HSR

Hungarian Studies Review

Vol. XXI, Nos. 1-2 (Spring-Fall, 1994)

Special Volume:

Hungarian Artists in the Americas

Edited by Oliver A. I. Botar

In this special volume Valerie Majoros writes about painter Lajos Tihanyi's attempt to establish himself on the American art scene and about his views on aesthetics and American culture; Richard Teleky offers an overview of the early work of photographer André Kertész; N. F. Dreisziger and Oliver Botar clarify some aspects of the political activities of émigré Hungarian artists such as László Moholy-Nagy, Béla Bartók and Béla Lugosi; Botar translates and comments on Moholy-Nagy's poems of 1918; and, in a case study of Hungarian artists in Latin America, Ágnes Judit Szilágyi outlines the career of cinematographer Rudolph Icsey and other Magyar filmmakers in Brazil.

Hungarian Studies Review

The *Hungarian Studies Review* is a semi-annual interdisciplinary journal devoted to the publication of articles and book reviews relating to Hungary and Hungarians. Since its launching in 1974, the *Review* has been committed to the policy of providing a forum for the scholarly discussion and analysis of issues in Hungarian history, politics and cultural affairs. It is co-published by the Hungarian Studies Association of Canada and the National Széchényi Library (Budapest, Hungary).

Institutional subscriptions to the *HSR* are $12.00 per annum. Individual subscriptions are $12.00 for one year and $20.00 for two years. Membership fees in the Hungarian Studies Association of Canada include a subscription to the journal.

Correspondence regarding the publication of manuscripts, book reviews, etc., as well as subscriptions should be addressed to:

The Editors,
Hungarian Studies Review,
University of Toronto,
21 Sussex Ave.,
Toronto, Ont., Canada M5S 1A1

Statements and opinions expressed in the *HSR* are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the journal's editors.

Articles appearing in the *HSR* are indexed in:
HISTORICAL ABSTRACTS and,
AMERICA: HISTORY AND LIFE.

ISSN 0713-8083 (replacing 0317-204X)

Typesetting by N.F. Dreisziger.

Printed and distributed by the National Széchényi Library of Hungary.

Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XXI, Nos. 1-2 (Spring-Fall, 1994)

Special Volume:

Hungarian Artists in the Americas

Edited by Oliver A. I. Botar

The publication of this volume has been helped by donations from the Rákóczi Foundation of Toronto and a few individuals.

Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XXI, Nos. 1-2 (Spring-Fall, 1994)

Contents

Table of Contents, continued.

Appendix (Illustrations)

Illustrations to Valerie Majoros' article (works by Lajos Tihanyi):

Joint illustration to V. Majoros' and R. Teleky's articles:

Illustrations to R. Teleky's article:

Illustration to Oliver Botar's documentary articles on László Moholy-Nagy

Our Contributors

OLIVER A. I. BOTAR is a Ph.D. candidate in art history at the University of Toronto. He is writing his dissertation on Ernő Kállai's theory of *Bioromantik,* that is of "biocentric" ideologies and biomorphic art between the two world wars. He has published extensively on Hungarian avant-garde art.

NANDOR F. DREISZIGER, professor of history at the Royal Military College of Canada in Kingston, Ontario, is co-editor of the *Hungarian Studies Review*. In recent years he has been researching the history of the politics of North America's Hungarian communities during the Second World War.

VALERIE MAJOROS works at the Art Historical Research Group of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest. She is considered to be Hungary's pre-eminent expert on Lajos Tihanyi and János Mattis-Teutsch.

ÁGNES JUDIT SZILÁGYI is a Ph. D. candidate in Latin American Studies at the University of Szeged, Hungary. She is writing her dissertation on the history of European emigration to Brazil in the 20th century. She has published several essays on modern Brazilian history.

RICHARD TELEKY teaches in the Humanities Division at York University in Toronto, where he is head of the Creative Writing Program. His most recent book is *Good Night Sweetheart and Other Stories*, published by Cormorant Books. His next book, *Hungarian Rhapsodies: Essays on Identity, Ethnicity and Culture*, will be published by the University of Washington Press.

Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XXI, Nos. 1-2 (Spring-Fall, 1994)

Preface

This volume of the *Hungarian Studies Review* is devoted to the activities of Hungarian artists in the United States and Brazil. A subsequent issue will cover the lives and works of Hungarian-Canadian artists.

Valerie Majoros writes of Lajos Tihanyi's unsuccessful attempt to establish himself on the American art scene in 1929-30. Her article is followed by two fascinating English-language texts by Tihanyi which give us an indication of his advanced aesthetics and his views on American art and culture. Richard Teleky has contributed an original reading of photographer André Kertész's early, Hungarian work. Teleky contrasts this with what he sees as the more alienated, formally experimental work of Kertész's émigré years in France and the United States. The reproduction of a portrait of Tihanyi by Kertész draws attention to the friendship of these two artists, while themes of Kertész's blind musicians and the deaf and dumb Tihanyi's fascination with music and musicians makes for an interesting, counterpointed commentary on art and the senses. Nandor F. Dreisziger's article and my own supplement to the "Documents on László Moholy-Nagy" published in the Spring, 1988 special issue of the *Hungarian Studies Review* on "The Early Twentieth Century Hungarian Avant-Garde," clarify a hitherto neglected aspect of Hungarian-American politics: the political activities of prominent Hungarian-American artists such as László Moholy-Nagy, Béla Bartók and Béla Lugosi. In a case study of Hungarian artists in Latin America, Ágnes Judit Szilágyi outlines the careers of cinematographer Rudolph Icsey and other filmmakers in Brazil. The "documents" section of this volume also contains my introduction to and translations of the little-known poetry of the young Moholy-Nagy.

We would like to extend our gratitude to Jane Corkin and the Hungarian National Gallery for permission to reproduce works by Kertész and Tihanyi. We also express our heartfelt thanks to Hattula Moholy-Nagy, daughter of the artist, without whose devotion to scholarship on her father, and without whose generosity in sharing the results of her own investigations, the production of this special issue would not have been possible. This issue celebrates the centenary of László Moholy-Nagy's birth in 1895.

Oliver Botar

Toronto, 1994

Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XXI, Nos. 1-2 (Spring-Fall, 1994)

Lajos Tihanyi's American Sojourn: 1929-30

Valerie Majoros

(translated by Judit Pokoly)

Lajos Tihanyi is remembered above all as a member of the artists' group "A Nyolcak" [The Eight], which was founded in Budapest in 1911. However, Tihanyi's oeuvre was not confined to the few years during which the exhibitions of The Eight took place. His painting was just as much a part of the Nagybánya school, as it later was of Parisian late Cubism and of international abstraction.

Tihanyi emigrated from Hungary in the fall of 1919, after the collapse of the Hungarian Soviet Republic. First he lived in Vienna, then for a few years in Berlin. He made Paris his home in the mid-1920s. In 1929 he went to New York for seventeen months, and he died in Paris in 1938.

Tihanyi's estate was returned to his native Budapest in 1970, and is now in the Hungarian National Gallery. One of Tihanyi's most loyal friends, the Transylvanian-Hungarian photographer Gyula Halász — better known as Brassai — arranged its repatriation. The returned paintings and drawings were displayed in an exhibition which served to focus on Tihanyi's work the interest of Hungarian art historians.[1] The first monograph on Tihanyi, written by Iván Dévényi, was published in 1968.[2] Some general works also mentioned Tihanyi, such as Krisztina Passuth's monograph on The Eight.[3] Later Passuth wrote several articles on Tihanyi, and it was chiefly these studies, published during the seventies in French and German, that made Tihanyi known outside Hungary.[4] In spite of this, Tihanyi's oeuvre is not that closely studied. The deaf-mute artist's extensive correspondence and communicative notes (which he used instead of everyday speech), provide much information about his art and events in his life. Only in the 1980s did historical research begin to process these writings.[5]

The painter carried on long and intensive correspondence with his friends, such as the writer Józsi Jenő Tersánszky, the painter Ödön Mihályi, and the critic György Bölöni. The majority of his letters are preserved in public collections in Hungary, such as the Petőfi Literary Museum in Budapest, the manuscript collections of the National Széchényi Library and of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and the archives of the Art Historical Institute of the Hungarian

Academy of Sciences and of the Hungarian National Gallery. Some letters are in London in the estate of Gustav T. Siden. Few have been published in full.

The present paper has a dual aim: to publish two of Tihanyi's texts in English, and to reconstruct Tihanyi's life in America from the written documents. The first study, entitled "What is painting?" was written by Tihanyi in Paris in 1928, in anticipation of his trip to America. We do not know exactly why Tihanyi wrote this text. Having been invited to several meetings of the New York artists' union, he might have wanted to present it to them, or perhaps he intended it as a general statement of his aesthetic principles, a kind of *ars poetica*. As far as is known, it was never published, not even in the catalogue of his exhibition at the Murai Gallery of Contemporary Art, the most appropriate venue for such a publication.

The key words of this remarkable text are materiality [anyagszerűség] and colour — as expressed through "materials containing colors," i.e. pigment — which Tihanyi sees as constituting the essence of painting. He defines colour as the sole value of painting. By enumerating all the factors he considers alien to it — such as plasticity, light, drawing and contouring — he concludes that painting is the expressive force of pigment by and for itself applied to a planar surface. In stating this, he placed himself firmly within the formalist-Modernist aesthetic tradition, and anticipated the writings of the American critic Clement Greenberg, who would come to champion such an approach in the following decade.[6] This anticipation is all the more interesting given Tihanyi's prediction of colour-field painting — in the lines "theoretically speaking the greatest accomplishment for a painter is to express himself with one colour if it dominates the entire surface..." — for Greenberg was the champion of this style of American art in the 1950s and 1960s. Tihanyi devotes most of the remainder of the text to a discussion of the necessity to keep to the requirements of the material used. He states that painting must be the objective expression of material, it must represent its nature instead of copying what is subjectively believed to be its essence. The aim of painting is not to depict objects or persons, neither is it to show colours and forms in space, but to express the material of pigment. This is a manifesto for a materialist, "concrete" painting, and is related to the ideas expressed by Theo van Doesburg and the "Art Concret" group of Paris at that time.

In this text Tihanyi all but renounces his former artistic self. He declares the fine draughtsmanship and emphatic contours of his landscapes alien to painting, and treats his earlier expressive portraiture in a similar manner. For financial reasons, he painted only portraits during his stay in America, and so did not conform to this philosophy of art in those works. Nevertheless, his Parisian paintings of the second half of the 1920s do more or less conform to these "materialist" principles, as his Manhattan exhibition, to be discussed below, demonstrates; in several of these works, his central concern was colour. The titles of these paintings do not refer to forms or to objects represented, but to the colours of which they are built up. This type of work, interrupted by the portraiture of the American sojourn, intensified during the 1930s to the point that

the painter even tried to impose these principles on his earlier pictures and portraits. The best example of this is the *Portrait of Kosztolányi* (fig. 1, see the appendix). Tihanyi denies all psychologizing and subjectivity in this work, proclaiming — rather unconvincingly — the interplay of colours to be its central theme. Though he was not always so in practice, by 1928 Tihanyi was an abstract painter in theory.

The idea of an American exhibition for the spring of 1928 had already been mentioned by Tihanyi in a March 1927 letter to Ödön Mihályi.[7] Another letter speaks of an exhibition and a journey, but it was still in the planning stages in October of 1928. Friends in New York tried to talk him out of this trip. The following excerpt is from a letter by the Hungarian-American journalist Margaret Monahan (Margit Székely):

> I called on some gallery owners but none of them seemed to be interested... [the New York dealer and curator J.B.] Neumann is firmly convinced that you should not come, for the following reasons: modern art has a very narrow basis in America. Now that business conditions are bad, it is especially so. Neumann is most friendly and is fond of you and has a high regard for your art. He says you are Tihanyi in Paris but no one would notice you here... He also says that you shouldn't come before your pictures are known here, unless you want to suffer.[8]

The attempted dissuasion failed to work. Tihanyi had more faith (if others did not) in the Greek Catholic Bishop of Hollywood, John Török, and in the gallery owner and photographer Alfred Stieglitz, a great patron of avant-garde art, than in Monahan or Neumann.[9] This preference must have been largely due to Tihanyi's lack of opportunities at that time in Paris. By the late twenties commissions for portraits were almost non-existent, exhibiting was hardly possible and he could not survive on the occasional reproduction of a painting in a journal. When a work of his was purchased, or something was written about him in Paris, it was always by Americans. Though with a good deal of exaggeration, in Budapest he was referred to as a favourite European painter of Americans.[10] The letters reveal that an American collector or collectors had visited his studio, but they are not named. His address book does contain the address of Katherine S. Dreier, a great patron of abstract art -- including that of Mondrian, whom Tihanyi knew and whose philosophy of art was similar to his own -- but there is no information on Dreier buying Tihanyi pictures or recommending them to others.[11] At any rate, they may have known each other personally, but even if they did not, it is to her credit that other American art collectors began to take an interest in contemporary French art and became aware of Tihanyi in Paris. In 1928 the *Portrait of Halász* (Brassai) of 1920 had already been acquired in Paris by H. Morgan, a New Yorker. Another painting of 1921, *Still Life with Oranges*, was bought by M.C. Harpham of Los Angeles.[12] Unlike every other painting he sold

in 1929, Tihanyi failed to note the date of this latter sale, though it may have changed hands in Paris before his departure. In any case, by November of 1928 Tihanyi no longer believed Monahan, and was convinced that he had to take his art to the American public.

Little information is available about the journey. By the late twenties some of the relationships that had earlier elicited intensive correspondence had slackened, e.g., with Tersánszky and Mihályi, while other close friends, such as Bölöni and Brassai were living in the same city. Tihanyi's contact with his family had almost broken off. He had increasing conflicts with his brother, and his family supported his trip to America on the condition that he never ask them for money again, as his fellow artist, the composer and painter Henrik Neugeboren (Henri Nouveau), wrote in a letter.[13] Information on his American sojourn is included in Tihanyi's letters addressed to American friends from Paris in the later twenties, and in letters sent to his friend Virgil Ciaclan in Oradea, Rumania (formerly Nagyvárad, Hungary), after his return to France.[14] Letters by Tihanyi of the period are either lost or buried in unpublished estates such as that of Brassai. Thus we also have to rely on the correspondence of his Parisian friends with third parties to round out our knowledge of his American stay.

