;
As in a mill, the weight his members crushes
And oozing juice from out his body gushes.
  The dusty soil drinks up the blood in haste,
A film of death upon his eyes is placed.
Thus the disaster that had stilled his breast
Brought sudden agony to all the rest.

At this the wrath of George surpassed belief,
The death of his bold soldier brought such grief:
And he was happy that his brother's deed
Could make his plans to ruin him succeed.
  His cunning, crooked purposes, he saw,
Could now be covered with the veil of law;
And with such guise his slaughter to invest,
He gave strict orders for his prompt arrest.

CANTO FOUR

"Now Nicholas' mother, grieving for her son,
In secret sent him food when he had none.
— Ilosvai

As when the antlered stag, by arrows hurt,
Darts to the forest-depths, with thickets girt,
To seek the soothing water of a spring
And herbs to heal his wound's keen suffering,
  But finds, alas, the spring is dried-out ground
And healing herbs are nowhere to be found;
Scratched by all branches, pricked by every thorn,
More dead than living is the beast forlorn,

Thus Nicholas strayed. Grief on his neck now rode;
Its spurs his anguished side incessant goad;
As in a burning barn a tied horse leaps,
His own heart in his breast its pounding keeps.
  The brook he roved; among the rushes hid;
But found no resting-place in all he did.
In vain he'd sought for solitude apart;
He found no remedy to heal his heart.

And like a reed-wolf, by a shepherd chased,
He entered a broad cane-brake's arid waste;
Yet every reed-stem whispered in his ear
That none in all the world had woes more drear.
  Root-stocks his pillow were, and reeds his bed;
God's firmament of blue stretched overhead.
At last the dark night took him to her breast
And pitched a tent of black above his nest.

Sleep like a butterfly came fluttering
With drowsy sweetness on its dusky wing,
But scarcely dared upon his eyes to light
Until the rosy dawn has routed night.
  Sleep was afraid of gnats, of reed-stems harsh,
The rustle of wild beasts that thronged the marsh,
The far-off noise of those who sought him out,
But most of all his soul's dismay and rout.

But when at last day touched the eastern hill,
The gnats sought out their roosts, and all was still.
On the lad's head sleep stole down in disguise
And spread two soothing wings above his eyes,
  Then kissed dream-honey on the boyish lips,
Culled from night's poppies with obsequious sips,
Honey of magic spells, with charms replete —
From Nicholas' mouth pure water trickled sweet.

But urgent hunger grudged him even that,
Roused him from slumber like an autocrat,
Drove him and spurred him with intent so harsh
That soon he wandered through the whole wide marsh.
  He sought the nests of wild birds in the muck,

The homes of moorhen, plover, gull and duck;
He wrecks their houses, steals their motley eggs,
Because his starving maw for fodder begs.

Having with eggs allayed his hunger's pains,
In making future plans he racked his brains.
Where should he go? What should he start? My God!
His ardent soul alone its pathway trod.
  He could depart and hide in some strange guise
But for his mother's face before his eyes.
If no news came, his safety sure to make,
Her agèd heart, he knew, would slowly break.

For three long days he brooded on his fate,
Then heard the reeds a rustling penetrate.
Thinking it was a wolf, he stayed his arm —
Only his brother would intend his harm.
  But it was Ben, his servant old and true,
Sent by his mother without more ado.
Upon his master's neck he falls with joy
And presently addresses thus the boy:

"How glad I am to find you, master dear!
For three long days I've rummaged for you here.
Through bogs I've sought you, as a wife a pin,
And lost all hope to find where you had been.
  That you were starved with hunger I was sure
Or eaten by the wild beasts on the moor.
Here is my satchel, open it and dine!
For there's roast meat, white bread and bottled wine."

With this, the old retainer rubbed his eye;
Then knelt down on the soil, where standing nigh
He'd set his satchel. This he now unpacked,
Course after course, in a delightful act.
  He even made a table, laying out
The satchel and its lid in joy devout,
Laid on it bread, the wine-flask and the meat,
And with two apples made the meal complete.

He then took out his clasp-knife, star-bedight,
And offered it in his young master's sight;
The latter took the knife and sliced the bread —
On it and meat right hungrily he fed.
  With joy the faithful Ben beheld him eat,
More pleased than if himself he downed the meat;
As if he ate himself, his mouth would move,
And his grey lashes showed a tear of love.

When the lad brought his appetite in check,
The old man fiercely wrung the wine-flask's neck;
The flask shrieked, and poured out its bubbling blood
In the old servant's hands in rosy flood.
  First with the wine his master's health he drank;
A few drops down his throat in fervour sank;
Then, seeking Nicholas with the flask to ply,
He wiped his mouth upon his shirt-sleeves dry.

Wine freed the old man's spirit like a sluice;
His heart swung open and his tongue got loose!
With Nicholas' grandsire he began his tale
(A whip-boy had he been, of small avail);
  Of Nicholas' sire and dame his yarns he'd forge,
Of Nicholas, too, and of his brother George;
Perhaps to the world's end his words had been,
If Nicholas had not sadly broken in:

"It hurts to hear you, while your heroes stalk!
Have done, I beg you, with this painful talk!
Once, sitting at the hearthside, glad and gay,
I could have listened until Judgement Day!
  Oft have you praised my father's noble force
Until the midnight ended our discourse.
Thereafter sleep stayed absent in the skies:
Often till dawn I couldn't close my eyes!

"What was, is past! That which was good is gone.
A new pen writes. My lot has changed anon.
I killed a man, an outlaw I became.
Who ever knows when I can clear my name?
  Yet I believe in God, the orphan's stay.

Perhaps I'll shed my blood, some noble day,
And wipe away the shame, obscene and dread,
That my dear brother brought upon my head.

"I was not born — these thoughts my spirit flog —
To hide among the rushes like a frog!
Nor was I made a cowherd, or a serf,
Or doomed to draw in haycocks from the turf.
I shall stay here until the night sets in
And shadows on the fields their watch begin.
Then, when across the world I make my track,
Even the wind will bring no message back!"

Ben, as he heard these words, became depressed
That his young master sought to leave the nest.
He stood in silence, then with sudden wails
Wrote crosses on his sandal with his nails.
Then he began to speak and begged the lad
Not to grow angry at the thing he bade,
But truly this was folly he proposed.
Why go from home, when home all good enclosed?

"Look here, dear master: In four days at best
Your brother George will leave for Budapest.
Then what has happened will be quite forgot.
You'll be our little King, as like as not.
Your honest servants would you leave alone,
Who feel for you as if you were their own.
Bimbó and Lombár would you leave behind,
Such oxen as one nowhere else could find?

"Your favorite pastimes would you quite forgo?
Who in the mill two sacks as one can stow?
Who lift a millstone, and all men confound?
Don't go, my dear! Stay on familiar ground!
Do not afflict with sorrow, through and through,
All the sad village folk of Nagyfalu!
The ancient house of Toldi guard and save!
Don't push your poor old mother to the grave!"

The lad kept silence as the old man pled.
At painful words, he merely shook his head.
But when his mother's name those pleas impart,
It rolls a stone upon the young man's heart.
He gives no answer as the old man pleads,
And sighing gazes at the whispering reeds;
Upon the whispering reeds he looks so long
That tear-drops to his lashes slowly throng.

As if he wiped away his forehead's sweat,
His finger to his eye he slowly set;
The tears along his finger flowed to earth
While he to Ben expressed these words of worth:
"Dear Ben, please tell my mother from my lips
That her son's star is darkened in eclipse.
No word or sight of it her love will win;
It will be lost as though it had not been.

"It will not really die, but disappear
As when a man shall hide for many a year,
But afterwards, when he returns again,
He shall be found a marvel among men.
My mother this shall hear in deep content;
Even small babes shall feel astonishment;
My mother's heart will leap with happiness.
May it not burst in all its joyful stress!"

So Nicholas spoke. Then Ben took up his task:
Back in the empty satchel put the flask,
Wiped off his clasp-knife with devoted care
And folded up the lardy linen there;
Then shouldering his knapsack, said Good-by
And set off homewards. His reluctant eye
Showed that he longed to stay. His course he knew,
And 'mid the waving rushes passed from view.

CANTO FIVE

Nicholas went wandering about the marsh,
Along the brook, amid the reed-fields harsh.
— Ilosvai

Day to the reedy marsh had closed her eye,
But left her big red mantle in the sky;
Then Night prevailed and stopped the crimson mirth,
Drawing a funeral cloth o'er sky and earth,
  Setting it neatly off with coffin-nails,
A million million stars in glittering trails;
Then laid the crescent moon, in silent walk,
A wreath of silver on the catafalque.

Then Nicholas on his unknown path set out,
Into the reedy marsh more deep he'd scout;
But just as if a rope had pulled him back,
He could not leave his mother by that track.
  He would look backward, but in vain, I ween;
There was no living creature to be seen.
He looked again, then turned himself around:
To take his leave of her, his steps were bound.

But as he backward turned in slow retreat,
The marshy soil gave way beneath his feet;
A wild wolf's lair below was manifest —
Two little whelps were whining in their nest.
  Nicholas was sorry to have trod upon them,
And bending down, he set caresses on them,
As when a shepherd boy, who trains his pup,
Pats his small, hairy head to cheer him up.

But here, kind pats were wholly out of place,
For suddenly reeds rustle; fierce of pace,
The she-wolf, entering with a fiendish howl,
Attacked him, and at once the fight grew foul.
  On her hind legs the wolf in fury rose,
Scratching with poisoned paws at Nicholas' nose;
Teeth in her ravening jaws gleamed weirdly white
And seemed to sparkle in the moon's fierce light.

Toldi turned quickly round to meet the attack;
Blows from his great fists beat the onset back;
From the beast's mouth and nose the blood-drops flew;
Its staring eyes bulged forth and bloodshot grew.
  Its tongue, which the wrecked mouth could not contain,
Was gashed on by the teeth in frenzied pain;
Like a mad dog's, its thick saliva fell;
None ever saw a beast more fit for hell.

Nicholas at last, irked by such savage heat,
Called for sure succor from his sturdy feet,
And as a bull might throw with horns unsoft,
With one great kick he hurled the wolf aloft.
  Down in the bog far off the creature dropped,
Breaking the span of reeds on which it flopped,
And as upon the earth it tumbled prone,
It thumped the surface with a mighty moan.

As if a devil in its hide were hid,
It bounded up, no faltering invalid,
And with a roar, its frenzy to unsheath,
Renewed the battle as with sharpened teeth.
  On Nicholas' shoulders then its paws were spread;
It gaped its jaws beside the youngster's head;
Its hind-legs on his knees pressed resolute —
God damn to hell the incorrigible brute!

All might be well, but now to help his kind
A howling he-wolf dashed in from behind.
How now, bold Nicholas? Does not terror fill you?
Had you a thousand lives, they still would kill you!
  Not in the least! One rather must suppose
That as the danger grew, his courage rose.
He will win out. Don't doubt the lad's a winner.
He was not born to be the grey wolves' dinner.

Then as the she-wolf in her grappling twists,
He held and pressed her throat with both his fists;
Her paws grow feeble in abrupt surprise,
Strength vanished from the sinews of her thighs;
  Her eyes protruded, full of tears and blood;

Her tongue was like a coulter in the mud;
Breath could not issue, prison'd in her throat;
Her jaws staying gaping, from their rage remote.

Toldi then raised her; with a mighty swing
He flailed her at her mate, about to spring.
Twice beaten back, the male, with tail a-twitch,
In utter fury bit at his own bitch.
  It was quite clear that he would rise again
Unless young Toldi slew him there and then.
He therefore pounded him: from such a fray
He would not wake until the Judgement Day.

Thus having slain the beasts by mighty deeds,
He took a little rest among the reeds.
The pair of young wolf-whelps were likewise dead,
Trampled and lifeless in the bulrush-bed.
  The parents lay, one here, one farther on,
The sickle moon upon their corpses shone;
Coolly she looked upon that reedy place,
A golden sauce-pan with a shining face.

Nicholas now racked his brains with worry's yeasts,
But not, I fear, in grieving for the beasts.
Of his own wolf he thought, his brother bad,
Who sought to eat him up and all he had.
  Why should his brother treat him like a cur?
Why would he be his executioner?
No ill to George did Nicholas e'er bequeath:
Why should he gnash upon him with his teeth?

If with the wolves he made comparison,
His brother was far worse to think upon.
Wild beasts are warlike to defend their lair;
Do not provoke them, and they will not care.
  When the starved belly urges them to kill,
They slay no more than would their needs fulfil.
From farmers' herds, only a tithe they win,
And never prey on their own kith and kin.

But see his brother, see that man of strife;
Why did he have designs on Nicholas' life?
Why did he seek his blood, in malice stony?
Why would he drive him from his patrimony?
  What if to him, who did his life pursue,
He meted what to wolfish souls is due?
Or are men out of tougher stuff contrived,
And George's death-day had not yet arrived?

Stop, Toldi, stop! Murder is your intent.
Do not in such a deed your grievance vent!
A murdered kinsman's blood to heaven cries
And calls for vengeance to the sky of skies!
  Know you, that if your brother you should kill,
Your soul you'd damned to everlasting ill.
Be not afraid, for God above you stands.
Leave all retaliation in his hands.

As if a quick resolve his mind had swept,
He rose, and to the creatures' corpses stepped,
Shouldered them swiftly and set out in wrath
Upon his dangerous nocturnal path.
  In headlong haste the tangled reeds he bent,
And left a swath behind him as he went.
The two dead wolves were dangling down his back
As to his mother's house he kept his track.

CANTO SIX

"And now it came to pass, George Toldi's
  mother
For Nicholas deeply grieved, his younger brother."
  Ilosvai

At the thorp's edge, beneath the fair moon's light,
The house of Lawrence Toldi glimmered white.
Behind it a great orchard spread out green,
Broad as some lowland forest's wide demesne.
  One doorway of the house the garden faced:
Here Madam Toldi's bedroom had been based,

Rosemary pots mourned on its window-sill.
This was the spot where Nicholas lingered still.

He laid the wolves upon the dewy grass;
On tiptoe, like a thief he seemed to pass
And went up to his mother's close-locked door.
Long time his ears some signs of life implore,
  But all in vain. High in the lintel gray,
Only a death-watch beetle ticked away.
He would have rapped, but fear his pulses gripped;
His fingers on the handle slid and slipped.

What was the reason for this sudden fear?
He could have faced old Satan with a sneer
But dread to startle her his zeal destroys,
Lest she should wake up frightened by the noise;
  For if he woke her up too suddenly,
She might not dare to open at his plea;
Nay, she might rouse the household with a shriek
And cancel every hope with her to speak.