Tihanyi spent a total of seventeen months in America, sailing into New York harbour sometime in late January of 1929, and arriving back in France on 25 May 1930.[15] The earliest document of Tihanyi's stay in New York is a telegram of February 2, 1929, sent by Henry Miller to Tihanyi's Times Square Hotel suite to cancel an appointment because Miller had to leave for Washington on urgent business.[16] Miller's telegram offers us hints concerning Tihanyi's social contacts in New York. Tihanyi must have got to know Miller when he and his wife visited Paris in 1928. Miller returned to Paris in March of 1930, this time staying for several years. In his books he does not write in as much detail about his social life during his 1928 stay in Paris as he does about the thirties, but presumably he did visit the cafés frequented by other penniless members of the "lost generation." "I have no money, no resources, no hopes. I am the happiest man alive" - one reads on the first page of *Tropic of Cancer*.[17] This introductory sentence might as well have been spoken by Tihanyi. Miller probably met Tihanyi through Brassai, who later wrote his recollections of Miller. For his part Miller wrote the introductions to nearly all of Brassai's books. As Miller returned to Paris a year after Tihanyi's arrival in America, they could easily have rescheduled their cancelled meeting. Unfortunately, no further reference can be found to Miller in Tihanyi's papers, nor are Brassai's letters more revealing. The foreword to the published letters, however, contains a quotation from Miller: "Dans ce temps-là, il me semble, je ne connaissais que des étrangers... Nous étions alors six à nous réunir frèquement : Brassai, Perlès, Tihanyi, Reichel, Dobó et moi."[18] In this context, "Dans ce temps-là" denotes the early 1930s, confirming that Miller maintained his relationship with Tihanyi in America.

Concerning Tihanyi's early days in New York, and his general financial situation, we have the following report by the artist himself, contained in a letter to Ciaclan of 25 May 1931:

> You are mistaken when you think that I did not like America, and I like it (sic). Your error is understandable because you have never seen America, and have not known me now for a long time... After arriving in New York, I stayed for several days on Ellis Island, and from there I proceeded to an elegant hotel [the Times Square] where I stayed three weeks, and where, with $68 in my pocket, it cost me $3 per day. The `miracle' of how I lived in New York for 17 months when I received the promised assistance neither from my family nor my friends is already in the past. I was stuck, and could do nothing...

Brassai, one of the friends Tihanyi was probably requesting assistance of, wrote the following in a letter of 1930: "Tihanyi still tries to get money in New York; he's had several exhibitions with a lot of moral and little pecuniary success."[19] In a letter to Károlyi of 12 February 1929, meanwhile, Monahan writes that "Tihanyi arrived a few days ago. I am afraid that he will meet with serious difficulties here. His paintings are too modern for Americans. Besides there is a distinct financial depression in America right now. [Emil] Lengyel, I believe can be of some help to him."[20] Apart from these texts, little is known of his life in America. Thus, in reconstructing Tihanyi's American experience, the second of his English language texts, in which the painter summarizes his views on American art and culture, becomes crucial. Only an English version of this is known, therefore it may have been composed in that language. (The corrections in pencil between the typed lines are in a hand other than Tihanyi's.)

When Tihanyi arrived in America, the construction of skyscrapers was on the upswing, reaching a peak with Howell's and Hood's Daily News Building of 1929-30. One of Tihanyi's Manhattan addresses was on 34th street, where in 1931 the world's tallest building, Shreve, Lamb and Harmon's Empire State Building was erected. It was the architecture of New York that made Tihanyi review the differences between European and American art. That is the subject of this second text, which was intended either for publication, or as a talk.

Conspicuously enough, Tihanyi made no mention whatsoever of contemporary American painting. Not that he was alone in this; Manhattan's Museum of Modern Art, opened in 1929, also aimed to present European art — that of Cézanne, Gauguin, Seurat and Van Gogh — rather than the products of American Modernists, such as Arthur Dove, Marsden Hartley or Georgia O'Keeffe, to the public. Also, during the early 1920s, when image after image of American technical achievements appeared in European avant-garde periodicals, few reproductions of American works of Modernist art were included. All in all, the views of America expressed in this text bear close similarities to the attitudes

towards America expressed by other Hungarian artists of the avant-garde. The same themes of American technical as opposed to artistic achievements, and the poetry of Walt Whitman were the touchstones of a polemic between the American poet Gorham Munson and the Viennese Kassák circle in 1922-21.)

In selecting the pictures to be taken to America, Tihanyi adjusted to the taste of the American public as he imagined it and as his friends outlined it. The works exhibited at his two shows in America — the Group Exhibition of American and Foreign Artists at the Brooklyn Museum and a commercial exhibition at the Murai Galleries of Contemporary Art in New York — give an indication of the types of taste he was trying to satisfy. For the Brooklyn show he chose works that might satisfy more conservative inclinations, while for the commercial display he selected abstract and late Cubist compositions almost exclusively. While there is no documentary evidence that he knew before he left that he would have these two exhibitions in America, he did pack for the trip with these two aspects of public taste in mind.

He exhibited fourteen pictures at the Group Exhibition of American and Foreign Artists, held at the Brooklyn Museum from June to October 1929.[22] The subtitles on photocopies preserved in the Tihanyi estate reveal that the exhibited works included the portraits of György Bölöni, Virgil Ciaclan, Dezső Kosztolányi (fig. 1 — see the appendix to this volume), Andor Halasi (fig. 2), Itóka Bölöni (Ottilia Márkus), Lajos Fülep and Lajos Kassák, as well as *Family* of 1921 (fig. 3), self portraits of 1912 and 1920, two landscapes (*Hungarian Landscape*, *Mountain Landscape*), two still lives (*Oranges*, *Cactus*), and a *Nude*. The list shows fifteen photos though only fourteen items appear in the catalogue. As the catalogue omits the names of the portrayed persons, it cannot be established which photocopy had incorrect data. Itóka Bölöni's portrait seems to be identifiable with *Portrait of a Woman*, the portrait of Dezső Kosztolányi, lost in America after the exhibition, with *Portrait of a Hungarian Poet*, and Halasi's portrait with *Portrait of a Critic*, but one cannot identify the other pictures as precisely. There is no knowing which picture was meant by *Portrait of a Young Woman* or (since his portrait of the Hungarian sculptor Pál Pátzay's was not there) *Portrait of a Sculptor*, or who was represented in the *Portrait of a Man*, Ciaclan, Fülep, György Bölöni or Kassák. The exhibition, organized by Herbert B. Tschudy, head of the painting department of the Museum, also included the work of the little-known Hungarian sisters Berta and Elena de Hellebranth.

The exhibition received a good deal of newspaper coverage, including reviews in the *New York Sun* (6 June) by Henry McBride; in the *New York Herald Tribune* (9 June) by Carlyle Burrows; in the *New York American* (28 June) by William B. McGormick; in the *New York Times* (9 and 30 June) by Elisabeth Luther Cary; in the *Brooklyn Times* (16 June) by Lillian Semons; and in *Brooklyn Life* (22 June) by Ruth Gladys Davis. Most reviews made mention of Tihanyi, for instance in the *New York Herald Tribune*:

> In Lajos Tihanyi, a Hungarian painter, who is represented chiefly by portraits and still life, one sees a similar exponent of the direct method in painting. His "Portrait of a Critic" is very much to the point, though his work as a whole loses much of its purport in the overwrought accentuation of the rhythmical qualities he attempts to bring out in his painting.

As we have seen, this picture is identical with the *Portrait of Andor Halasi* (fig. 2). A critic and translator, Halasi was the editor of the Budapest journals, *Kritika* [Critique] and *Irodalmi Élet* [Literary Life], in the teens. He also contributed to Kassák's first periodical, *A Tett* [The Deed], the precursor of the better-known *Ma* [Today]. During the 1919 Hungarian Soviet Republic he was a member of the Writers' Directorate and head of propaganda in Georg Lukács's Commissariat for Public Education. Tihanyi remembered having painted Halasi's portrait in 1913.[23] The portrait of the elegant man in a suit with a thin long face, pointed nose and high brow was, as mentioned, bought by Bishop John Török. The correspondence between Tschudy and Török reveals that the Bishop then donated the picture to the Brooklyn Museum.[24] But it was not only Török's donation that drew the museum's attention to the painter. The October issue of their publication, the *Brooklyn Museum Quarterly*, carried the reproduction of another Tihanyi painting, the *Family* (fig. 3).[25]

Tihanyi, however, was left with a bitter aftertaste at the close of the exhibition. His estate includes several handwritten lists of works, all having the remark "lost in America in 1929" entered against the Kosztolányi portrait of 1914. It is not the only Hungarian painting lost abroad, neither is it the only Tihanyi work thus fated; his art school drawings sent to the Milan International Exposition of Industrial Art of 1906 perished in a fire at the Hungarian pavilion. Hungarian art historians have not given up the idea of finding the Kosztolányi portrait, and this picture will be discussed in detail in the hope of its recovery. Contemporary criticism considered it to be one of Tihanyi's best works. Sharing this conviction, the painter took it with him into the uncertainty of emigration after the collapse of the communist regime in 1919.

Tihanyi's friendship with Kosztolányi began in the first years of the decade. Starting out as a journalist, Kosztolányi was a major contributor of critical writing and poetry to the important Budapest avant-garde literary journals *Nyugat* [Occident] and *Világ* [World], and he regularly published books of verse. Tihanyi most probably met Kosztolányi at an evening program given in honour of The Eight, when the poet recited three lines from the title poem of his book *A szegény kisgyermek panaszai* [Complaints of a poor little child], which went through five editions between 1910 and 1919. Little is known of the subsequent course of their relationship, but a letter by Tihanyi suggests that by 1914 it had grown deeper than a passing acquaintance.[26] The painter included an ink drawing of a sitting nude in the letter with the following dedication: "To Dezső Kosztolányi with sorrowful friendship / Lajos Tihanyi, March 1914." The drawing is of the same

date as the portrait, so one might well ask why their friendship had become "sorrowful," and whether this "sorrow" can be discerned in the portrait.

The portrait of the poet, clad in a black coat and waistcoat with a bow-tie, his face turned slightly sideways, belongs to the series of psychologizing portraits Tihanyi began to paint in 1911, and first presented to the public in 1918 at the MA Gallery, at which time they, including the Kosztolányi portrait, caused controversy (fig. 1).[27] But apart from finding the picture to be *léleklátó* ("soul-seeing"), critics concentrated on the even subtler psychology of some of the other portraits. By the end of Tihanyi's career, however, in the French poet Robert Desnos's 1937 book *Tihanyi*, in reviews of this book, and in the 1938 obituaries for Tihanyi (such as those of György Bölöni and György Bálint), attention was focused more on this portrait.[28] The writings of Bölöni and Bálint give insight into Tihanyi's work, while reflecting their different world views. Bölöni, just like Tihanyi, chose emigration, while Bálint remained at home, as did Kosztolányi. Also, the two obituary writers represent differing opinions of Kosztolányi's role in the events surrounding the Republic of Councils in 1919. György Bálint analyzed the portrait in *Pesti Napló* [Pest Journal] in the following words:

> ...whenever I think of him, I will always see the face in the portrait because I think it is the authentic, the true face. It's both attractive and disquieting, dreamy yet challenging, softly "decadent" and yet sharply masculine. It does not only show the poet's brow, eyes and nose but his poems, short stories and essays as well. Even those works that he was to write much later, in the last period of his life - *Édes Anna* [Anna Édes] and *Hajnali részegség* [Drunkenness at dawn]. It is as if the painter Lajos Tihanyi had sensed the future masterpieces in the poet's features, just as a palmist feels your fate in the web of lines on your skin.

Bölöni saw quite another person in the portrait. "He shows the shyness of a little child and the anxieties of a nervous person on the face of Kosztolányi," he wrote in the obituary. In his book, *Az igazi Ady* [The true Ady], Bölöni gives a detailed analysis of the portrait: "The Tihanyi portrait shows the disarranged face of a neurotic whose features display cowardice and fear. The face is full of treacherous lurking and slyness ready for ambush."29)

Kosztolányi's political "*volte-face*" of 1919 — as perceived by Bölöni — would explain the adjective "sorrowful," as well as Bölöni's less than favourable description of Kosztolányi's face in the portrait. In 1916, however, Bölöni could not as yet notice signs of such a political shift to the right. Indeed, Bölöni saw the portrait differently in 1916 than in 1938. In his review of Kosztolányi's 1916 book, *Tinta* [Ink], he emphasized the poet's honesty and courage.[30] At that time he praised Kosztolányi for the lack of fear in his writings, for his commitment to a definite world view, for having self-respect and for his awareness of artistic superiority. These attributes and personality traits are quite incompatible with the

former, but this contradiction shows well how the viewer projects his personal experiences and changing judgments onto a picture.

Tihanyi never accepted the views that his portraits were "psychologizing," and that he could see into the souls of his subjects. In the case of Kosztolányi's portrait, instead of "soul-seeing," he wrote of "the valorization of two pinks against a large but not heavy mass of greenish black".[31] The onlooker, however, is not obliged to limit the picture's analysis to such a "valorization." Though protesting against non-formal types of analyses, in his heart Tihanyi must have felt there was some truth to them, and that was probably why he took the portrait along for his conquest of America.

Not long after his debut in the Brooklyn Museum, twelve of Tihanyi's paintings were displayed in an exhibition at the Murai Galleries of Contemporary Art. Unlike the previous one, in this "Showing of European and American Moderns," almost all the works were abstract and late Cubist pictures, such as *Blue and Yellow*, *Red and Blue*, *Knife and Fork*, *Guitar*, *Le Metro* and *Still Life with Apples*. Of the earlier pictures only a *Portrait of the Artist* and a painting of a sitting girl were included. The latter is probably identical with the *Seated Girl* painted in Berlin. According to Krisztina Passuth, Tihanyi sold his painting *Bridge* (fig. 4), one of his major Berlin works, to Mrs. Will Durant at this exhibition,[32] but this picture is not included in the catalogue. The threatening tone of gallery owner Arnold Murai's letter demanding money suggests that the exhibition brought neither financial nor critical recognition for either of them.[33] The only success Tihanyi could report as a result of this exhibition was the reproduction of a *Self-Portrait* (1912) in the *New York Telegram* in 1930.[34]

These exhibitions and reproductions were the "moral" success mentioned by Brassai in his cited letter. Though in his view Tihanyi's stay in America brought him no financial rewards, this was probably only partly true. In November, 1928, Monahan wrote to Tihanyi the following about another Hungarian painter: "Neumann says [Béla] Kádár received commissions for a few portraits to be painted as required in Philadelphia. As he was badly in need of money, he accepted the commissions for very little pay. At present he has no work to do." Tihanyi seems to have been in a similar situation. Getting portrait commissions in America must have been far more significant for Tihanyi than an outsider might expect, however, for in Paris he had sorely missed this respectable means of earning a living. In New York we know he painted portraits of István Dobó and his wife,[35] and drawings have survived of Bishop John Török and Louis T. Gruenberg (figs. 5, 6). Though similar to his work of the teens, the known New York portraits lack the depth and psychological insight of his earlier works. In fact, some clients may have refused to accept their portraits, as Tihanyi's estate contains at least one painted in New York, that of the painter Nicholas (Miklós) Suba, which is signed "L. Tihanyi N.Y. '29" (see figure 7).