Putting the wolves upon his shoulders wide,
He went round to the building's other side;
There, too, all living souls had gone to bed,
Even the dogs were sleeping in a shed.
  The door was open; George he could survey;
A coverlet of moonbeams on him lay;
And deep in slumber on the portico,
The sentinels were stretched out in a row.

With all asleep, he did not hesitate
But on the doorstep laid the wolves' twin weight
And seized with his great hands primordial
The spears that had been leaned against the wall,
  Then nailed the garments of the guards to earth
Lest they should quickly rise to prove their worth.
He stepped into the room. Ha, brother evil,
Now is the time for you to join the devil!

Then Nicholas watched, behind the mosquito-net,
His brother's snores in sequence rise and set.

Just take one grip! — had he a thousand souls,
An everlasting peace upon him rolls.
Said Nicholas softly: "Now I could commit it,
And rightly, but my conscience won't acquit it.
This time I'll spare you, and shall disappear,
And only leave a sign that I've been here."

And having spoken thus, the wolves he spread
Upon the edge of the old-fashioned bed,
And gently spoke to them: "There, there abide you!
Behold your elder brother lies beside you!"
Then into the next chamber he proceeds,
Where sits his mother in her widow's weeds.
Her folded hands upon the table lay
And over them her head bent sad and grey.

Sweet sleep had sought to ambush her, in vain;
He was unable to break through her pain.
At last he won, accomplishing his will
By borrowing the mantle of a chill;
Into her head his potions did he pour,
Down to her heels and back again once more,
Crippling her senses with his languor deep.
Thus must he work, before she fell asleep.

Nor was her silent slumber long to last;
Quickly, at Nicholas' steps its spell was past.
The lady startled when she heard him stir,
But Nicholas spoke, her terrors to deter:
"My dearest mother, do not be afraid!
For with no harm do I this house invade
Though in the darkness, like a wandering ghost.
By day-light, as you know, my life were lost.

The widow, at these words, felt no alarms.
But folded her dear son within her arms,
No space a farthing's span was surely missed
Upon his face, that was not softly kissed.
"Ah, do I see you then?" his mother cried.
"Through my despair for you I almost died.
Alas, a softer tone my tongue must keep —
Your brother in the next room lies asleep."

Such were her words. No more would she have said
Were they on the broad Hortobágy instead!
There had she clasped him in the same embrace
And rained maternal kisses on his face.
He felt her tremble, as emotion quelled her;
She would have fallen if he had not held her.
He, too, was deeply stirred, and did not dare
To answer while stark sorrow was his share.

Firmness he sought, but it was all in vain;
As if sharp needles gave his nostrils pain,
Or sharp horse-radish underneath his nose
Were grated, did it twist in tingling woes;
From his two eyes the tears that overflowed
On his dear parent's visage were bestowed;
As rillets down a hillside merge as one,
The twofold streams of tears together run.

Nicholas then steeled his soul from such despair.
He touched his forehead to his mother's hair;
Then gathering up his strength in vigour rude,
He somehow overthrew his weeping mood,
And soon addressed his mother, speaking thus:
"Cease now, dear mother, from embracing us.
My hours are numbered, and I dare not stay.
I must take leave, because I go away.

"I do not hope that I at home could live
With George — to whom may God his judgement give!
'Twould end, I fear, in my destroying him.
May God defend me from that seizure grim.
This is my message: Do not be oppressed.
Drive off the mighty terror from your breast.
Hopes for my sure return with gladness fill me
I trust in God; His mercy will not kill me.

"In my two arms enormous strength I feel.
In barn or mill I shall not waste my zeal.
My father's warlike deeds our annals grace;
Shall I alone bring shame upon our race?
I'll seek the King, a soldier to become,

I'll show for him some exploit mettlesome;
Nor shall I shame my brother's soul accurst —
Nay, from sheer envying, his spleen will burst.

"Therefore, dear mother, hear my earnest plea:
Don't worry or shed tears because of me.
Why sorrow ere their death for mortal men . . .
When even the deceased will rise again?"
  He would have talked in time's sheer disregard,
But the dogs started howling in the yard,
On hearing this, he straightway realized
That he had made a blunder ill-advised.

The anger of the dogs had been aroused
By scent of the two wolves while still they drowsed;
Servants would wake, the barking to report,
And Nicholas cut his conversation short:
  "Not for a moment longer dare I stay.
May the Lord bless you as I go away!
God bless you in this world, and in the other!
That is my heart's true wish, my darling mother."

Then "Bless you . . . bless you . . ." he the echo caught.
Who should bless whom was tangled in her thought;
But well she knew that God's all-seeing eye
The secrets of her inmost heart could spy.
  When from her breast the boy had passed again,
No poet could describe her fearful pain.
Her soul, that chained them both, in sorrow's chutes
Was not unclasped but torn out by the roots.

Meanwhile the beagles whined and whimpered still
And even sought the door with baying shrill;
The servants, with an effort, got up now;
George also was awakened by the row.
  "Who's there? What was it?" Everybody cried,
Until the two wolf-carcasses they spied.
" 'Tis Nicholas' work. Nobody else could do it.
Chase after him, you curs, or you will rue it!"

As if a nest of hornets rose to sting --
Such was that house's furious murmuring.
Colliding down the gallery they go;
On foot or horse, they eddy to and fro.
  Whither? No person knew their quarry's tracks.
All of them jumped about like maniacs.
At last George scolded them, in fury hollo'd,
Then took the lead and all the others followed.

But did the widow hear the hunt's wild sounds,
The horns, the shouting, and the howling hounds?
Heard she them bawling, "Hold him! Boldly snatch!",
Well knowing whom they meant to hold or catch?
  She did not hear it. As her son departed,
Her feeble feet gave way; and broken-hearted
She slowly fell unconscious on her bed;
Only God knows how long she lay as dead.

CANTO SEVEN

"He vowed, in pity for the lady's woe,
He would avenge her son's sad overthrow."
— Ilosvai

Those who on earth have neither friends nor pelf
Find their cause taken up by God himself.
See how he made poor Nicholas' case his own:
Across the moon an inky cloud was thrown;
  In utter darkness, nothing could be found,
Then thunder burst and lightning cracked around,
The wrath of God a village soldier slew --
At once he perished, without more ado.

George Toldi's filthy heart was full of dread
When God's own lightnings circled round his head;
His scattered dogs were called back by the horn;
His strayed men also gathered, all forlorn.
  The hours of night were drawing close to day
As he rode homeward with his drenched array.

And all the while his anger fiercer grew
Because his bloody plan had fallen through.

All night long, Nicholas wandered, staunch yet pale,
Braving the rain, the lightning and the gale.
And when the dawn the night afar had chased
He found himself amid a desert waste.
Who was his comrade as the day passed by?
The sun that followed him across the sky,
Caught up, passed on, and sank at last from sight,
Leaving him friendless in the sodden night.

Three days passed by: and on the fourth at noon
He saw in a mirage great mountains swoon;
He was amazed — the like he ne'er had seen —
Not the mirage but mountain peaks serene.
He hastened on and on, through weary hours;
When evening came, he glimpsed tall Buda's towers.
And just before the sunset hour he came
And saw the well-known field of Rákos' fame.

The field of Rákos close to Pest is set;
It was at Pest that he with evening met,
Beside a cemetery, in whose park
The mound of a new grave was looming dark.
Whose grave it was, he did not greatly care,
But — God Almighty! — who was standing there?
Surely his mother, in a mourning dress,
Bowed by a pair of crosses in distress!