According to Tihanyi, he completed nine portraits in New York in 1929. Unfortunately, he referred to most of them as *Portrait of a Woman* or *Portrait of a Man*, and we know the identities of only three of the sitters. Two are of

Tihanyi's love, Cecile, and one is of Nicholas Suba who lived in Brooklyn (figs. 7, 8). Since these three pictures remained with Tihanyi, and the works acquired by the Hungarian National Gallery include two painted in 1929 (one male and one female portrait), they are probably the portraits of Nicholas and Cecile Suba.[36] Of the rest of the pictures, we know only their owners, who may very well have been the sitters as well. A female portrait was in the possession of June Mansfeld, and a male portrait belonged to Frederick Kiesler, the Austrian-American architect, whom Tihanyi probably knew from Kiesler's stay in Paris in 1925, and with whom he corresponded in March of 1926, soon after the architect's arrival in America.[37] The third female portrait belonged to Dobó's wife, Fukishima, whose name is not in the address book. The fourth portrait of a woman was owned by Ivor Kármán, and it may represent his sister Lilla Kármán. One of the male portraits belonged to Sándor Barta, the other to the physician Joseph Hollós. There is no way of knowing who Barta was, but he could not have been the Sándor Barta who published in *MA*, and who later published the journals, *Akasztott Ember* [Hanged Man] and *Ék* [Wedge]. That Barta, who was in contact with Tihanyi, lived in the Soviet Union after 1925. Hollós can be identified as the physician who wrote a book to combat alcoholism and who contributed to the cure of tuberculosis. He lived in America from 1924 on, and founded, among others, the New York left-wing groups Kulturszövetség ([Hungarian] Association of Culture) and the Ady Society, the latter in 1929.[38] Another picture of 1929 is known, but Tihanyi only noted the initials (A.B.) of the portrayed person on the reverse, so he cannot be fully identified.[39]

It is hard to reconstruct Tihanyi's social life in America, but the subscription lists for Desnos' *Tihanyi* album of 1937, his correspondence and his address book suggest that in New York he enjoyed a busier social life than he had in Paris.[40] Tihanyi's address book includes, among others, the following Hungarian names: John Biró, Joseph Brummer, Sándor Finta, Zoltán Haraszti, Willy Pogány, Emil Lengyel, Egon Kornstein, Ivor Kármán, John Török, "Dr." E. Ormándy, Fritz Reiner, Béla Rózsa and Nicholas Suba. Adjacent to some of the names, Tihanyi noted the phrase, "kindly follower." These were: Pogány, Caroll Kitchen, M. Higgins, Catherine Jackson, Tolmach, Ormándy and Reiner. One of the "kindly followers" is Willy Pogány who illustrated Nándor Pogány's book, *Magyar Fairy Tales from Old Hungarian Legends*, published in New York in 1930. The other is the conductor Eugene Ormándy. Ormándy had a Tihanyi painting titled, *Paris, Pont St. Michel*, painted in the teens. A well-known Hungarian pianist, Fritz Reiner was a pupil of Béla Bartók, and in 1931 he became the musical director and conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra.[41]

Considering Tihanyi's hearing impairment, his address book registers a remarkable number of musicians. Tihanyi must have met Egon Kornstein, a member of the Waldbauer-Kerpely quartet. In the fall of 1918, Kornstein, then a reserve lieutenant in the Austro-Hungarian army, had organized an art exhibition in Belgrade, and he invited Tihanyi to take part. While in Budapest peace

demonstrations and soldiers' mutinies were daily news, the exhibition in the capital of the Serbian enemy constituted a mute protest against the war.[42] Tihanyi had also long known the violinist Ivor Kármán. In his letters to Ödön Mihályi from Berlin, he often mentioned the musician's sister, Lilla, also a musician, whose passage to America her brother wished to arrange.

The address book contains about one hundred and fifty names. As the identifiable names reveal, Tihanyi was mainly in contact with artists, art dealers (Neumann, Joseph Brummer), and social scientists and journalists (historian Emil Lengyel, journalist John Biró, historian-librarian of the Boston Public Library Zoltán Haraszti). This does not, of course, preclude his relationship with other Hungarians not closely related to the arts or to literature, such as the psychiatrist Sándor Radó. Furthermore, Tihanyi kept in contact not only with Hungarian Americans. Far more non-Hungarian than Hungarian names are entered in his address book, but even fewer of them can be identified today. One of them was Peggy Guggenheim, to whom, in Paris, Tihanyi sold a 1917 landscape of Badacsony on Lake Balaton. His subscription sheets also contain a few non-Hungarian names.[43]

Apart from the paintings mentioned above, some other Tihanyi works entered private collections in America in 1929-30. A *Still Life with Palms* (Berlin, 1921) went to Dr. Morris Hilguitt of 44th Street and a *Berlin Landscape* of 1922 to the painter Lajos Márk in Brooklyn. His *Self Portrait*, painted in Vienna in 1920, came into the possession of Mrs. Himler in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and his landscape, *Souvenir de Nice*, of 1926-27 went to Arnold Schoen of New York. Tihanyi noted on the reverse of a photo of a female portrait that it was in a private collection in New York and indicated "Dr. M's" collection in New York as the provenance of a *Landscape* of 1918.

A few words should be devoted to Arnold Schoen, since Tihanyi's estate contains a Schoen manuscript analyzing Tihanyi's art. The scholar whose chief research interests, attested to in several of his books, were the history of architecture and culture in Budapest, later became the director of the Budapest Historical Museum. Whether this Schoen lived in Brooklyn and is identical with the Schoen who had a Tihanyi picture is unknown, but his writing seems to take account of Tihanyi's "What is painting?," so it is worth quoting a passage from it.

> If we should mention the names of Picasso and Cezanne in connection with [Tihanyi's] name, it would be impolite to see his works as more than studio pieces... In the final analysis, these studies suggest that their creator has a sense of composition, is good at drawing, that their main asset is decoration, and they avoid carrying a meaning, that he is hardly interested in problems of lighting and is fond of abstraction, and finds planar movement pleasing.[44]

To resume the list of works, John Török also had several Tihanyi paintings, including the *Composition Sketch: Christ on the Cross* of 1920, a *Self-Portrait* of 1920 and a *Female Portrait, Catherine*, painted in Paris in 1927. This Catherine might be identical with the "kindly follower" Catherine Jackson included in the address book at Bishop Török's address.[45] The present location of these, just as those of the above-mentioned Tihanyi pictures, is not known.

In January of 1930, Tihanyi applied for the extension of his American visa at the Immigration Office. The U.S. Department of Labour's Immigration Service acknowledged receipt of his application in a letter of 20 January 1930. He probably asked for a half-year extension, since in March Brassai expected Tihanyi to return in June,[46] and, as noted, Tihanyi returned to Paris (sailing with his friend Count Michael Károlyi) around May 30.

As Neugeboren judged it, Tihanyi returned to Paris because his American trip had been a failure.[47] His return may also be ascribed to his strong attachment to Paris as a city, and his longing for his friends there. Or, one might presume that the failure of the exhibition at the Murai Galleries convinced the painter already engaged in abstract art that his place was in Paris. What is certain is that during his extended stay in New York in the first half of 1930, Tihanyi no longer received commissions for portraits, as all of his New York paintings bear the date 1929. One is thus inclined to share György Bölöni's view, who reflected upon Tihanyi's journey to America in the following words: "He was induced to leave Paris by an American journey. Though he found clients in New York and his pictures went to museums, the immense world crisis that was just beginning swept away his crops."[48] Tihanyi arrived in America in 1929, the year of the stock exchange crash and the beginning of the global economic depression, and his premature departure was in large part also due to this circumstance. As he wrote in the already quoted letter to Ciaclan:

> For the time being I only wish to relieve you of your mistaken beliefs that people work ten hours a day there — at least! — and that I worked non-stop. I would have gladly done so, had I been able to, but when I returned, the tally of eight million unemployed I left behind me was reduced by only one... The crash came, and neither work nor sales were possible. I painted portraits, I sold pictures, but never at American prices, and I came back with a few hundred dollars I had scraped together, because I *had* to.

NOTES

This article was researched with support from the Soros Foundation.

[1] *Tihanyi emlékkiállítása* [Tihanyi memorial exhibition], introduced by Zsuzsa D. Fehér and Brassai (Budapest: Magyar Nemzeti Galéria, 1973).

[2]Iván Dévényi, *Tihanyi* (Budapest: Corvina, 1968).

[3]Krisztina Passuth, *A Nyolcak festészete* [The painting of The Eight] (Budapest: Corvina, 1968).

[4]Krisztina Passuth, "La carrière de Lajos Tihanyi," *Acta Historiae Artium* (1974) 22, no. 1-2. Passuth, *Magyar művészek az európai avantgarde-ban* [Hungarian artists in the European avant-garde] (Budapest: Corvina, 1974). Passuth, *Tihanyi* (Dresden: Verlag der Kunst, 1977). "A neósok" [The Neos] in Lajos Németh, ed., *Magyar művészet 1890-1919* [Hungarian art 1898-1919] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1981).

[5]Csilla Csorba, "Tihanyi Lajos levelei Tersánszky Józsi Jenőhöz" [Tihanyi's letters to J.J. Tersánszky], *Kritika* (1981) no. 8, 21-26. Valéria Majoros, "A Tihanyi-Tersánszky barátság alakulása 1919 után" [The Tihanyi-Tersánszky friendship after 1919], *Sub Minervae Nationis Praesidio: Studies on the National Culture in Honour of Lajos Németh on his 60th Birthday* (Budapest: ELTE, 1989): 285-89. Majoros, "Tihanyi Lajos 1911-es aktjai" [Tihanyi's nudes of 1911], *Új Művészet* (1990) no.2, 47-48. Majoros, "Tihanyi Lajos festőkortársairól. I. A magyarok. II. Az egyetemes művészet képviselői" [Tihanyi on contemporary painters. I. Hungarians. II. Representatives of international art], *Ars Hungarica* (1991) no. 2, 211-19 and (1992) no. 1, 99-114. Majoros, "Tihanyi Lajos Nagybányán" [Lajos Tihanyi at Nagybánya] in: *Nagybányai művészek* [Artists of Nagybánya] (exh. cat.) (Miskolc: Miskolci Galéria, 1992).

[6]See, e.g., Clement Greenberg, "Modernist Painting," *Arts Yearbook* 1 (New York, 1961).

[7]Lajos Tihanyi's letter to Károly Mihályi. Paris, 27-31 March 1927. Petőfi Irodalmi Múzeum — henceforth PIM — V 2293/289/55.

[8]The letter written in New York on 2 November 1928 was included in Tihanyi's estate. (Hungarian National Gallery Archive — henceforth MNGA — 18881/74) He must have got to know Margaret Monahan (Margit Székely) through Mihály Károlyi, when she was in Paris in 1928. Monahan (then Székely) emigrated with her two daughters to America in 1919 and lived in New York City. She supported her family by designing lingerie, but also worked as a journalist, and took an active part in Hungarian-American intellectual life as well as the literary life of Greenwich Village. In her letters to Károlyi, Monahan often sent messages to Tihanyi, and Károlyi mentioned them together in a letter he wrote to György Bölöni in 1930. See: Margaret Monahan's (Margit Székely's) letters to Mihály Károlyi, New York, 13 September 1928 and 25 October 1928, Archives of the Párttörténeti Intézet, Budapest, 704.f.64, 144-145, 161-163 and Mihály Károlyi's letter to György Bölöni, New York, 24 January 1930, quoted in György Bölöni, "Memoir," in his *Egy forradalmi nemzedék* [A revolutionary generation] (Budapest, 1982): 511. Monahan also to wrote to Károlyi about Tihanyi's arrival to America, and sent his greetings. See Margaret Monahan's (Margit Székely's) letters to Mihály Károlyi, New York, 12 February and 27 October 1929. (PIM 704.f.65, 39 and 168).

[9]János Török (1890-1955) was a follower of Mihály Károlyi, who played a role in Károlyi's bid for peace with Italy during the First World War. He was arrested for this in 1917, and was freed from prison when Károlyi came to power in 1918. After this he emigrated to America where he became the Greek Catholic Bishop of Hollywood. Török is mentioned by Oszkár Jászi and János Hock in their letters to Mihály Károlyi. Hock and Jászi referred to him as an "adventurer," while Károlyi called the bishop "unpleasant" and "bohemian," someone with whom one had to be both firm and careful. See Hock, 10 February 1922; Jászi, 17 July 1922; Károlyi, 30 March 1923, 17 November 1924, 1

December 1924 in Tibor Hajdu, ed., *Károlyi Mihály levelezése* II [The correspondence of M. K. II] (Budapest, 1990).

Stieglitz is mentioned in Monahan's letter along with Neumann. The exact addresses of both can be found in Tihanyi's handwritten address book. MNGA 18873/1-12.

[10]This was emphasized in the article in *Az Est* [The Evening] (19 June 1938) about Tihanyi's death. The readers of *Színházi Élet* [Theatre Life] of 1931 might also have believed this; while the Hungarian papers never wrote about him, *Színházi Élet* reported with reference to the *Chicago Daily Tribune* that Tihanyi was attacked on the street in Paris, suggesting how popular the painter was in America.

[11]The address of Katherine S. Dreier is included in Tihanyi's address book. Tihanyi's name does not appear in the comprehensive catalogue of the Dreier collection: Robert L. Herbert, Eleanor S. Apter and Elise K. Kenney, *The Société Anonyme and the Dreier Bequest at Yale University: A Catalogue Raisonné* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984).

[12]Harpham's name comes up in Tihanyi's letters to Mihály Károlyi, Monahan mentions this name, and a Fred M. Harpham wrote Károlyi a letter from Akron, Ohio.

[13]Henrik Neugeboren's letter to Ernő Kállai. Paris, June 1938. Cited by Ida F. Mihály: "Dokumentumok Tihanyi párizsi éveiről és haláláról" [Documents about Tihanyi's Paris years and his death], *Művészet* [Art] (1968) no. 12, 10-11.

[14]Lajos Tihanyi's letter to Virgil Ciaclan, MNGA 23279/1991.

[15]In a letter from New York to Virgil Ciaclan of 20 February, Tihanyi writes that he had "been here for a month." In another letter to Ciaclan of 25 May 1931, Tihanyi notes that he had returned to France exactly a year previously. Also, in Brassai's letter of 28 February 1929 to his parents, he notes that he was living in Tihanyi's hotel room since the latter was in New York. Brassai, *Előhívás. Levelek* [Photographic development. Letters] (Bucharest: Kriterion, 1980): 134.

[16]MNGA 18789/73.

[17]Henry Miller, *Tropic of Cancer* (Paris: Obelisk, 1949).

[18]Henry Miller, introduction to Brassai, *Histoire de Marie* (Paris: Editions du Point du Jour, 1949): 8-9.

[19]Brassai, *Előhívás. Levelek:* 137. Another source is Tihanyi's Christmas and New Year's greetings of 1929 to Itóka Bölöni. (New York, 25 December, PIM V 4132/350/4) From György Bölöni's letters to Károly Mihályi we know that Tihanyi wrote them several letters from America, but these have not as yet come to light.

[20]Margaret Monahan's letter to Mihály Károlyi, 12 February 1929, PIM 704.f.64.ö.e.39.

[21]On this, see Oliver A. I. Botar, "Connections Between the Hungarian and American Avant-Gardes During the Early Twenties," *Hungarian Studies Review* (Spring 1988), 40-42.

[22]*Group Exhibition of American and Foreign Artists* exh. cat. (New York: Brooklyn Museum, 1929): 332-345.

[23]MNGA 18803/73, no. 35 in the oeuvre catalogue. Here, Tihanyi dated the painting to 1913, but in the museum's registry it bears the date 1915. See Mária Halasi, "Elkésett ismeretség" [Belated friendship], *Tükör* [Mirror] (9 March 1976). Here the size is indicated as being 40 X 30 cm, which is unlikely, for in a letter of 19 December 1932 sent by Elisabeth Hamlin, Secretary of the Department of Fine Arts at the Brooklyn

Museum, the size is cited as being 40 x 50 cm (15 1/4 x 19 3/4 inches). See MNGA 18828/73.

[24]The first letter of the Brooklyn Museum to Török is dated 21 September (MNGA 18882/74). He is informed of when the exhibition will close, and that he could buy the Tihanyi picture if he wished. In Bernard Tschudy's letter to Török of 22 October he thanks the Bishop for the donation of the Tihanyi work he had purchased, as expressed in Török's letter of 4 October. Tschudy remarked that although he was aware of the greatness of Tihanyi's painting, he was not convinced the conservative directors agreed with him. (MNGA 20501/1980). On 28 October the Museum sent another letter of thanks to Török (MNGA 18785/73), and in a letter of 12 December to Tihanyi they inquired about his date of birth (MNGA 18879/74). In December Tihanyi wrote to the Museum asking for photos of his picture. He received them, as the estate proves, but in a letter of 19 December the Museum also informed him of the size of the frame. (MNGA 18828/73).

Though the Pittsburgh Carnegie Institute itself has no record of such a transaction, according to Tihanyi a *Self-Portrait* was also purchased by Török, and deposited at the Institute in 1927. The cited Tihanyi letter refers to the deposit in Pittsburgh (see note 6).

[25]*Brooklyn Museum Quarterly* (October 1929) 16, no. 4, 132.

[26]Lajos Tihanyi's letter to Dezső Kosztolányi, Hungarian Academy of Sciences Manuscript Collection, Ms 4628/21.

[27]Catalogue of Lajos Tihanyi's exhibition, *MA* [Today] (15 Oct. 1916), 3, no. 10, no. 35.

[28]György Bölöni, "Tihanyi," *Szabad Szó* [Free word] (25 June 1938), 2. György Bálint, "Egy kép alá" [On a picture], *Pesti Napló* [Journal of Pest] (17 October 1937), 9.

[29]György Bölöni, *Az igazi Ady* [The true Ady] (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1978): 609.

[30]György Bölöni, "Tinta" [Ink], in, *Egy forradalmi nemzedék* [A revolutionary generation] (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1982): 213-15.

[31]Lajos Tihanyi's letter to Ernő Kállai, 29 January 1937. Quoted by Mihály, "Dokumentumok Tihanyi párizsi éveiről és haláláról," 8.

[32]Krisztina Passuth: "La carrière de Lajos Tihanyi," 125-49.

[33]Arnold Murai's letter to Lajos Tihanyi, undated. MNGA 18835/73.

[34]Oil on canvas, 71 x 58 cm, bottom left: "Tihanyi L. 1912." Hungarian National Gallery (henceforth MNG) inv. no. 70.132 T.

[35]We have little information on István Dobó but, as mentioned, Henry Miller cites him in his writings as having lived in Paris in the early thirties.

[36]Portrait of a woman, 1929. Oil on canvas, 50.5 x 40 cm, bottom left: "L. Tihanyi N.Y. 1929." MNG inv. no. 70.189 T. The photocopy of the latter can be found in Tihanyi's estate, the reverse bearing Tihanyi's note that it is a picture of Miklós (Nicholas) Suba and was exhibited in Paris in 1930 and 1931. (MNGA 18781/73-12.)

[37]New York, 10 March 1926, MNGA 18825/73. On Kiesler, see e.g. Lisa Phillips, *Frederick Kiesler* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1989)

[38]Several of Hollós' letters are amoung Mihály Károlyi's papers. On the Ady Society, see Julianna Puskás, *Kivándorló magyarok az Egyesült Államokban 1880-1940* [Emigrant Hungarians in the United States, 1880-1940] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1982): 351. See also József Hollós, "Magyar kultúrelet New Yorkban" [Hungarian cultural life in New York], *Korunk* (1932).

[39]MNGA 18781/73-31.

[40]Tihanyi's social circle in Paris could not have been small either, as indicated by the Hungarian sculptor Márk Vedres' remembrance: "[Tihanyi] complained that he had little money. I recommended that he ask each of his friends for a franc, instantly he'd be a millionaire." Márk Vedres, "Tihanyi Lajosról" [On Lajos Tihanyi] (Paris, 17 June 1938), Archive of the Art Historical Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (henceforth MTAMKIA), no inventory number.

[41]He may only have the same name, but one of Tihanyi's younger sisters was Mrs. Henrik Reiner.

[42]Zoltán Bálint, "Magyar képzőművészeti kiállítás Belgrádban 1918 őszén" [Hungarian fine arts exhibition in Belgrade in the fall of 1918], *Művészettörténeti Értesitő* (1966), no. 2, 119-21.

[43]The subscription sheets feature the name of Toscan Bennet, who is also included in the address book. Other names are also recorded with American addresses, but they cannot be made out in his handwriting. Some American letters are also found in Tihanyi's estate, all written by Hungarians. They include: Emil Lengyel's letter, New York, 16 December 1935, MNGA 18875.74; Árpád Kallós's letter, New York, 15 April 1929, MNGA 18843/73, Nándor Pogány's letter, New York, undated, MNGA 18815/73.

[44]MNGA 16277/1964

[45]There was a Jackson mentioned in connection with Török in Mihály Károlyi's letters to Oszkár Jászi and Mrs. Károlyi, but this person was Mary G. Jackson of Westminster, Maryland. See the letters of 17 November 1923, 24 January 1924 and 1 December 1924 in Hajdu, ed. *Károlyi Mihály levelezése* II.

[46]Miller must have brought the news to Brassai, for he arrived in Paris on 4 March and Brassai forwarded this piece of information to his parents on 11 March. Tihanyi may have adjusted his return date to Károlyi, for on 24 January Károlyi wrote to György Bölöni that he hoped Tihanyi would return with him. The "luxury trip" refers to the fact that Károlyi had to travel third class while in emigration. See Bölöni's cited "Memoir" on this.

[47]Henrik Neugeboren's letter to Ernő Kállai. Paris, June 1938.

[48]György Bölöni, "Tihanyi," *Szabad Szó*, Paris, 25 June 1938, in, György Bölöni, *Képek között* [Among pictures], edited by Edit Erki (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1967): 519-21.

Appendix

Two English Texts by Tihanyi

Note: The translations are somewhat garbled in places, but in the absence of any originals, we have decided to print them as they are, with a few clarifying insertions in brackets.

I. What is Painting?

Painting is based on the appreciation of colors. It is realized through the utilization of materials containing colors.

The raw material is transformed into new living value by properly utilizing every part of it. The material [which] does not reveal new values is dead.

The good material is responsible for itself and in itself. Each color is separately responsible for itself and in itself and can express only *one* real value.

This is the *just[e]* [proper] color which cannot be replaced.

The expressive-responsible-color has a voice of its own.

The painting which is not realized by itself but through the interaction of lines and values (colors) may be a good or clever representation of one or more objects or figures based on optical or objective impressions. It may be merely play or a composition involving brain work but the significance of music is not expressed by the musical or by one's knowledge based on musical tradition. Intuitive concepts are expressed only by talent and newly found values.

Creative expressions which do not impose themselves with the proper utilization of the material — through the qualities inherent in them — (including drawing and the boundary lines of values) are falsified and subjective impressions.

Brain work means struggle with the material and the power of thought over the material.

The author "composes" with words, the sculptor with stone and metal, wood or other material. The painter is working with colors.

By utilizing the values of a given surface the painter [is] struggling with the quality, quantity and dimensions of his material in the same manner and at the same time.

When one paints on a flat surface, plastic expression is a false value, done with the false utilization of the value of the material. The other improper expression of painting is the light which is incorporeal like the gases whose utilization means in laboratory work [sic].

In this sense a musical instrument hidden behind the picture or even the odor of a flower or that of a piece of cheese may transmit our feelings or sentiments.

The painter has greater obstacles to overcome using less material, he is making use of and the... manner he adopts. Theoretically speaking the greatest accomplishment for a painter is to express himself with one color if it dominates the entire surface, if [it] is the outcome of the necessity that this color in itself is entirely expressive and that there is no need for another color because it would be superfluous.

The work and its value does not depend on the restriction of the material but in the preservation and expressiveness of the real value of the material used.

Mental or physical work coincides with the accomplishments of the physical action. The brush or any other instrument — intermediaries — are for the evaluation and not for the degradation of the material.

The eyes, hands and instruments of the painter are as bad as the brain which leads them if he uses them in contradiction to the real nature of the material.

There are no rules and no limits in the selection and employment of the materials, but freedom is a relative notion and the laws of work are given in the nature of the material.

Ce' qu'il faut, c'est refaire dans la matière.

The material contains everything that is truthful and beautiful, but truth and beauty have to be brought out not through hampering tendencies but with the aid of the given necessity.

The most inferior factor of creative work is its tendency to create the "beautiful" with the aid of aesthetic and other tendencies, and aesthetic and literary reminiscences, in the dark architecture of misty corridors, in the vaults of a hall supported by pillars.

This spiritual parasitism results in reproducing activity.

The creation of aesthetic values results then in the production of objets d'art.

Snobbism, together with the parasites of aesthetics and business, are working for the development and stabilization of this false culture.

This is the ces "beaux arts" which exists not only is one's imagination.

The real object of painting is not only the representation of one or more figures or objects, their interpretation and composition in space. Nor is its object the simultaneous interaction of optical effects and of dynamical forms. Painting is the expressive — in itself and for itself — colors on a surface.

A painting can never be abstract because owing to its physical qualities the material is concrete.

In spite of all kinds of geometrical, optical and "color-erotical" devices the surface of the canvas remains smooth and the work of the painter can be realized only on this surface.

"Transmissive constructions" require the utilization of strange and plastical materials which break up the surface. It is an unavoidable necessity that the

painter should dominate the surface within the given dimensions by the complete and convenient use of material.

In this the subjective and objective function of painting is exhausted because the subjective function is only possible in objective connections.

Whatever lies outside of this is unimportant and does not deserve to be mentioned.

We do not know more about physical phenomena than we do about psychic and psychological phenomena and these do not sufficiently explain the creation of a work of art.

The painter who has written these lines had long ago disposed for himself of this "mystic" adage:

I am not doing what I wish to do.

But I can wish to do what I am doing [sic].

Lajos Tihanyi
(Paris, June 1928)[1]

II. [untitled]

It has been my ambition for years to visit America. I cannot understand why so many European artists do not appreciate the spiritual values of this country and do not find it important to get acquainted with it.

On the other hand, American artists have contributed so much to European art and its traditions that it is difficult to perceive the difference between their methods and ours, although the products of old American art greatly surpass the value of the Asiatic and other pre-historic arts.

The new art and its important representatives will find the most useful values in the new artistic creations of America. The machine art, cubism, the German "Neue Sachlichkeit" and the *ci-devant* constructivism represented the parasitic efforts of contemporary Europe. The constructive creations of America, on the other hand, reflect the spiritual and physical work of the modern world.

The ethical purity of these constructions assumes an ever growing importance. Huge masses and lines demand incontrovertibly the preponderance of the beauty of the material.

These new buildings have to be built with the best material and by the best craftsmen. The good work of the constructor will be improved upon within a short time by the architect. I understand that in a height of 100-200 meters the large planes and cupolas cannot assert themselves to best advantage even in electric light. They need the help of gold, the most noble metal. This luxury is justified but the luxury of the American home, I can not help saying came from

the junk room of Europe, pretty and spurious, except the wonderful hygienic equipment.

Some American banks and office buildings represent the same happy combination of modern architecture and interior decoration as some of the Renaissance churches and castles of past ages.

I believe that within a short time European art, an iconoclast, will completely orient itself toward America. American taste will welcome Europe's additions which will make for the perfection of a new style. Europe should beware, so that American influence should not be predominant.

I am not very familiar with American literature but I dare to compare Walt Whitman's puritanic simplicity with the silent stone piles of the sky-scrapers.

In the works of the unknown American artists of 200-300 years ago I have found a few strikingly beautiful pictorial mementoes. I have seen knotted rugs which in their simplicity and intelligent use of the material surpass the home art of any European country.

The European woman makes herself pretty, whereas the American woman ornaments herself.

Louis /Lajos/ Tihanyi
June 1929, New York City[2]

Notes to the Appendix:

[1]Hungarian National Gallery Archive, 18829/73.
[2]Petőfi Irodalmi Múzeum, V3481/29/10.

List of Illustrations. See the appendix to this volume (pp. 115-122).

1. *Portrait of Dezső Kosztolányi,* 1914, oil on canvas, 80 X 90 cm. (Present location unknown).

2. *Portrait of Andor Halasi* (*Portrait of a Critic*), 1913, oil on canvas, 40 X 50 cm. (Brooklyn Museum, New York).

3. *Family*, 1921, oil on canvas, 115 X 90 cm. (Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest, inv. no. 70.1/9 T).

4. *Bridge,* oil on canvas, 60 X 82 cm. (Present location unknown).

5. *Portrait of John Török*, 1929, chalk on paper, 63.7 X 49.2 (Hungarian National Gallery, inv. no. F.70.157).

6. *Portrait of Louis T. Gruenberg*, 1929, chalk on paper, 49 X 32.1 cm. (Hungarian National Gallery, inv. no. F.70.136).

7. *Portrait of Nicholas Suba*, 1929, oil on canvas, 50.5 X 40.5 (Hungarian National Gallery, inv. no. 70.201. T).

8. *Portrait of a Woman (Cecile),* 1929, oil on canvas, 50.5 X 40 (Hungarian National Gallery, inv. no. 70.189 T).

Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XXI, Nos. 1-2 (Spring-Fall, 1994)

"What the Moment Told Me": The Photographs of André Kertész

Richard Teleky

In 1912, the year André Kertész began working as a clerk in the Budapest Stock Exchange, he bought his first camera: an ICA box using 4.5 x 6 cm plates. He was eighteen years old and ready to teach himself the mysteries of light. Over the next thirteen years, before moving to Paris, he made hundreds of photographic images of Hungary. A soulful young man dozing in a Budapest coffee shop; a blind violinist fiddling in the middle of an unpaved street; two lovers embracing on a park bench; soldiers lined up on the latrine; a snow-covered street in Esztergom: these are only a few of the most familiar. Almost seventy years later Kertész collected 143 of these images for his elegiac book *Hungarian Memories*.[1] Most frequently remembered for Surrealist photographs of contorted women, or contemplative images of his adopted New York City, Kertész had preserved the underside of *belle-epoque* Hungary in some of the finest photographs of the twentieth century.