Not she, but someone like her, it appears.
A stone would have been melted by her tears.
Why should not Nicholas make her grief his own,
Having a heart much softer than a stone?
His bosom filled with pity, up he stepped
And asked her who it was for whom she wept.
Then the sad widow who this watch was keeping
Answered his question with a storm of weeping.

"Oh, my dear lad! Your word my sorrow stuns.
Today I buried here two gallant sons:

Upon an isle, by a Czech's hand they fell,
And may God never save his soul from Hell!"
  She spoke no more. This much was agonized,
For with her grief her tongue was paralyzed.
Down on the black mound of the grave she knelt
And bowed there in the anguish that she felt.

This lasted long, and Nicholas held his peace
Until her lamentation's voice might cease.
And when at last her tears had had their vent,
After a time her sorrow seemed nigh spent.
  Then spoke he: "Madam, now your tears have end,
What is your case, I cannot comprehend.
Who slew, and why, I have not understood:
And is there no one to claim blood for blood?"

On hearing this, the lady stood erect
And all her cruel affliction sharply checked.
The outline of her face was lean and wan
And under glooming brows her great eyes shone:
  "Blood calls for blood, you say. But I possess
No one to succor me in my distress.
My heart is like an autumn stubble-field
From which the scythe has swept its golden yield."

Then Toldi said: "Don't cry. For from their biers
Your sons will not be raised up by your tears.
But may the Lord bring doom upon my neck
If I do not take vengeance on that Czech.
  I therefore beg you, and it will avail,
Tell me the whole of an unvarnished tale.
I have a widowed mother of my own
And can have pity on a widow's moan."

The lady by this time had taken heart
And now set forth her tale in every part:
Upon a Danube isle a Czech knight fought
In single combat, and great havoc wrought.
  Of boasts and bluster was his conversation,
And ever he abused the Magyar nation.
Many had fought, and died, and left to mind them
Widows and orphans in lament behind them.

But yesterday her sons had sought him out,
Her sons, the Magyars' best beyond a doubt.
In all the world were none so kind as they,
And now together in one grave they lay.
The world grew fearful. There was none tomorrow
To fight the cruel Czech and bring him sorrow.
When morning came, he would be there at ease,
Spouting his obscene words and blasphemies.

When Nicholas now the whole affair had heard,
He did not, of his purpose, say a word,
But took his leave, and set out for the city,
Revolving mighty plans amid his pity.
From street to street his hasty steps would stray
As if he were familiar with the way;
Yet, of a fact, he only roamed around,
For neither food nor shelter had he found.

(To be continued.)

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REVIEW ARTICLE

Quo Vadis Transylvania?

Andrew Ludányi

The Hungarian Nationality in Romania. By Institute of Political Sciences and of Studying [sic] the National Question. Bucharest: Meridiane Publishing House, 1976. 53 pp.

Transylvania: The Hungarian Minority in Rumania. By Julia Nanay. Problems Behind the Iron Curtain Series No. 10; Astor, Florida: Danubian Press, Inc., 1976. 85 pp.

Scholars are hesitant to review books, pamphlets and other works which deal with problems on a non-scholarly level. This is a serious mistake. It leaves unevaluated the writings not only of unorthodox new talent, but also the writings of charlatans, propagandists and pseudo-scholars. Yet, because the former are unrecognized and because the latter are unchallenged, society is shortchanged. Thus, unscrupulous and questionable sources may become respectable enough to be quoted for the documentation of misleading or erroneous assumptions and myths and illusions are perpetuated which should have been weeded out long ago. The perpetuation of such distortions of reality continues to plague the understanding of the historical role and the political relations of the peoples in East Central Europe as well.

Two recent additions to such popular illusion-building have been the pamphlet published by the Rumanian Institute of Political Sciences entitled *The Hungarian Nationality in Romania* and the booklet compiled by Julia Nanay for the Danubian Press of Astor, Florida, entitled *Transylvania: The Hungarian Minority in Rumania.* Both of these works were written in an emotion-filled atmosphere, seeking to justify the Rumanian and Hungarian positions respectively, relative to the treatment of Transylvania's inhabitants by the government of present-day Rumania.[1] Both as works of propaganda and as sources of informa-

tion, they leave a great deal to be desired. Yet in both there are positive as well as negative features.

In *The Hungarian Nationality in Romania,* published by the Rumanian Institute of Political Sciences, the major merit can be found in the "Annexes" which are appended to the text. Annex #1 lists the constitutional, electoral, statutory, civil-criminal, legal definitions of the Hungarians' and other nationalities' rights and obligations in present-day Rumania. Unfortunately the listing is incomplete. It neglects to discuss those laws which hinder Hungarian economic, educational and cultural opportunities in Rumania (*e.g.,* Decree-Law 278 [May 11, 1973] which requires a minimum of 25 elementary school students and 36 high school students to maintain Hungarian classes).[2] However, it does provide a complete list of the positive, *symbolically* significant general references to majority-minority relations (pp. 28–34).

Annex #2 provides a list of industrial enterprises which have "been commissioned or developed during the 1966–1975 period" in those counties of Transylvania which have "a more numerous Hungarian population" (pp. 35–38). Unfortunately, the listing has a number of shortcomings. First, it fails to differentiate between "commissioned" and actually "developed" enterprises. Secondly, it does not indicate what percentage of the local Hungarian inhabitants actually benefit from these enterprises. Industrialization in itself is not always a boon to the local population. It can be, and has been, used to dilute the ethnically compact Hungarian areas of Transylvania (*e.g.,* Cluj-Napoca [Kolozsvár], the largest city in Transylvania, was 84% Hungarian in 1890; its population has been systematically Rumanianized since 1918, mainly through industrialization and urbanization. Thus, the Hungarians' share of the total population was 83.4% in 1910. This percentage has been reduced to 54.2% by 1930, 50.3% by 1956 and 45% by 1966, so that the Rumanians [12.4% of the population in 1910] have actually become a majority of the city's inhabitants. The population of the city grew in these 85 odd years from 30,000 to over 205,000 at the present.)[3] Thirdly, the listing gives only Rumanian place names, creating the impression that the towns are historically Rumanian. Any objective presentation should provide the place names of Transylvanian cities in all relevant languages (*e.g.,* Tirgu-Mures [Marosvásárhely], Sibiu [Nagyszeben, Hermannstadt], etc.). Only such a portrayal can really acquaint people with the actual multi-national tradition and development of the area.

Annexes #3 and #4 summarize the publishing opportunities of the

Hungarians in Rumania in terms of their daily-weekly newspapers as well as monthly, bimonthly, quarterly and annual periodicals, journals and yearbooks (pp. 39 45). This provides a profile of existing Hungarian publications in Rumania. It is a useful listing insofar that it indicates the age, concern, frequency of publication, number of copies and number of pages of the various papers and periodicals appearing in Hungarian. Shortcomings of the listing are primarily two. First, it does not relate the vital statistics of these publications to their previous development. For example, it does not tell us whether the 25,000 copies of *Igazság* (published in Cluj-Napoca [Kolozsvár]) is an improvement over the past or a reduction. The same is also true in reference to the number of pages or the frequency of appearance of each one of these publications. In view of the cutbacks announced in 1974 because of a "paper shortage," it would be interesting to compare the statistics given for 1976 with those of 1973 or 1969 or 1966. Furthermore, it would be interesting to compare the ratio of cutbacks in minority publications with cutbacks among majority publications. A second shortcoming is that this listing provides place names, again, only in Rumanian.