Avoiding the wealthy and the middle class, Kertész preferred to focus on the less-privileged, in a seemingly haphazard manner that belied his instinctive sense of composition. As a historical record his photographs are invaluable to the study of a vanished world — they preserve its texture, its density. Although Susan Sontag, in *On Photography*, wisely questioned the relation of photographic images to reality, it is possible to "read" photographs of the past in their own context, a process that Sontag tends to disregard.[2] Kertész's context, naturally, has many facets, from the fiction of Zsigmond Móricz and the poetry of Endre Ady to music and painting, as well as the dramatic story of the Dual Monarchy's last years. While Kertész's photographs can be looked at in isolation, or in terms of the development of modern photography (and his contribution to it), an appreciation of them is enriched by their context. Kertész was a pioneer, but he did not work alone.[3]

Yet even "context" is not enough to explain the difference between Kertész's Hungarian photographs and his work outside of his native country. As soon as one looks at the sweep of his work, a gradual shift in tone and a darkening sensibility become apparent. Kertész's Hungarian photographs exude warmth, immediacy, and freshness, qualities that gradually disappear from his

work as more formalist concerns begin to dominate it. While his early subject matter inevitably gave way to new surroundings (first Paris, and then New York where he spent the last forty-nine years of his life), the difference is more than a matter of subjects, although they are part of it. Something else seems to be happening, as if, cut off from his roots, Kertész can record only an alien world that the immigrant observes but does not fully inhabit. He seems to be retreating into formalism, yet an air of melancholy emerges, his emotions gradually withdrawing from the photographic image.

Kertész's long career has often been seen as part of the development of modernism. While the connection is an obvious one, it can be made a good deal more specific. That is that the psychological burden and freedom of emigrating made Kertész particularly open to modernist conventions, and had a profound effect on his work. Kertész was twice removed from his homeland — once from Hungary and once from France. His Hungarian photographs take on a different resonance when this is remembered.

* * *

Kertész's impulse to preserve a dying way of life was not unlike that of his compatriots Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály who recorded the folk music of the remote rural regions where old traditions persisted. This desire to preserve the past reflects a cultural movement in Hungary interested in expressing what was distinctly "Magyar," a movement launched by the celebrations of 1896 to commemorate the first thousand years of Hungarian history.

Andor Kertész was born in 1894 into an assimilated Jewish middle-class family in Budapest. At six, he saw "an illustrated magazine and decided I wanted to do the same with a camera as it had with drawings."[4] Purchasing his first small camera after receiving his baccalaureate, he used it as "a little notebook, a sketchbook. I photographed things that surrounded me — human things, animals, my house, the shadows, peasants, the life around me. I always photographed what the moment told me."[5] The glut of photographic images of the past century has made subjects such as these so familiar that it is easy to forget that Kertész was one of the first to record them. What may now look like stock images were once radically new. Self-taught, Kertész had to improvise a darkroom in his parents' house and do his printing at night, while the family slept. He reserved weekends for his camera, clerking at the stock exchange throughout the week.

During World War I Kertész served in the Austro-Hungarian army, taking along his cumbersome camera (now a Goertz Tenax with 4.5 x 6 cm plates) and photographing comrades whenever he had the chance. At the front line he took informal, candid photographs, unlike official photographers for the War Department, "who always came with a huge camera on a tripod after the battle was over to make a scenic photograph that would show the destruction."[6] Kertész preferred intimate moments — his latrine companions, a young soldier writing a

letter home, another flirtatiously touching the hip of a babushkaed peasant woman. After being wounded in 1916 he developed some of his pictures, and his regiment planned to publish them in a small book and give the proceeds to the Red Cross.[7] (The project never materialized because most of the negatives were destroyed.) Because of his injury, he had to spend almost nine months in a hospital, where he went swimming in the pool daily. Here he discovered the distortions caused by looking through water and began to use them in a series of photographs of male swimmers. When friends asked why he took such photographs, he replied "Why only girl friends? This also exists."[8] These first body distortions, made in 1917, foreshadow his more famous surrealist female nudes of 1933. Once recovered, he rejoined active service and travelled throughout Central Europe, making photographs along the way. Some of his war photographs appeared in *Borsszem Jankó*, in 1916, and in *Érdekes Újság*, in 1917.

After the war Kertész returned to work at the Budapest stock exchange and continued to make his visual record of Hungary. Yet he did not emphasize urban images. Rather, Kertész often visited the country. "I grew up in Budapest, but I always felt very close to the countryside,"[9] he wrote in the caption for a photograph of a peasant family in Szigetbecse holding violins and double bass upright, preparing to play a string trio. "I never had to go very far for subjects — they were always on my doorstep. But I can't analyze it. People ask me how I did it. I don't know; the event dictated it."[10] *The event dictated it.* Appealingly romantic, the claim is not entirely true. Kertész went in search of his subjects, although there was nothing mannered about the way he photographed them. Even when taking pictures in Budapest, he tended to concentrate on peasants, blocking and isolating their figures so that the sophisticated city seemed remote, even non-existent. "Waiting for the Ship, Budapest, 1919", for example, shows three peasant women huddled on the docks, talking, with two large and seemingly empty wicker baskets before them. They might be in any of the villages Kertész visited.

Kertész's Hungarian subjects rarely spill beyond their frames. "Boy sleeping over the daily paper in a coffee shop" (1912) is more than the photographic record of a handsome young man leaning on his right hand, his eyes shut, his mouth open; the image is a psychological statement about someone in suspension, as if Kertész were anticipating the dream space of Surrealism. The young man is lost in a state somewhere between a finite and an infinite landscape, neither a dream nor a nightmare, but another world — sleep space. The power of the image comes partly from Kertész's ability to photograph two kinds of space. First, the formal composition of the photograph — its spatial arrangement — isolates the figure in an "X" shape almost in the centre of a square, and the coffee shop is suggested mainly by the trapezoid of newspaper spread out before him and the triangle of newspapers hanging on a wall-rack behind and above him, as if to balance the white-and-grey trapezoid that may have put him to sleep in the first place. Second, the spatial duality established by the subject's face, in half shadow, suggests the sleep space beyond the world of waking, a

space within another space. A trace of eros marks the young man's features, along with a languid melancholy that seems tinged with Kertész's good humour — the young man will, of course, awake and return to the cares of the day. Given the fact that Kertész was only eighteen when he took this photograph, it can be seen as a self-portrait of sorts. But like any serious portraitist he probed the character of his subject — the young man is gentle, dreamy, almost vulnerable, with the unselfconsciousness of youth.

Unselfconsciousness is a feature of Kertész's Hungarian work, and frequently of the people he chose to photograph — beggars, Gypsy children, a blind fiddler. Unhappy with his office job, Kertész may have identified with these marginal figures and their sense of dislocation. His family did not encourage his desire for a career in photography, fearing that he would end up like any of the numerous small Budapest photographers making studio portraits — this was, after all, a time when photography had a lower status than the other visual arts. Instead, his mother encouraged his minor interest in bee-keeping, for Kertész had loved the countryside since childhood, when his family spent summers in Szigetbecse, on the *puszta*, and at Tiszaszalka on the Tisza River. In July 1921 Kertész spent six weeks in a village near Buda, learning about bee-keeping. Fortunately he never pursued the subject, but it was during this time that he took his photograph of the blind violinist, one of the masterworks of European photography.

At first glance "Abony" (July 19, 1921) — which Kertész described as "A blind musician... who wandered from village to village with his boy. He made a living playing for alms"[11] — seems to be a sociological comment. But closer examination shows that it is much more than photojournalism. The photograph, in fact, is a statement about making art. The face of the violinist suggests that his music has transported him from the unpaved street where he plays to himself, transcending his ordinary world yet still a part of it. This reflection on the process of creation observes the boundary between art and life (the violinist's child companion is clearly on the look-out for alms) while the musician inhabits another world. Here again, space is relative, not absolute. In this early study Kertész managed to make the invisible visible — the artist's need to create, and the space that creation makes. He photographed the violinist's essence. Years later Kertész wrote of this subject: "Look at the expression on his face. It was absolutely fantastic. If he had been born in Berlin, London, or Paris, he might have become a first-rate musician."[12] There is something almost consoling about this image, as is true of all great works of art. One critic, Sandra S. Phillips, has remarked that the figure has "the timeless authority of Homer."[13] (It is no accident that Kertész felt drawn to another blind musician later in his life, in New York.)

Kertész had not yet given himself up to the experiments that would follow in Paris, where painting and photography seemed to merge. In Hungary he insisted on the strict separation of the two, affirming the integrity of photojournalism. Yet he was not interested in mimesis but, rather, in exploring the

external world through the camera. Like all early modernists, he had to recognize the separation between external reality and the work of art, even as he presented the anecdotal with a modernist's sense of fragmentation. His own emotions, his own responses, were always central to his photography. "My work," he wrote, "is inspired by my life. I express myself through my photographs. Everything that surrounds me provokes my feeling."[14] An instinctive artist (perhaps a function of being self-taught), Kertész emphasized how he found his subjects: "I always photographed what the moment told me."[15] Yet he lived in search of the moment, and organized his weekend travels in aid of the search. "You do not have to imagine things; reality gives you all you need."[16] His angle on "reality," however, was unique, and Kertész knew it: "It has been said that my photos 'seem to come more out of a dream than out of reality.' I have an inexplicable association with the things I see. This is the reality."[17] Loathe to give away his secrets, Kertész understood that his work was based on an "inexplicable association." When he did speculate on the nature of this association, he recognized the unusual character of his Hungarian work: "The only one I knew to make pictures like mine was a kind of calendar photographer. He arranged his scenes. But I captured mine. My youth in Hungary is full of sweet and warm memories. I have kept the memory alive in my photographs. I am a sentimentalist — born that way, happy that way. Maybe out of place in today's reality."[18] A sentimentalist, but never a sentimental artist, Kertész was able to photograph an added dimension of the world around him because he felt that dimension, one world contained within another. His work is visually exciting precisely because he knew how to reveal the unseen.

An art of contingencies, photography requires a habit of readiness. Photographers must always be watching for the moment when light and subject meet; they have to act in a matter of seconds, making a decision based on an emotional response. In photography, Kertész has written, "two seconds are a thousand years."[19] For a good photograph to result, all elements must cohere, yet this is far from a matter of mere coincidence: Kertész was always mindful of what he was looking for. "Of course a picture can lie," he wrote, "but only if you yourself are not honest or if you don't have enough control over your subject. Then it is the camera working, not you."[20] In Hungary he trained himself to be in control of his camera.

Unlike the Hungarian pictorialists whose work filled popular magazines, or the "calendar photographer" he remembered, Kertész insisted on the real rather than the staged. Yet it is clear from his early photographs that he was not beyond staging moments. In one night scene, "Budapest, 1914," a solitary man stands before a pool of light on a cobblestone street, an image that evokes the lonely world of Gyula Krúdy's short stories. In fact Kertész used one of his brothers for a model, and he had to stand still for eight to ten minutes — "the film wasn't so sensitive then,"[21] he recalled. Is this realism? Maybe. The photograph is not spontaneous, yet it appears to be completely natural, as if Kertész had taken a quick snapshot. Other images from these years are also

obviously posed (for example, "Nude in Abony, July 23, 1921" and "Szigetbecse, September 26, 1926," a portrait of a peasant woman breast-feeding her baby) and seem rather stiff. Perhaps part of the success of Kertész's sleeping youth or blind fiddler comes from the fact that these subjects were unaware they were being photographed. Of course this gave Kertész more freedom. He may have chosen marginal people as his favoured subjects, seeing in them his own feelings about the world, but he did not meet them on exactly equal ground: the camera that stood between them conferred power on him whether he wanted it or not. His subtle use of this power, and his refusal to exploit it, account for the charm of his early work.

In 1923 Kertész sent four pictures to a photo exhibition in Budapest, and learned that the jury wanted to give him the silver medal. Asked to print in bromoil, a process that made photographs look like drawings, Kertész refused, and the offer of a medal was withdrawn. "That was all right with me," he remembered years later. "I have always known that photography can only be photography and is not meant to imitate painting."[22] At first this may seem surprising for a young man who dreamed of living in Paris, then the centre of modern art. Kertész, however, always insisted on the integrity of photography, and remained years ahead of his time in his perception of the value of his art.

Kertész's Hungarian work seems untouched by the *avant-garde* art that developed alongside of it. The *fin-de-siècle* had seen a great flowering of art and architecture in Budapest, but no one would guess this from most of Kertész's photographs. The Nagybánya painters and, later, painters like the Eight, were in their prime years, exhibiting regularly in Budapest, where a genuine Hungarian *avant-garde* style was developing. As well, Kertész would have read the modernists Ady and Móricz in the pages of *Érdekes Újság*, which continued to publish his own work. Yet as Oliver A.I. Botar has pointed out, Kertész's circle of friends included Vilmos Aba-Novák and István Szőnyi, painters of the Szolnok School who were "committed to painting Hungarian landscapes, townscapes, and rural genre scenes."[23] Kertész remained separate from the *avant-garde*, struggling by himself to photograph his world as directly as possible while learning the technical secrets of his various cameras. Remembering this time years later, he said, "We had an absolutely special spirit in Hungary, especially in Budapest."[24] The words suggest that Kertész knew he belonged to a larger movement, although he had been content to embody it in his own way.

* * *

After wearing down his mother's objections, Kertész finally applied for a visa to live in France, and left Budapest for Paris in 1925. At once he joined the Hungarian community there and was probably glad for their help, since he knew little French. He gravitated to the Café du Dôme in the heart of Montparnasse, to the Hungarian table with architect Ernő Goldfinger, painters and sculptors such as Lajos Tihanyi, József Csáky (whose Cubist sculptures he particularly

admired), Dénes Förstner, and Etienne (István) Beöthy, the writer Sándor Kémeri, Noemie Ferenczy, ceramicist Margit Kovács, and photographer Ilka Révai. He also befriended a Transylvanian-Hungarian named Gyula Halász, and showed him how to take photographs as a way to make money, sharing his knowledge of night photography, a subject that Halász, later known as Brassai, came to be associated with.

As his circle of friends grew to include Mondrian, Leger, and László Moholy-Nagy, Kertész saw the most *avant-garde* art of the day. These were the years of his surrealist experiments with distortion, which had their roots in his swimming-pool photographs made during the war. The model in his famous "Satiric Dancer, Paris, 1926," was a young Hungarian woman named Magda Forstner, and the photograph was taken in the studio of his sculptor friend, Beöthy. Did Kertész feel particularly free to experiment because he shared a common language with his model? We'll probably never know, but the question is still worth asking. It is not a large leap from Magda Forstner to the photographs Kertész took in the early 1930s with distorting mirrors he bought in a flea market. Sandra S. Phillips, however, has noted that Kertész's move to abstraction was not unlike Moholy-Nagy's, which also occurred only after he left Hungary.

One can merely speculate about why such changes took place. The heady combination of personal freedom in a new city, which happened to be the world's art capital, along with Kertész's own intense, melancholy, but out-going nature, must have made him particularly open to an atmosphere of experimentation. It was during a visit to Mondrian's studio in 1926 that Kertész took his well-known photograph of a table with a vase and artificial flower near the stairwell. Regarding Mondrian, he wrote: "I went to his studio and instinctively tried to capture in my photographs the spirit of his paintings. He simplified, simplified, simplified. The studio with its symmetry dictated the composition."[25]

During these years Kertész's many photographs of friends — both portraits and casual gatherings — are a link to the faces that stare out from his Hungarian photographs. Budapest beggars have been replaced with the *clochards* of Paris, but these images are more picturesque than similar ones taken back home, as if Kertész's mind and heart were elsewhere. Yet he recorded friends and colleagues with the same kind of sympathy and spontaneity that he once brought to peasant women and Gypsies. Like immigrants before him, Kertész took the measure of his new surroundings and saw what they asked of him. He could be entirely modern too.

* * *

In 1936 Kertész and his Hungarian wife of three years, Elizabeth Sali (born Erzsébet Salomon), moved to New York City, where he planned to spend a year photographing the United States. Initially Elizabeth did not want to make the trip, and even told Kertész jokingly, "I'll divorce you."[26]

What followed is an almost familiar story of European émigrés in America during the years before the Second World War. Offered a contract with a prominent picture agency, Keystone Studios, by fellow-Hungarian Erney (Ernő) Prince, Kertész settled into the Beaux Arts Hotel, the first of his Manhattan addresses. These were difficult years for him. Yet it is easy to forget that photography as an art was new to the museum world in the 1930s. In 1936, when Kertész was en route to America, Beaumont Newhall, the photography curator at the Museum of Modern Art, was preparing the museum's first photography exhibition, "Photography 1839-1937." Five images by Kertész were used (including a nude study cropped by Newhall to eliminate the model's pubic hair). In Budapest his photographs had received almost immediate recognition, but in New York Kertész had to struggle as a free-lance photojournalist whose work seemed largely irrelevant to American taste. His photographs were exhibited in several galleries and even published in *Look*, where they were credited to Prince. "My sort of photography was not understood," he later recalled. "I made an interesting New York book. I took the layout to a publisher. `You are too human, Kertész, sorry,' was the answer, `make it more brutal.'"[27] At *Life* magazine he was told "You are talking too much with your pictures. We only need documents," and Kertész felt "cheated. I was trapped."[28]

Because of the war he was forced to remain in America where, classified as an enemy alien, he was even prohibited from making photographs outdoors. Eventually his photographs were published in magazines such as *Collier's*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Town and Country*, and *Vogue*, but he never found easy acceptance. After becoming an American citizen in 1944, he began working for Conde Nast Publications, and signed an exclusive contract with them in 1949, supplying mainly interior photographs for *Town and Country*. In 1946 the Art Institute of Chicago mounted a one-man show of Kertész's photographs, but he had to wait another twenty-eight years for his next solo exhibition.

Although Kertész referred to himself as "a sentimentalist," he did not try to recreate a bit of old Hungary in America. He was already a seasoned immigrant. Unlike his first years in Paris, where he belonged to a vital Hungarian community, in New York Kertész settled down to the business of doing business. In studying his work it is also important to stop and think of the subjects he didn't photograph. There are no Hungarian restaurants, pastry shops, butcher shops, churches, clubs, dances, or community activities, often the solace of the new immigrant. Certainly in the years before and after the Second World War there were plenty of these in New York for anyone inclined to photograph them. And Weston J. Naef has noted that, "The Americanization of Kertész was proceeding in a way not unlike that of other aspiring immigrants. He did not, for example, choose to live in New York's Hungarian enclave, situated on Manhattan's commercial Lexington Avenue between 68th and 78th streets."[29] Of course Kertész's family had a history of assimilation in Hungary, maintaining little of their Jewish identity, and perhaps he had learned the lesson well. In New York he devoted his free time — and his free emotions — to his own

photography. It is fair to say that he had assimilated himself into the international style of modernism. His world had no need of picturesque immigrants, and neither did he.

After settling in New York, it seems that Kertész lost interest in faces, or found none that moved him as much as the Hungarian faces of his youth. His work became increasingly abstract, his camera angles more unusual. Of course people weren't Kertész's only subject in Hungary. He had also made images of cobblestone streets and dirt roads; rain on the streets, mirror-like puddles, and piles of snow; clouds and shadows. The camera's lens was Kertész's eye on patterns in nature, patterns that reflected the clean geometry of modernism. Now there are few faces to equal those in his early photographs: the artist's brother, Jenő, swimming; children in Esztergom; a Gypsy girl modelling her embroidered scarf; a small-town judge, teacher, minister, and notary; and even an astonishingly tender photograph of his mother's hands, taken in 1919, when she was sixty, about which Kertész wrote for a caption "I have the same hands today."[30] America provided few human subjects that stood out in their own right. People merged into their landscapes as the documentary aspect of Kertész's photography completely transformed itself — a considerable achievement because photography nearly always hints at some link with its realist, documentary origins. The power relation between Kertész and his subjects had also changed from his early excursions to the Hungarian countryside. Kertész was now the marginal figure, the immigrant trying to "make it," and he had to be aware of this on the streets of New York.

Kertész continued to take photographs "for myself,"[31] including a series focusing on Washington Square, the park below his apartment building, which he added to over several decades. His isolation was deeply felt, and one photograph from the late 1950s, "Sixth Avenue, New York City, 1959," suggests the depth of it. On a busy street corner a blind accordionist looks out blankly while a dwarf, who works as a circus clown, drops a coin into the cup held by the musician's female companion. Inevitably the image evokes Kertész's earlier blind violinist. The effect, however, eerily prefigures the work of Diana Arbus — the artist is not transcendent here, but sadly marginal. Kertész wrote of this image: "You have different feelings with each happening — good ones and bad ones: a killer can be an artistic person; wars are fought in beautiful landscapes. But I cannot analyze my work. People often ask, 'How can you do this photograph?' I do not know, the moment came. I know beforehand how it will come out. There are few surprises. You don't see; you *feel* the things."[32] Like Mondrian, he had taught himself how to simplify.

In 1962, at the age of sixty-eight, Kertész was finally recognized as one of the pioneer photographers of the century when he was given the chance to stage a one-man exhibition at Long Island University of New York. Retrospectives followed soon at the Venice Biennale (1963), the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris (1963), and the Museum of Modern Art in New York (1964).

It was as if the art world had suddenly happened on a major figure, just as Kertész claimed to find his subjects.

The attention gave Kertész freedom and a degree of financial security he had not known before, and he was able to terminate his contract with Conde Nast. He continued to take photographs in New York, but also in Europe and Japan. And he gave interviews, discussing his work with a new generation fascinated by it. Three years before his death, in 1985, his collection *Hungarian Memories* was published. It was the most lavish of the books that Kertész undertook, and shows his deep attachment to his early Hungarian work. Yet Kertész did not call the book *Hungarian Images*, or something similar, but rather *Hungarian Memories*. The choice is significant because the word "memories" highlights the personal aspect of his work as well as the distance he felt from his youth. "Memories" also suggests nostalgia, even the bittersweet mood of a backward glance. Hungary now belonged to the past. It should be no surprise that Kertész ended his life photographing a small glass bust of a woman that reminded him of his deceased wife, as it reflected the light of the cityscape outside his living-room window. Displacement and alienation had always drawn his eye, and now Kertész became one with them, recording pure light as precisely as possible. The external world no longer captured his attention: pattern was all, and the form and content of photography united.

NOTES

The illustrations to this study (see the Appendix at the back of this volume) are courtesy of the Jane Corkin Gallery, Toronto, Canada.

[1]André Kertész, *Hungarian Memories* (Boston: A New York Graphic Book/Little, Brown and Company, 1982).

[2]Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1977).

[3]The context I have in mind is examined in such books as John Lukacs's *Budapest 1900: A Historical Portrait of a City and Its Culture* (New York: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1988) and Mary Gluck's *Georg Lukacs and His Generation 1900-1918* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1985), as well as by two recent travelling exhibitions of Hungarian art with book-length catalogues: *A Golden Age: Art and Society in Hungary 1896-1914* (Corvina, Budapest/Barbican Art Gallery, London, England/Center for the Fine Arts, Miami, Florida, 1990) and *Standing in the Tempest: Painters of the Hungarian Avant-Garde 1908-1930* (Santa Barbara, California: Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1991).

[4]André Kertész, *Kertész on Kertész: A Self-Portrait* (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1985), p. 15.

[5]*Ibid.*

[6]*Ibid.*, p. 23.

[7]Colin Ford, *André Kertész: An Exhibition of Photographs from the Centre Georges Pompidou Paris* (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1979), p. 9.

[8]*Ibid.*, p. 24.

[9]*Ibid.*, p. 36.

[10]*Ibid.*, p. 30.

[11]Kertész, *Hungarian Memories*, p. 30.

[12]Kertész, *Kertész on Kertész*, p. 37.

[13]Sandra S. Phillips, David Travis and Weston J. Naef, *André Kertész of Paris and New York* (New York: Thames and Hudson, Inc., 1985), p. 19.

[14]*Kertész on Kertész*, p. 29.

[15]*Ibid.*, p. 15.

[16]*Ibid.*, p. 105.

[17]*Ibid.*, p. 76.

[18]*Ibid.*, p. 38.

[19]*Ibid.*, p. 80.

[20]*Ibid.*

[21]*Ibid.*, p. 33.

[22]*Ibid.*, p. 32.

[23]Oliver A.I. Botar with M. Phileen Tattersall, *Tibor Polya and the Group of Seven: Hungarian Art in Toronto Collections 1900-1949* (Toronto: Justina M. Barnicke Gallery, Hart House, University of Toronto, 1989), p. 2.

[24]Keith F. Davis, *André Kertész: Vintage Photographs* (New York: Edwynn Houk Gallery, 1985), p. 6.

[25]*Kertész on Kertész*, p. 53.

[26]Ford, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

[27]*Kertész on Kertész*, p. 90.

[28]*Ibid.*

[29]Phillips, Travis and Naef, *op. cit.*, p. 109. Naef curiously misses the point with his phrase the "Americanization of Kertész." In fact, the photographer never developed an American fondness for scenic subjects, while it was his European-ness that caused his work to be undervalued, as Kertész admitted.

[30]Kertész, *Hungarian Memories*, p. 194.

[31]*Ibid.*, p. 96.

[32]*Ibid.*, p. 99.

Illustrations to this article: see the Appendix to this volume (pp. 123-25).

1. André Kertész. *Boy Sleeping over Daily Paper*, 1912. Gelatin silver print. Courtesy: Jane Corkin Gallery, Toronto, Canada. ©André Kertész.

2. André Kertész. *Blind Violinist*, 1912. Gelatin silver print. Courtesy: Jane Corkin Gallery, Toronto, Canada. ©André Kertész.

Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XXI, Nos. 1-2 (Spring-Fall, 1994)

Émigré Artists and Wartime Politics: 1939-45

N.F. Dreisziger

Numerous notable Hungarians lived in American emigration during the Second World War. Among them were exiled politicians,[1] writers, scholars, scientists,[2] as well as people involved in both the visual and performing arts.[3] When war enveloped the world from 1939 to 1941, some of these individuals felt that the fate of their native land, indeed of modern civilization, lay in the balance. Accordingly, they took time from their creative activities and became involved in politics. First it was the politicians that heeded the war's clarion call, but when it became obvious that they would not be able to achieve their aims, other prominent Hungarian Americans — including a number of artists — came forward and, hoping that their reputations would enable them to do better, tried to take centre stage in Hungarian émigré politics. This study explores the largely untold story of these individuals' wartime political activities. It will try to explain their motives, assess their impact on Hungarian-American politics, and estimate the extent to which these artists-turned-politicians were successful in attaining their objectives.

On the eve of the Second World War, Hungarian Americans composed a sizable ethnic group that was characterized by complex social, religious, and ideological divisions.[4] Most of its members were either immigrants who had come to the United States before the First World War or their children. Since immigration from Hungary had been greatly reduced after the introduction of admission quotas in the 1920s, there were relatively few new additions to America's Hungarian communities. Many of those that were relative newcomers, however, were not so much economic migrants as they were émigrés who had left Hungary for political reasons. Among them were people who had participated in Hungary's post-war leftist revolutions and made their way to the United States during the 1920s and 1930s, often with the expectation that they would return to Hungary once the political climate there changed. This segment of Hungarian-American society was a small one, but it was potentially influential as it counted among its ranks numerous highly educated people with a great deal of determination, energy, and organizational experience. In historical literature this element of the Hungarian-American community is usually referred to as the "progressive" bloc. In time, certainly by the summer of 1942, members of this

bloc would dominate wartime Hungarian émigré politics, after their opponents, the conservatives, have had their heyday.

Conservative Ascendancy, 1939-41

Most Hungarian Americans, especially those who believed in "church and country," were loosely affiliated with the American Hungarian Federation (AHF). The AHF was the largest and most influential umbrella organization of Hungarian Americans at the time of the outbreak of the Second World War. It was the successor to a number of such organizations, the earliest dating from before 1914. The first Hungarian-American federation ceased operations during the First World War, but in 1929 a new one was established with the help of the Hungarian government. Ten years later, a more viable organization was formed. Both the 1929 federation and the one resurrected on the eve of the war were supporters of Admiral Miklós Horthy's regime and its efforts to revise the Treaty of Trianon, the post-war peace settlement that detached from Hungary two-thirds of its territory. Enjoying the support of some of the largest and richest associations of Hungarians in the United States, the AHF wielded a great deal of influence in Hungarian-American affairs during the early stages of the war.

Late in 1940 the AHF's leadership became involved in the Horthy regime's plans for the establishment of a powerful Hungarian lobby in the West which could serve as a base for a government-in-exile should circumstances demand its creation. The chief advocate of such a plan was János Pelényi, the Hungarian minister in Washington.[5] He had revealed his ideas to his superiors in the winter of 1938-1939, but action on this matter was not taken in Budapest until the following winter. At that time the Hungarians feared that Hitler's next move would be in the direction of oil-rich Romania. To be ready for all contingencies, including a possible German occupation of Hungary, Premier Pál Teleki took steps to prepare for the creation of a Hungarian government in the West.