The last "Annexes" in *The Hungarian Nationality in Romania* (pp. 48-52, not numbered) are three press excerpts, two from the Hungarian literary weekly *Élet és Irodalom* (Budapest) and one from *Target*, the paper of the Fifth General Assembly of the Ecumenical Council held at Nairobi, Kenya in 1975. These excerpts are direct responses to specific charges against Rumanian policies relative to freedom of publication and religion. The first two excerpts commend Rumanian efforts in the publishing field, while the third one is a favorable testimony by minority church leaders from Rumania. There is no place to reflect on the specific testimonies. It is perhaps enough to note two weaknesses. In the case of the first two excerpts, the information is provided without any explanation of their objective. Thus, in themselves they are incomplete and incomprehensible for an uninitiated audience. In the case of the third excerpt, the testimony includes an explanation, but it comes from a source which is obviously constrained and not disinterested. The excerpts also suffer from numerous English mistakes in style and composition (*e.g.*, "mispresented" instead of "misrepresented" on p. 53) and from errors in facts and or evaluation. For example, on p. 52, it is contended that: "Religious journals are printed by the Protestant Churches in Hungarian and German languages, for their clergy, for their theological schools as well as for their believers." As Annex #4 (p. 43) points out, there are only two Hungarian language religious publications, *Református Szemle* and *Keresztény Magvető*. The former is a

bimonthly appearing in 1,000 copies, while the latter is a quarterly appearing in 500 copies. It is unlikely that these are capable of satisfying an audience composed of 700,000 Calvinist, 700,000 Roman Catholic, 50,000 Unitarian and 30,000 Evangelical readers (p. 23).[4]

The text of *The Hungarian Nationality in Romania* does not even possess the limited value of its annexes. It is clearly and simply *apologia*. Altogether the text is only twenty-one pages (pp. 5 26). It is divided into four sections, providing a historical-demographic background, a brief review of economic, political and social conditions, a discussion of educational and cultural opportunities and a summary of religious rights as these relate to the Hungarians.

The presentation attempts to provide an easily understandable and favorable picture of Rumania's treatment of its Hungarian population. It does not succeed for both stylistic and substantive reasons. Awkward sentences, misspelled words (*e.g.*, "monther tongue" p. 24, "jear" p. 43) and inappropriate word usage (*e.g.*, "swap of experience" instead of "exchange of experience" p. 43) hinder an effective communication of the message. Similarly, substantive errors or distortions are bound to irritate the informed observers of East Central European affairs. Examples of the latter include the blurring of the significance of certain statistics by relating them to an imprecise time perspective. In relation to the publication of religious books in Hungarian, the given statistics are related to "the last few years" (p. 25). What does this mean? The last two, five or ten years? Another example is the statement that Dávid Ferenc (1520 1579), the founder of Hungarian Unitarianism, was born in Cluj-Napoca (p. 25). In 1520 there was no such city! To be historically accurate, he was born in Kolozsvár [Klausenburg], today renamed Cluj-Napoca. This use of only Rumanian place names, even when they do not fit the context, is a recurring abuse. In the first section entitled "General Data", other questionable or misleading statements are also made. On p. 6, it is contended that the "Hungarian feudal state" only came into being "in the 12th century." On this same page it is also contended that the "Szecklers (*i.e.*, Székelys) . . . lived alongside the Romanians from whom they also learned the art of writing." It is indeed ironic that such claims can be put forward when the only *written* source used by present day Rumanian historians to "prove continuity" in medieval Transylvania is the *Gesta Hungarorum* of the Hungarian King Bela III.

Julia Nanay's *Transylvania: The Hungarian Minority in Rumania* is not as blatantly propagandistic. Yet, it is also ineffective in shedding light on the actual state of affairs in Transylvania. It, too, is weighted

down by serious shortcomings in both presentation and content. This is really unfortunate, because Nanay's little book could have become something more than an ineffective propaganda pamphlet. With a few re-writings, a strict editor who could have weeded out unsupported generalizations and factual errors, and a thorough proofreading, it could have become a useful little handbook on Transylvania and the fate of its Hungarian inhabitants.

From the "Foreword" and "Table of Contents" to the "Appendixes" and maps, the presentation is marred by all sorts of weaknesses. The maps included in the booklet are either hand-drawn by an amateur or reproduced from some other source without giving credit to the original source. The hand-drawn map on p. 23 is an example of hasty preparation. The two maps reproduced at the end of the book are too dark and are not even properly labeled.

The carelessly prepared maps are used to supplement a poorly written text. Practically every page contains a meaningless sentence, a weakly constructed paragraph or an inaccurately used concept, phrase or word. Two examples will have to suffice. On p. 11, the following sentence appears: "Nationalism emerged as one of the heroic stalwarts of national unity and oftentimes, of minority anguish." and, on p. 28, "Disunity was a direct consequence of a meshing of allegiances." Similar examples could be listed *ad infinitum*.

Confused word usage and inconsistent use of place names makes *Transylvania: The Hungarian Minority in Rumania* even less understandable. Like the Meridiane publication, the Astor, Florida brochure also uses mainly Rumanian place names. On p. 25 an effort is made to provide Hungarian names for the cities along the present Rumanian-Hungarian border. The result is "Nagy Károly" and "Nagy Bánya," when it should be "Nagykároly" and "Nagybánya." More serious, but just as uneducated, is the misquoting of the formula for Stalinist nationality policy as "nationalistic in form, socialistic in substance" (p. 30) when it should be "national in form, socialist in substance." A similarly serious weakness is the loose use of the word "race" instead of nationality or ethnicity when discussing population statistics on pp. 31–36. Other abuses would be the terms "fascist" on p. 19 and the term "judeo-communism" on p. 24. This sampling is merely the tip of an immense iceberg of word abuses and name errors.

Incorrect labeling of social reality indicates an inadequate grasp of that reality. It also indicates a lack of rigorous research. Results of the latter shortcoming are also legion. Only the most glaring instances will be mentioned. In the "Foreword" on p. 5 it is contended that: "The U.S.

is alone in the world in basing its population growth on multi-national immigration." What about Brazil, Canada and Australia, to mention only the most obvious others?! On pp. 31–35, reference is made to the census of 1952 and statistics are quoted based on this census. There was no census taken by Rumania in that year. The only post-war censuses this reviewer is aware of are those of 1948, 1956, 1966 and one that is being processed at the present writing. In Appendix II "Geopolitical and Demographic Features of Transylvania," reference is made to an article written by G. Satmarescu for a journal entitled *East Central Europe* "edited by Professor Fischer-Galati of the University of Colorado" (p. 85). According to this reference, the Satmarescu article estimated that there were 2.4 million Hungarians in Rumania. This is in error in one respect; the Satmarescu article appeared in the *East European Quarterly*, VIII, No. 4 (Jan., 1975) not *East Central Europe!*