A part of the preparations was the transfer of $5 million in securities to the United States for safekeeping. Pelényi was instructed to place the funds at the disposal of certain major Hungarian political figures who would assume the leadership of a Hungarian emigration if and when they managed to escape to the West. The plan was designed to ensure that, in case of problems at home, there would be at least one major Hungarian political figure in the West. There can be little doubt that Teleki's preference would have been to escape himself if necessary, but the success of such a last-minute exit could not be guaranteed. Therefore someone had to be sent to the West in advance. The person selected was Tibor Eckhardt, a figure deemed to have sufficient stature to gain acceptance in the West. As Hungary's former delegate to the League of Nations, and as former leader of the opposition Smallholders Party, he was considered to be a politically suitable volunteer for the task. In accordance with this plan, Eckhardt went on a lecture-tour of the United States.[6]

Hitler's strategy during the first half of 1940 made the execution of these contingency plans unnecessary. The *Führer* wanted peace in Eastern Europe for the time being, and gave assurances to the Hungarians to that effect. If the leaders in Budapest had any doubts as to what Hitler's next move might be, they were soon dispelled when the German leader began his northern and western offensives in the spring of 1940. The changed international situation resulted in a decision by the Hungarian government to abandon preparations for a government-in-exile. At the end of May, Pelényi was instructed to return the designated $5 million to the Hungarian National Bank's account in the Federal Reserve Bank in New York for other use. On completing his speaking tour in the United States, Eckhardt, instead of remaining there, returned to Hungary. In 1940 then, the Hungarian plan for a government-in-exile seems to have been scrapped. Developments in the winter of 1940-41, however, led to their resuscitation. The impetus for this turn of events was provided by confidential reports from Germany that Hitler was preparing for a war against the Soviet Union. Teleki wished to take certain precautions in advance of the anticipated German move. He wanted to prevent Hungary's involvement in such a war but, if that proved impossible, he wanted to establish a Hungarian government in the West to act as the true voice of the Hungarian nation.[7]

Plans were worked out in January 1941 at a meeting attended by Hungary's most influential leaders. It was decided that if the Germans made demands on Hungary that were incompatible with Hungarian sovereignty, the government would resign. Regent Horthy would then appoint a new government headed by a prominent Hungarian statesman residing in the West, and he would go into passive, "internal" exile in Hungary.[8] Although this plan was officially approved only in January, Pelényi and his most trusted friends had been preparing its implementation for some time. In late November 1940 he and others among his staff resigned from their diplomatic posts and asked for political asylum in the United States. As émigrés, they could make preparations for a possible government-in-exile, which they could do only with great difficulty as accredited diplomats.

Pelényi's best contacts, both before and after his defection, were with the AHF. At the end of January 1941 the AHF's leaders, as well as other prominent Hungarian Americans, gathered at a conference in Washington. There they declared their support for a movement aimed at the preservation of an independent Hungary. This movement proposed to pave the way for the creation of a government of a "free Hungary" in the West in case the mother country fell under Nazi domination.[9] The movement was to be extended to all Western countries where Hungarians lived. To organize its American section, the meeting in Washington appointed a committee which, over the next few months, toured some of the largest Hungarian-American communities to explain the movement's aims and to drum up support.[10]

In the meantime, Hungary's policy-makers were taking steps to ensure that the movement would have a suitable leader as soon as it was firmly estab-

lished. Once again they turned to Eckhardt who was asked to go to the United States. He departed on March 7, only a fortnight before events would take place in Eastern Europe that would dramatically change Hungary's wartime situation.[11] By early April, soon after the German invasion of Yugoslavia had got under way, Eckhardt had reached Cairo. It was there that he learned of Teleki's suicide, prompted by his failure to preserve Hungary's neutrality. Less than a month earlier, the Premier had expressed to Eckhardt his hope that he could keep Hungary out of the conflict, but the change of government in Belgrade and Hitler's decision to crush Yugoslavia brought about a situation in which it proved impossible for the Hungarian statesman to continue to maintain his country's neutrality. With Teleki's death a new period began in Hungarian foreign policy in which less emphasis was placed on the maintenance of either the semblance or the substance of neutrality. This period saw Hungarian troops involved in the occupation of the formerly Hungarian districts of Yugoslavia, and then, at the end of June, in the invasion of the Soviet Union. However, this period of Hungarian foreign policy was brief, as several of Hungary's leaders began to have second thoughts about their country's involvement in the war when it became apparent that Hitler's Russian campaign would not be over in a "few weeks" and Hungary's soldiers would not be home "by harvest time."[12]

Eckhardt disregarded the pro-German attitudes that prevailed in Budapest during the summer and fall of 1941 and followed the objectives that he had been asked to strive for by his late chief, Teleki. From Cairo he proceeded to South Africa, where he boarded a ship for North America. He disembarked in the United States in August. As soon as he arrived, he tried to breathe new life into the by-then sagging campaign to launch the Movement for an Independent Hungary (MIH). To spearhead this effort, Eckhardt formed a committee made up of himself and his closest Hungarian associates in the United States. Pelényi was a member of this provisional body, as were other former members of the Hungarian legation in Washington. With the help of these men Eckhardt drafted a proclamation which he then issued in New York on September 27.[13]

From the very start, Eckhardt's campaign encountered bitter opposition. He and his associates were denounced both publicly and privately. The attacks against them came from various sources: from left-of-centre groups of Hungarian émigrés who planned to conduct their own fight for an independent Hungary; from leftist elements for whom Eckhardt was nothing but an agent of the "pro-Nazi" regime in Hungary, a "Hungarian Rudolph Hess;" and from people associated with Little Entente political circles who regarded the establishment of a respectable Hungarian political movement in the West as a threat to their own interests.[14]

Another problem for Eckhardt was the fact that the State Department in Washington adopted a policy which restricted the scope of his freedom in recruiting support. It forbade American citizens from joining any official organization that included Hungarian citizens. As a result, Eckhardt and his associates were forced to create two committees for the promotion of their cause

in the United States. One of these was called the American Committee of the Movement for an Independent Hungary while the other was made up of Hungarians who did not have American citizenship. At first, Eckhardt was this second committee's head and its membership consisted of a number of prominent Hungarians residing in the United States, foremost among them Eckhardt's diplomat associates who had defected to the United States late in 1940.[15] Another member was a recent arrival in the United States: composer Béla Bartók.

Enter Bartók

Béla Bartók is not known to have had much interest in political affairs. He certainly had nothing to do with party politics while he had lived in Hungary. When asked what party he belonged to, he usually replied that he supported the "Dózsa Party." Needless to say there was no such party in the Hungary of Bartók's days, but anyone claiming to favour it was obviously a friend of the common people, especially of the peasant masses who were far removed from the centres of political influence in the country.[16]

While Bartók eschewed involvement in party politics, he is known to have had firmly held views on certain political matters. As a young man, during the days of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, he had opposed what he saw as the unchecked growth of Austrian and German cultural influence in Hungary.[17] Later, Bartók's anti-German sentiments were tempered by his discovery of the music of German composers such as Richard Wagner and Richard Strauss. In the late-1930s, however, he once again began to fear the spread of German influence, in particular the growing appeal of Nazi ideology. He was especially displeased by his own country's imitation of contemporary Italian and German politics. Illustrative of his attitude was the action he had taken not long before his departure for America. The government of Pál Teleki, as part of its anti-Jewish legislative program, had passed measures restricting the participation of Jews in Hungary's cultural life. The measures elicited a formal protest from a group of prominent Gentile artists and intellectuals, including Bartók.[18] Bartók's departure from Hungary in 1940 has in fact been depicted by many authors as a protest against the radicalization of Hungarian politics; in particular, the alignment of Hungarian politics and diplomacy with those of the Axis. Bartók's decision to leave Hungary, however, also had to do with professional and career concerns.

The event that precipitated Bartók's decision to come to America was an invitation from Columbia University to work in the field of East European ethnomusicology. Bartók was called upon to complete a project that had been started by Millman Parry of Harvard University. Parry and his co-researchers had spent two years in the Croatian and Serbian countryside recording folksongs and traditional epic songs sung by village elders. It had been Parry's intention to transcribe the recordings into musical scores but he died before he could

undertake this difficult and time-consuming task.[19] The project's sponsors, including Columbia University Press, looked to Bartók to complete the work. Through the University's School of Music they offered him a contract, involving a yearly stipend of $3,000. This was a substantial sum for a visiting musician, and Bartók — and his concert pianist wife, Ditta Pásztory — could expect to supplement this income through concert tours, guest lectures, master classes, and composing.

The fifty-nine-year-old Bartók and his wife arrived in New York in October of 1940. At first, most of Bartók's energies were consumed by working on the Parry collection. There were also concert tours for both Béla and Ditta. During this time most of their contacts were fellow artists (musicians, conductors, composers, etc.), and they had few interactions with members of the Hungarian political emigration in the US. There were, however, distractions and irritants in Béla's life. He found Manhattan a noisy and inhospitable place and eventually he moved to a quieter residential area of Brooklyn. He also worried about developments in his homeland, as well as the fact that his younger son, Péter, was about to reach military age and, as a result, faced military service in a country which seemed to be drifting toward war.[20]

As time passed and Bartók's circle of Hungarian-American acquaintances widened, and as his concern for developments in his home country grew, it became increasingly likely that he would become involved in the political affairs of the Hungarian community in North America. Indeed, when the Movement for an Independent Hungary (MIH) was launched in the fall of 1941, Bartók accepted a membership on its executive committee. However, he asked that his involvement not be made public for the time being in view of his efforts to help his son Péter avoid military service in Hungary.[21]

By the time Bartók succeeded in arranging for his son to join him in America, Eckhardt's position in the MIH had deteriorated. In December 1941 Hungary had declared war on the United States, a development that put the final nail in the coffin of Eckhardt's ambition to lead a powerful Hungarian lobby in North America. Soon it became obvious that his movement needed both a new leader and a new approach. It was in this connection that Bartók's willingness to serve became important.

In July 1942 Eckhardt decided to step aside as the MIH's principal officer. On the 9th of that month the movement's Executive Committee met to deliberate over the MIH's future. Those in attendance decided to ask Bartók to assume the presidency of the committee. As the composer was not present, the EC's meeting was adjourned for lunch while someone went to fetch Bartók. Bartók eventually arrived and agreed to accept the presidency, prompting Eckhardt to thank him profusely for coming to the movement's rescue.[22]

Under Bartók's leadership, the MIH began to transform itself from a lobby of émigré politicians into one that represented a group of concerned Hungarian-American artists and intellectuals. Indeed, Bartók had been moving in this direction even before July of 1942. He began taking an overt role in

émigré politics after his son's departure from Hungary and had started to contact various luminaries of the Hungarian-American artistic and intellectual community. In a letter to literary historian Joseph Reményi, Bartók explained: "We know" that in the struggle against the Axis, Hungary's "heart and interest" are with the Western democracies. "Regrettably, many of our enemies try to convince people that Hungary... joined the Nazi camp of its free will and conviction." Bartók went on: "In this situation we, the representatives of Hungarian culture in America, are duty bound to cast away that reserve that we feel about politics [and] we must voice our conviction that the Hungarian people... stand on the side of those who are struggling for a free, decent and democratic world." Bartók then asked Reményi to become a member of the MIH's Scientific and Artistic Committee and support efforts aimed at the creation of an independent, free and democratic Hungary.[23]

Bartók continued his organizing efforts throughout the summer and fall of 1942 but with limited success. In a November, 1942, interview with Oszkár Róbert, a Hungarian-American journalist, Bartók outlined his work for the creation of a lobby of Hungarian-American artists and scientists, but by this time he denied that he wanted this organization to function as part of any political movement. He explained that he had sent out many invitations, and had received numerous positive responses, including one from noted conductor Eugene Ormandy. He felt obliged to admit, however, that many of the invitees had declined to accept, claiming that their association with what might be seen as a political movement might bring trouble for their relatives and friends in Hungary.[24]

Evidently then, Bartók's efforts had not been very successful. His association with Eckhardt's movement had harmed his cause in more than one way. By the autumn of 1942, Eckhardt had been discredited not only in America, but also in Hungary. There he came to be regarded as an enemy of the Horthy regime and was consequently deprived of his Hungarian citizenship. But by this time Bartók's own situation had also deteriorated. His contract with Columbia was coming to an end, he found it increasingly difficult to obtain invitations for concert tours, and his health began to decline.[25] It is not surprising under the circumstances that he gradually abandoned organizational work. In any case, by late 1942 the political initiative in the realm of Hungarian-American affairs had passed to another group of émigrés, those representing the political Left.

The Rise of the Progressives

The left-wing elements of the Hungarian-American community were prompted into action by Eckhardt's appearance in the United States in August of 1941. One Hungarian émigré who at first played an important role in these efforts was Oscar Jaszi — known to Hungarians as Jászi Oszkár. In pre-1919 Hungary he had been a scholar, publicist, and aspiring opposition politician. In the post-

World War I government of Mihály Károlyi he had been responsible for nationality affairs, and attempted to adopt the Swiss model of autonomous cantons which could accommodate the cultural aspirations of Hungary's minorities. In this he had failed and, soon after the demise of the Károlyi regime, he fled to Austria. In 1926 he emigrated to the United States where he became an academic. In 1941 he became involved in the politics of the Hungarian-American Left mainly because he believed that his former boss, Károlyi, was the best man to lead a "free Hungary" movement in the West. Károlyi also held Jaszi in high esteem and was ready to use him as his American right-hand-man. Helping Jaszi was Rusztem Vámbéry, a recent arrival in the US. Vámbéry was a lawyer by profession who, during the revolutionary interlude in 1918-19, was appointed a professor at the University of Budapest. During the Horthy regime he made a living for himself by practicing law. In 1938 he emigrated to the United States.[26]

The Jaszi group's attacks on Eckhardt and his movement were no doubt fully supported by Károlyi in England. Ever since Hungary's involvement in the war against Yugoslavia in the spring of 1941, Károlyi had contemplated launching a movement of free Hungarians living in Britain and the Americas. The 66-year-old former statesman turned to Jaszi and Vámbéry to organize the American branch of the movement. In response to Károlyi's plea, the American Federation of Democratic Hungarians (AFDH) was brought into being in September at a meeting in Cleveland, Ohio.[27] The organization's headquarters were established in New York City. The journal *Harc* [Combat] became its official press forum, but the AFDH was also supported by another newsletter, the *Igazmondó* [The Truth Teller]. In addition, Vámbéry launched a review intended for intellectuals among the AFDH membership, the *Magyar Forum*, renamed *Szabad Magyar Forum* [Free Magyar Forum] in 1943.[28]

One of the primary aims of the AFDH was to support Károlyi's political ambitions. In the late summer of 1941 Károlyi had come to the conclusion that if he were to lead "democratic" Hungarians outside of Hungary effectively, he would have to transfer his operations from the United Kingdom to the United States. The leaders of the AFDH tried to intercede with the State Department to grant him a visa. They also continued their attacks on Eckhardt in order to destroy his movement. By the spring of 1942, the AFDH, together with the Hungarian-American communist press, had managed to cast enough doubt over Eckhardt's figure in the eyes of Allied authorities as to make his movement a stillborn venture. Unfortunately for the AFDH, it was unable to rally the bulk of the Hungarian-American community behind itself. So, the search for the creation of a credible lobby to represent Hungarian Americans had to continue. To achieve this aim, the AFDH followed a two-pronged approach. The first aimed at the creation of a new organizational structure for the Hungarian-American Left, one that was more acceptable both to the Hungarian immigrant community and to the authorities in Washington. The other closely related

aspect of the search was the attempt to reach an accommodation with some less "compromised" members of Eckhardt's entourage.