More serious than the above errors is the unquestioned acceptance of the Rumanian propaganda position relative to the Second Vienna Award of 1940. In the "Table of Contents" (p. 7) we can read the following: "The Vienna Diktat and the release [sic] of northern Transylvania to Hungary." This is seconded by the discussion that follows on pp. 22–25. Time after time the Vienna Award is referred to as a "Diktat." It is the height of inefficiency for a Hungarian propaganda brochure to support the claims of Rumanian propaganda. The Vienna Award was the result of an arbitral decision. Hitler's fear of military complications on the eve of the attack on the Soviet Union led him to exert pressure on Rumania and Hungary to resolve their dispute over Transylvania. Both were constrained to make a formal request for arbitration. The award was based on a presentation of both the Rumanian and the Hungarian claims to the area. At the arbitration table Germany's Ribbentrop favored the Rumanians while his Italian opposite number, Ciano, favored the Hungarians. Finally a compromise was worked out between the two positions which divided Transylvania between Rumania and Hungary. Furthermore, the population of Northern Transylvania had a Hungarian plurality (1,380,506 Hungarians to 1,029,470 Rumanians) while Southern Transylvania had a Rumanian majority (2,274,561 Rumanians to 363,206 Hungarians) with the remainder of the population made up mainly of Germans, Jews and Serbs.[5] The Rumanian population statistics used by the author to condemn this decision are highly questionable on the basis of her own discussion of Rumanian census figures (pp. 32–36) as well as other available Rumanian and Hungarian census results.[6]

The "Diktat" blunder is even more surprising in light of the more

balanced presentation of the Vienna Award provided in Appendix I, "An Historical Background," (p. 83). It is hard to imagine that the author of the brochure was unfamiliar with the contents of Appendix I. At the same time, this Appendix (pp. 79–84) is the best written and most effectively presented part of the entire booklet. Unfortunately there is no indication from where these pages have been obtained. The analysis of the content, however, convinces this reviewer of two things: One, that the author of this Appendix was not the same person as the author of the entire brochure. Two, that the Appendix is taken from a more dated source. Since no mention is made in it of the most recent Rumanian Constitution (1967), but the 1952 document is specifically cited (p. 84), we can surmise that it was written sometime in the late 1950's or early 1960's, – too long ago to be the work of the brochure's young author.

Aside from Appendix I, the Bibliography (pp. 75–77) deserves some praise. It includes many of the English-language sources that relate to the fate of contemporary Transylvania and the destiny of East Central Europe. It could have been a little more selective, but for the purpose of the booklet in question, it is more than adequate. In retrospect, the text does not reflect an adequate awareness of the wealth of information listed in the bibliography. The extensive footnoting notwithstanding (pp. 59–74), the brochure remains a research paper that has been hastily prepared for publication. The footnotes indicate merely that a great deal of effort has been exerted to compile the information. However, it is not effective documentation. Some of the explanatory footnotes reflect the same unclarity as the text. One example is footnote #17, which states: "Xenophobia, like patriotism, enters into nationalism but is not a part of its doctrinal composition." Footnote #23, on the other hand, must have been left out when the brochure was rushed to the printer. I seriously doubt that anyone in Astor, Florida read more than the title of *Transylvania: The Hungarian Minority in Rumania,* either before or after it left the printer. This is irresponsible, and it is unfair, not just to the readers interested in Transylvania, but also to the young author whose name is linked to the brochure.

Aside from shoddy workmanship, both of the booklets reviewed are objectionable for one other, more weighty, reason. The appearance of these booklets will not draw Rumanians and Hungarians to understand each other any better. No serious effort is made in either instance to present an objective analysis. Thus, old myths and illusions are reinforced, thereby projecting into the future the nationality hatreds of the recent past. An effort at an objective evaluation — which would also have demonstrated the many shortcomings of present-day Rumanian

treatment of Transylvanian Hungarians — would have avoided the intensification of polemics. Instead, it could have opened the door to a discussion on a question that requires understanding, honesty and humanity on *both sides!*

NOTES

1. The news of deteriorating majority-minority relations, with distinctly adverse consequences for the minority, prompted many Hungarian-Americans to demonstrate against Rumanian policies. These demonstrations (May 8, 1976, in front of the Rumanian Permanent Mission of the United Nations in New York, and June 16, 1976, in front of the Capitol, Washington, D.C.) coincided with Rumanian efforts to obtain the "most-favored-nation" trading status with the United States. The Meridiane booklet appeared during the summer of 1976 almost in direct response to these demonstrations and the lobbying on Capitol Hill. The Danubian Press, in turn, came out with its publication in the fall of 1976. For more information on the events of 1976 see: "Rumania's Most Favored Nation Status and Human Rights Violations Against the Hungarian Minority in Rumania: Speeches, Public Statements and Interviews of U.S. Senators and Congresmen, May-November 1976," Committee for Human Rights in Rumania, New York, Dec., 1976, and "Testimony of László Hámos on Continuing Most-Favored-Nation Tariff Treatment of Imports from Rumania," before the Subcommittee on Trade of the Committee on Ways and Means; New York: Committee for Human Rights in Rumania, Sept. 14, 1976. For the series of news stories which sparked all this activity see: "Bureaucratic Chicanery against the Churches in Rumania," *Neue Züricher Zeitung* (Zürich, Switzerland) Feb. 1/2, 1975; "Transylvania's Ethnic Strains," *The Financial Times* (London) April 2, 1975; "New Curbs on Art Likely in Rumania," *New York Times*, May 28, 1976; and "Repression Rise Seen in Rumania, Emigration and Travel Is Held Further Restricted," *New York Times*, May 30, 1976.
2. "Transylvania's Ethnic Strains," *The Financial Times, Ibid.*
3. The ethnic evolution of all the major Transylvanian cities is summarized in the as yet unpublished "Statistical Studies on the Last Hundred Years in Central Europe" compiled by the Mid-European Center, New York, 1968. Also see: G. D. Satmarescu, "The Changing Demographic Structure of the Population of Transylvania," *East European Quarterly* VIII (Jan., 1975), pp. 432-433; Elemer Illyes, *Erdély változása: Mitosz és valóság* (München: Aurora, 1975), p. 17.
4. These Rumanian statistics on the number of Calvinists, Roman Catholics, Unitarians and Evangelicals is probably much too low. However, even if we would accept them as a valid estimate, their correlation with the total number of copies of religious publications (p. 43) is in itself incriminating!
5. *Recensamantul General al Romaniei din 1941 6 Aprilie: Date Sumara Provizorii* (Bucuresti: Institutul Central de Statistica, 1944), Table 1, p. ix; "Rezultatele Recensamantului Maghiar 1941," *Comunicari Statistice*, No. 1 (Jan. 15, 1945), Table 18, pp. 14-15.
6. *Ibid.*

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Book Reviews

Kard és Kasza [Sword and Sickle]. By Albert Wass. A Literary Guild Publication, 1976. Pp. 860.

Albert Wass left Hungary after the Second World War. Although he is far removed from his native Transylvania, under the blue Florida skies he continues to write about that land as if he had left it only yesterday.

Wass is not one of those trend-following writers who exploit sex in order to appease certain elements of the reading public. He never transgresses the bounds of good taste; yet he is popular among Hungarians and non-Hungarians alike in many parts of the world.

His major works are: *A tizenhárom almfa* [Thirteen Apple Trees], *Adjátok vissza hegyeimet* [Give Me Back My Mountains], *Valalki tévedett* [Someone Has Made a Mistake], *Magukrahagyottak* [The Forsaken]. These are not only entertaining novels; judging by the reviews in the non-Hungarian press, they have achieved world-wide recognition. Wass's books have been translated into German, English, Dutch and Spanish; they have brought the attention of many nations to the peculiarities of the traditions, history and spirit of the Hungarian people.

There are readers who, at first, note only his unique style, his rich vocabulary, and interesting sentence construction. But sooner or later everyone realizes that Wass has an important message. In one of his novels a mortally wounded man asks a girl to teach him to pray. The girl bends down her head and prays: "Our father who art in heaven..." "Our father. . ." repeats the man submissively. Then he bursts out "why in heaven? why not here on earth? He is needed here, not in heaven. . ."

Another of his novels, *Elvásik a veres csillag* [The Red Star Wanes], reveals Wass's peculiar characteristic, the ability to introduce warm and clean humour into a tragic story. This is not an attempt on his part to make his novels more colourful. It is a product of his inner joyfulness which is present even in his descriptions of the misfortunes of Hungarian Transylvanians during and after the Second World War. This

talent enables Wass to depict the sufferings of his people in a manner palatable even to non-Hungarians.

Wass's new book, *Sword and Sickle,* is an historical novel. Part I is a chronicle, not only of a family, but also of the Hungarian nation through nine hundred years. The author's breadth of knowledge is revealed by his description of a people's evolution, spirit and traditions. The second part is a description of the modern age, the era of the Second World War. It is not a dull report on the politics and diplomacy of the day, but a lively, touching story of a people, the Hungarians of Transylvania. It carries the reader with the story and makes him share the joys, grief and cares of the novel's heroes. The author's message is clear. It is wrong to place the burden of guilt for the Hungarians' misfortunes on scapegoats such as the "aristocracy" or the "clergy". Hungarians were collectively responsible for the tragedy that overtook them, and they all must individually bear the burden of that responsibility.

The sword and the sickle are symbols. The former is indispensable in the conquest of the homeland and its defence against external foes. But one can retain the homeland only with the sickle, the plow: through the cultivation of the soil, through backbreaking and honest toil.

Wass has received many literary honours, but he has not stopped writing. He has now presented us with a unique book which combines joy and sadness, encouragement and warning. This is a work of eternal validity, for today's man, who has conquered space but keeps stumbling on earth, needs moral guidance. After reading this book the despondent will raise his head, the sad will smile, and those who had lost hope will discover light in the seemingly dark future. What more can a writer offer to his readers?

Holland — Erzsébet Kisjókai

Quest for a New Central Europe: A Symposium. Edited by Julius Varsányi. Adelaide – Sydney: Australian Carpathian Federation, 1976. 295 pp. ISBN 0 9597246 0 3.

In his introduction to the work, Dr. Varsányi describes its purpose in the following terms:

> This is not an attempt to pass moral judgements on a particular political reality, but rather, a scrutiny of its underlying facts and superimposed features, in an attempt to determine the degree of validity of this reality, and the viability of an alternative form of regional arrangement.

The alternative proposed is regional integration in East Central Europe, defined as "all the countries . . . situated between the two German states and the Soviet Union: Austria, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Rumania, and Yugoslavia." This integration is to be accomplished through the guaranteed neutralization of the area and its voluntary participation in the proposed regional structure.

As several of the contributors point out, the idea of some regional arrangement in the Danubian area is not a new one. The individual articles are designed to show that no insuperable obstacles of a geographic, historical, economic, or legal nature exist to prevent some form of integration. The ethnic diversity problem is recognized and dealt with at some length. Various practical and legal solutions are proposed to deal with this internal problem.

It is in the area of external political relations that problems arise. The only article specifically labeled "political" deals with Austrian neutrality. Dr. Felix Ermacora, Austrian legal specialist and member of the Austrian Parliament, describes in some detail the practices and policies of his country's internationally recognized neutrality. In concluding his article, Ermacora indicates that permanent neutrality is only effective "if it is in the framework of the big powers of the region" and "if its activities are generally recognized at least by the states of the respective region." He also points out that the hegemonial power in the area would have to acquiesce in the neutralization process.

It is this practical political consideration which creates difficulty. The Soviet Union is not likely to acquiesce in any arrangement which would leave a divided Germany on the far side of a belt of neutralized states. Until some permanent resolution to the German problem is implemented (if then), the Soviet Union is unlikely to permit any Central European regroupment which would diminish its power position in the area.

Neither the Brezhnev Doctrine nor the Sonnenfeldt Doctrine offers much hope to believers in a neutralized Central European federation. Each doctrine envisions continued Russian involvement in the region. The recent elaboration of West European "Eurocommunism" by the Spanish, Italian, and French Communist parties adds a new complication. The doctrine appears to present a challenge to U.S. and Soviet political interests throughout Europe. If the two major powers attempt to limit the political impact of the Eurocommunists, the result may well be a strengthening of the status quo in each half of Europe.

The circumstances surrounding the book's publication are intriguing. The book, dealing with Central Europe, is published by the Australian

Carpathian Federation, and printed by the Dai Nippon Printing Company in Hong Kong. A more truly international venture could hardly be imagined. A careful reading of some of the articles leads to the suspicion that Australian Carpathians are really Australo-Hungarians (pardon the pun) in disguise. The term "Carpathian Basin", rather than Hungary, is used regularly in the text, often with the basic assumption that the basin would serve as the focal point of the integration movement.

From an over-all perspective, the articles are uneven in quality and interest. The translation of the Ermacora article is undoubtedly correct, but a bit stilted. Typographical errors are an occasional minor annoyance.

While the book is intended to promote a political goal of sorts, most of the articles selected are neither political nor polemical in content. They have been drawn from a wide variety of academic disciplines. Graphs and charts provide statistical information on population factors, natural resources and trade. One need not be an academic specialist in order to profit from reading the work, although its primary appeal will be to the Central and East European devotee.

Indiana University of Pennsylvania Edward E. Platt

A Short History of Hungary. By Zoltán Halász. Translated by Csaba Szabó. Budapest: Corvina Press, 1975. Distributed by Imported Publications Inc. of Chicago. 275 pp. Illustrations. $10.00 cloth.

Tastefully turned out by Corvina, this historical primer presents and updates for English-language readers the interpretation of Hungary's past familiar to us from the work of the late, outstanding Marxist historian Erik Molnár. The translation is nearly flawless and idiomatic, though we hope that the rendering of the 1918 Károlyi *őszirózsás forradalom* as the "Michaelmas Daisy Revolution" will prove to be less risibility-inducing in Britain than in America.

Structurally the book is disproportionate. The first fourteen centuries of Hungarian prehistory and history ending in 1900 receive 174 pages; the ensuing seventy years, 87. More space is devoted to the 10th Hungarian Party Congress than to the Reformation, about the same as the author gives to the Rákóczi and Kossuth Wars of Independence each. The illustrations are excellent but there are no maps. The translator's practice of using Hungarian place names in discussing events taking place in territories detached from Hungary in 1918–1920 (Pozsony, Érsekujvár, Gyulafehérvár, Balázsfalva, Világos, Liptószent-

miklós, etc.) makes it impossible for the non-Hungarian reader to trace the narrative on modern maps published outside Hungary. Similarly, the use of a correct but unfamiliar German geographical nomenclature instead of place names familiar from English historical writing (for example, Höchstädt for Blenheim) fails to prompt instantaneous reaction in the lay reader's mind.

Methodologically the text, which otherwise reads well, lapses into weaknesses characteristic of dogmatic historiography. Hypothesis is presented as historical fact, as on p. 15: "The ordinary Magyar [of the early 10th century] had the choice of two alternatives: to join the armed bands or . . . to till the soil," etc. Historical fact incongruous with the justification of a synthesis is omitted, as on p. 243: "Ferenc Nagy, who was in Switzerland at the time . . . was summoned by the government to return home. . . Nagy refused and sent a letter of resignation instead." The non-captive reading public has the omitted facts available in Ferenc Nagy's *Struggle Behind the Iron Curtain*, Macmillan: New York, 1948, pp. 405-426 and in the open diplomatic archives of the West. The book ends with a presentation of the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Hungary (p. 247) as a curtainraiser to the end of the dialectical process in that country and so perforce of Hungarian history.

The 1975 publication of this little book in Budapest roughly coincided with the signing in Helsinki of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. The fact that it is being freely distributed in America by Imported Publications, Inc. of Chicago should be partial proof of U.S. compliance with those "third-basket" desiderata of the Final Act which call for reciprocity in the free movement of ideas and in access to printed information. We hope that the Hungarian counterpart of the American Imported Publications, Inc. will soon be, if it isn't already, as free of government control in importing and distributing information originating anywhere in the world as is the Chicago firm which has placed Zoltán Halász's book in our hands.

Fort Thomas, Kentucky — Leslie C. Tihany

The Crises of France's East Central European Diplomacy, 1933-1938. By Anthony T. Komjathy. Boulder: East European Quarterly, 1977. Distributed by Columbia University Press. 277 pp.

As a general rule scholars would agree that highly critical reviews should be kept as brief as possible, if indeed they should be written at all.

Now and then, however, this rule deserves to be discarded in the interests of professional standards — standards which must apply to scholars and publishers alike.

Dr. Komjathy calls his book, *The Crises of France's East Central European Diplomacy, 1933–1938.* One need not quarrel with a title, but one has every right to measure its appropriateness against the book's contents. It is true that one can live with the "East Central" designation, although the Introduction makes it clear that "Central" would have been quite adequate (2). So too we can accept with grace the idea of successive "crises", even though the crises identified by the author generally failed to be regarded as such by French statesmen of the day. And we can even suppress our curiosity as to why the book ends without explanation in 1938, shelving for the moment our doubts that Munich was "the last diplomatic defeat of Britain and France before the outbreak of World War II" (210). But we can only swallow so much.

The title suggests that this is to be a book about French foreign policy with special reference to Central Europe. In fact, the emphasis is reversed in the work itself. Much attention is paid here to the Central European states, "Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Rumania and Yugoslavia", and relatively little to France. For instance, the Munich affair is rather brusquely dismissed with the remarkable pronouncement that "the Munich crisis became the crisis of Britain and not of France" (208). In the long run we may be grateful for such facility, for a good deal more research would have been necessary in order to make the exercise worthwhile. Is it really possible to say anything about France in the 1930's without having read the eleven volume post-war commission of inquiry entitled *Les événements survenus en France de 1933 à 1945?* Can one really afford to venture remarks on French military preparations before having consulted Weygand's memoirs, or Bankwitz, or Tournoux, or Challener, or at least some of the vast periodical literature on the subject? Searching in vain for references to such works in this book, the reader might properly balk at some of the author's suggestions: for instance, that which blames the French for squandering the Polish alliance by not planning for the "speedy occupation of Denmark" (31). And if one is really going to explore French policy in Central Europe, can one afford to ignore the ambassadorial memoirs of Laroche, Noel, Coulondre, Puaux and Chambrun, the published papers of Lukasiewicz, the collection of papers in *Studia Balcanica* (1973) or even the monographs of Budurowycz, Wathen, Gehl and Bruegel? In a word, the rare instances of unpublished source materials, combined with League of Nations publications and the pub-

lished diplomatic documents from Germany, Britain, France, America and Hungary, do not compensate for what constitutes some quite extraordinary omissions.

The kindest thing that one is able to suggest is that such omissions are responsible for some equally extraordinary judgments. Weygand's memoirs alone should have pre-empted references to the "undisguised admiration of French military experts for the Soviet armed forces" (61), just as they would have qualified the notion of the "militarily useless Soviet mutual assistance" (139) by pointing up the principal French desire to avoid any renaissance of the Rapallo agreements between Germany and Russia. Similarly, many of the neglected sources would surely have encouraged, if not demanded, qualifications for such contentions, that French "military leaders . . . proved to be incapable of understanding the influence of changed technology on strategy" (213), that the French felt "absolutely secure . . . behind the Maginot line" (139), that Popular Front foreign policy "did not accept the validity of natural alliances" but allowed "ideology and not realistic interests" to determine "allies and enemies" (78). Finally, one would have hoped that more careful research might have reduced the chances of presenting the French as quite unimaginably stupid. If a point is incorrect in the first place, no amount of repetition is going to change the fact; and thus the reviewer is moved to deny the claim that Laval was "naive" enough to believe that "the Little Entente would unconditionally follow the desires of France" (107) and to deny that Blum was "naive" enough to believe that "Britain had the same feelings vis à vis Germany as France did" (171). Throughout this work it is repeatedly suggested that the French were simply oblivious to the special and competing needs of their individual allies and clients.

One is less confident that problems of documentation are responsible for the many internal inconsistencies. For instance, what are we to believe after having been told that Titulescu's rapprochement with Russia was "pursued over the objections of his government" (149) and that "the government agreed with Titulescu's rapprochement attempts with the Soviet Union" (161)? Should we conclude that Blum entertained "the hope of reconciliation" with Italy, which he considered "absolutely necessary" (165), or rather should we accept that Blum did not care about offending Mussolini (176), that he refused to believe in the Duce's sincerity, and that he "excluded the possibility of any cooperation with Italy" (178)? Are we to believe that French trading policy with Central Europe was "disastrous" (26) because it wilfully neglected the economic interests of France's client states, or should we

temper such an indictment by recognizing that France "was not in a position to effectively help the Polish economy" (41), that she "did not need" Yugoslavian goods, and that she "was not in a position economically to help Hungary" (115)?

To these complaints one is obliged to add two others. First, a conceptual problem lies at the heart of this book. There is no doubt at all that we are in need of a work that investigates more closely the nature of France's relations with Central Europe; and this work does contribute to that cause. However, in order to appreciate such a topic fully, surely we have to be told more about France's relations with the western powers, especially with Great Britain. Unless and until we are given that sort of broad coverage, we are likely to be further plagued by such judgments as those which refer to the "questionable value" of a British alliance "as far as true French interests were concerned" (202).

Second, this work prompts us to wonder where all the editors have gone. The reviewer has compiled a list of 42 printing and spelling errors, excluding those in the footnotes and bibliography and excluding 11 cases of *fait à compli* (sic). One would think, too, that flaws of greater magnitude required even less detection.

> . . . but in 1934, Germany also entered this group, while France moved into the neutral block, which consisted of Poland, Switzerland, and England in 1933, and was joined by France in 1934. (68)

> Thus, while in 1933 Austria's foreign trade was fairly distributed among the friendly . . . , hostile . . . , and neutral . . . blocks, in 1934. (68)

Finally, the translations are frequently awkward and unclear. We encounter for example: 'A throughout pacifist state of mind preferred to believe. . .' (135); 'It will be easier . . . if Austria will have . . .' (178); the German minority was also "aggrevated (sic) by the arrogant and 'politically not too psychological' attitude of the Czech bureaucracy. . ." (186). And did Fichte really say that for any nation 'peace exists till her own frontiers are not invaded' (215)? If so, what in heaven's name could he have meant by it?

This is not an impressive piece of work, except perhaps in its deficiencies. One would hope that for his next book the author will resist the understandable urge to rush to publication, and that he will find himself a more meticulous and thorough publisher.

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OUR CONTRIBUTORS (continued from page 114)

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