To realign the organizational structure of the Hungarian-American left, the AFDH, at its annual meeting in New York City in September 1942, launched the New Democratic Hungary (NDH) movement. The leadership of the AFDH evidently believed that, with their conservative rivals in disarray, they could bring into being a lobby under whose umbrella a wide range of Hungarians opposed to the Axis could gather. Through the creation of a high-profile movement, they hoped to be in a better position to further Károlyi's cause.

The time seemed propitious for drawing new converts into the NDH. With the imminent demise of Eckhardt's movement, it should have been easy to attract some of its followers. The prime target of the AFDH's effort was Antal Balasy, one-time deputy head of the Hungarian legation in Washington. Balasy, who had sought diplomatic asylum in the United States in November 1940, was known in Allied diplomatic circles as an honest man and a professional diplomat of impeccable credentials. He could have been a solid asset to the NDH. Negotiations with Balasy had been initiated even before Eckhardt's resignation from the leadership of the MIH, but they were not successful. Vámbéry was unhappy with Balasy's refusal to condemn the Horthy regime, while the latter was doubtful of Vámbéry's ability to command wide support among Hungarian Americans. Contacts with Balasy were resumed after Eckhardt's resignation as leader of he MIH, but the attempt to recruit him failed.[29] Another prominent Hungarian resident of the United States whom the NDH tried to attract to its ranks was Bartók. While Balasy's support would have increased the movement's credibility in the eyes of the State Department, the winning of Bartók to the NDH's cause would have elevated its profile in Hungarian-American circles and in the eyes of the American public. Bartók however did not sympathize with Károlyi's supporters and had already committed himself to support their rivals.

Throughout the balance of 1942 the NDH continued its low-key campaign to bring Károlyi to America, but the State Department showed no interest in allowing him entry. This failure had a damaging effect on the Vámbéry-Jaszi coalition's prospects. Already during September of 1942, a number of the movement's influential members expressed dissatisfaction with the leadership, especially with regard to its inability to secure a visa for Károlyi. This group decided to go it alone and to undertake a truly vigorous campaign to bring Károlyi to the United States. For this purpose the group's members established a new organization, the Hungarian-American Council for Democracy (HACD).

The Politics of László Moholy-Nagy and Béla Lugosi

The leadership of the Hungarian-American Council for Democracy was made up of lifetime devotees and, in some cases, former associates of Mihály Károlyi. In 1942, most of them were residents of Chicago: Hugó R. Rónay, Alexander Vince

[originally Sándor Vincze], George Striker, and newspaperman Ignác Izsák, as well as younger people, including Zita Schwartz and André Gabor. Both Rónyand Vince had held high-level administrative positions in Károlyi's government. In the HACD they at one point held the posts of Chairman and Treasurer respectively. Striker acted as secretary and monopolized the HACD's administrative affairs. He was rumoured to have had links to the communist movement.[30] The heart and soul of the new organization, however, were two artists — avant-garde painter and designer László Moholy-Nagy and Hollywood actor Béla Lugosi. The two had competed for the HACD's presidency with the honour going to Lugosi, probably because he was seen by the membership to have a higher profile in the USA. Moholy-Nagy, however, remained the Chicago group's real leader.

László Moholy-Nagy was born in 1895 in the village of Bácsborsod, in southern Hungary. His parents separated when he was a small child and he and his younger brother Ákos were brought up by their mother's family. Most supportive and influential among László's male relatives appears to have been an uncle, the lawyer Gusztáv Nagy. In fact, by the time he had reached his teens, László assumed "Nagy" as his family name, which he changed in 1918 to Moholy-Nagy. The family circumstances of his youth seem to have caused László a great deal of embarrassment. According to his widow and biographer, Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, they contributed to him becoming "fiercely ambitious" to prove his own worth and to redeem the Moholy name.[31] He had planned to become a writer, but art proved more attractive to him even as a young man. As an artist in search of new ideas and artistic freedom, he could not have stayed in the conservative, "semi-feudal" Hungary of the post-1919 era. He first settled in Germany, where he became associated with avant-garde artists, including Walter Gropius. Not wishing to live — and not feeling safe — in Hitler's *Reich*, in 1935 he moved to England, and then, two years later, to the United States. He eventually settled in Chicago where he established the "New Bauhaus," which later became the School of Design. Moholy went on to become a prominent artist and teacher and produced what Walter Gropius described as "a wealth of art that embrace[d] the whole range of the visual arts."[32]

Moholy worked indefatigably and undertook every task, however daunting, with supreme confidence in success. He brought similar energy and optimism to the political work he and his associates had started in the fall of 1942. Their "ultimate aim" according to Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, was to make Károlyi the leader of a democratic Hungary after the war. For this purpose Moholy spared no effort. "[He] spoke before steel-mill workers... and miners...; he sat through endless amateur shows which [were] the obsession of all [immigrant] groups; he went to Washington to enlist the support of Eleanor Roosevelt...; and he spent hours on the telephone, trying to pacify the fiercely individualistic tempers of his followers."[33]

Béla Lugosi, whose leadership earned the Hungarian-American Council for Democracy the nickname — used by State Department and OSS bureaucrats

— "Dracula Council," was somewhat older than Moholy. He was born in 1882 as Béla Ferenc Dezső Blaskó in the town of Lugos (transferred to Rumania after World War I and renamed Lugoj). After a brief stint as a miner, Béla Blaskó became first an amateur and, later, a professional actor with formal training in theatre studies. For some time he was known to audiences as Arisztid Olt or as Béla Lugossy, a name which he later changed to the less aristocratic-sounding Lugosi. Like most of his fellow actors, Lugosi began his career under circumstances in which his self-esteem and ambition far exceeded his professional income. He felt that he was exploited and he never forgave his country's elite for the poverty he had to endure as a young man, even though by the time he had entered his mid-thirties, his career as an actor — by then with the National Theatre of Hungary and as a star in Hungary's nascent film industry — appeared assured. His passion and sympathy for the underpaid young members of his profession spurred him to political action during Hungary's post-war revolutions in 1918-1919. He began organizing Hungary's actors into unions. The advent to power of the communists under Béla Kun in March 1919 discouraged some of Lugosi's not-so radical minded colleagues, but it did not stop him from continuing his activities. He soon became the secretary of the National Trade Union of Hungarian Actors and he used his position to denounce the "exploitation" and "corruption" that, in his view, actors had been subjected to by the "private capitalist managers" and "the state" before the revolution.[34]

When the collapse of Béla Kun's regime became imminent, Lugosi, fearing retribution for his role, fled Hungary, first to Vienna, and then to Berlin. In Vienna he was unable to resume his acting career, but had more luck in Berlin. Nevertheless, in 1921 he decided to emigrate to America. Soon thereafter he became a leading organizer of the Hungarian émigré actors' and artists' community in New York City.

By the time Hungary had become involved in the Second World War, Lugosi had made it to Hollywood and had begun a lucrative career in film-making. The events of the war re-awakened his sympathy for the common people of his native land and his passion for political action. His respect for Károlyi and his affinity with the more radical elements that congregated around the HACD attracted him to that organization rather than the one headed by Jaszi and Vámbéry. However, Lugosi did not investigate just how radical some of his HACD colleagues were, as it was not his habit to check out closely his political allies.[35]

With Moholy-Nagy's irrepressible optimism and charisma, Lugosi's passion and money, with the boundless energies of both of these men, as well as with the determination and perseverance of the other HACD leaders, much progress was made in the first several months of the HACD's existence. Signatures were collected for a petition requesting that Károlyi be given a visa to come to America. Attempts were made to recruit other prominent Hungarian Americans. A drive was started to set up local chapters of the HACD elsewhere in the USA, in Canada, and in Central and South America. Finally, steps were

taken to exert pressure on Jaszi and Vámbéry to have them join the HACD, and thereby to end the division of the "progressive camp." In all but the last of these ambitions, the HACD's leadership was quite successful. A number of Hungarian-American luminaries were recruited, some even from New York City, the home of Vámbéry's New Democratic Hungary Movement. These included the popular writer and historian Emil Lengyel (the leader of New York's Endre Ady Club) and Mózes Simon, a writer for the paper *Magyar Jövő* [Hungarian Future]. Branches of the HACD were established in places as diverse as Hollywood (Lugosi's own backyard), Bridgeport, N.J. (the home turf of the conservative Hungarian American Federation), and even in some Latin American countries. Only in their efforts to get Jaszi and Vámbéry to cooperate with the HACD were Lugosi and Moholy disappointed.

The most important move the HACD made in this direction was the motion, passed at its 1943 convention, to invite Károlyi to be the organization's honourary president. Károlyi accepted. Evidently, the leadership and the activities of the Chicago group had impressed this elder statesman of the Hungarian Left enough to support the HACD, notwithstanding the fact that it had split from Károlyi's earliest American supporters, Jaszi and Vámbéry. According to historian János F. Varga, Károlyi saw the launching of the HACD as a "positive" step.[36] Károlyi believed in United Front tactics, and this front made room not only for democrats and socialists, but also for more radical elements of the Left.

Once Károlyi had committed himself to supporting the HACD, he felt obliged to try to restore unity among his American supporters. This he did, but without success. Lugosi and Moholy also tried to induce Jaszi and Vámbéry to associate themselves with some of the HACD's efforts, but they were similarly unsuccessful. These efforts failed for two reasons. Unquestionably — and not surprisingly — Jaszi and Vámbéry had been offended by both the establishment of the HACD and Károlyi's endorsement of it. Jaszi told Moholy (with whom he remained on speaking terms) that the allegation made by HACD members that he (Jaszi) had not supported Károlyi with enough vigour, was unwarranted.[37] More importantly, however, Jaszi and Vámbéry were worried about some of the HACD's tactics, and the composition of its leadership. Vámbéry, in particular, had little use for the circulation of petitions in favour of Károlyi, as he knew that Károlyi's Hungarian-American opponents could easily collect a far greater number of signatures opposing the granting of an American visa to him.[38] Both he and Jaszi disapproved of some of the manifestos that Lugosi occasionally dashed off in the name of the HACD. Moreover, they were worried about some of the more radical, communist-affiliated elements of the Chicago group, such as Mózes Simon, a staff member of a communist newspaper.[39] Above all, they distrusted Károlyi's United Front policy, as they worried that in the end their elder-statesman friend might come under the control of the communists.[40]

Despite their success in making the HACD the highest profile Hungarian Leftist organization in America, Lugosi and Moholy failed to achieve their

foremost objectives. They could not persuade the State Department to allow Károlyi to come to the USA and they could not convince Jaszi and Vámbéry to align their organizations with the HACD. A further blow came in the fall of 1944 when a provisional Hungarian government — formed in Soviet-occupied eastern Hungary — did not include Károlyi. Not surprisingly, for the last part of the war, members of the Chicago organization turned their attention to other causes, such as the starting of a movement to send war relief to Hungary, and the formation of a "re-elect Roosevelt" committee. Both these undertakings involved few political risks.

The War's End: Tragedy for All

Hungary's involvement in the Second World War had a powerful emotional impact on Hungarians living in the United States. As soon as the conflict enveloped their native land they became concerned with the fate of their country and its people. Some no doubt also worried about their friends and relatives in Hungary. Within still others the war re-awakened political concerns that had been dormant since the aftermath of the First World War. These people saw the war as both a threat and an opportunity. It was a threat to their nation, their ideological associates, and in the case of Jewish Hungarians, their co-religionists. But it was also an opportunity, a chance to change Hungarian politics and society and to direct it in a more desirable direction after the end of hostilities.

Unfortunately for Hungarians in America, there was little agreement on how to combat the threat posed to the Hungarian nation by the war, and there was virtually no agreement on what social and political system should be introduced in Hungary at the end of the war. Not surprisingly, the impulse to help Hungary and to shape its future resulted in the division of the Hungarian émigré community in the United States into several factions. Not only were there unbridgeable differences between conservatives and leftists, the members of a liberal-progressive bloc also failed to agree on a single program or a common course of action.

Just as the larger Hungarian-American community was divided over these issues, so was the community of Hungarian émigré artists in America. Members of this group had a chance to get into the political fray when professional politicians became discredited, either because of their past (as was the case with Tibor Eckhardt) or because they could not command much respect either with the American general public or the masses of Hungarian-American workers (as was the case with Rusztem Vámbéry). Under these circumstances artists such as Béla Bartók, László Moholy-Nagy, and Béla Lugosi assumed leading roles in the various "free Hungary" movements. Though they seem to have had some success at first, they too failed to achieve even some of their interim objectives let alone their final goals. Some of the causes of their failings were personal misfortunes that they had no control over. On the whole, however, they failed

for the same reasons that their political predecessors had failed: the inability of the emigration to agree on a common approach, and the magnitude of the task that they were facing. After all, the future of Hungary was decided on the battlefields of Eastern Europe, and on those battlefields Stalin's armies triumphed.

Yet the leaders of the Hungarian emigration in America should not be condemned for attempting to influence the course of the war and, especially, its final outcome. In the First World War it had been Czech émigrés in North America and Britain who helped determine the fate of post-war Czechoslovakia, and members of the Hungarian emigration during the Second World War were acutely aware of this fact. Had American and British forces liberated Hungary in 1945, an effective Hungarian émigré lobby might have had a great deal of influence on the outcome of the conflict and of the post-war peace negotiations as far as Hungary was concerned.

Hungary, however, was occupied by the Red Army. After a few years a Stalinist dictatorship was imposed on the country and the hopes of all prominent Hungarian-American émigrés were dashed. The war brought tragedy for the Hungarian nation. And there was personal tragedy for two of the artists who had played prominent roles in our story: first Bartók and then Moholy-Nagy were diagnosed with leukemia. They died in 1945 and 1946 respectively. Lugosi lived longer, but also encountered disappointment: his acting career faltered, his income declined, he had problems with substance abuse, and then came still another divorce — his fourth, from the mother of his only child, Béla Jr.[41] He died, almost penniless, less than a decade after the death of Moholy-Nagy.

NOTES

My research on the subject of the wartime Hungarian communities in North America has been supported by grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and from the Department of National Defence, for which I am grateful.

[1]Leading figures of Count Mihály Károlyi's 1918 "Revolution of Michaelmas Roses" were living in America at the time: Oscar Jaszi, Sándor Vincze, Hugó Rónyi, Pál Kéri, László Fényes, etc. More shall be said about some of these men in this paper.

[2]A book could be written about the scientists. Their names are familiar to most physicists and mathematicians: János von Neumann, Leo Szilárd, Todor Kármán, Edward Teller and Eugene Wigner. See Francis S. Wagner, *Hungarian Contributions to World Civilization* (Center Square, PA: Alpha Publications, 1977), part II, *in passim*.

[3]Many of America's major orchestras, for example, were directed by Hungarian-born conductors such as Antal Doráti, Eugene Ormandi, Fritz Reiner, and George Szell. See Wagner, *Hungarian Contributions*, pp. 173f.

[4]Historical studies dealing with the origins of this ethnic group in America include Julianna Puskás, *Kivándorló magyarok az Egyesült Államokban, 1880-1940*

[Emigrant Hungarians in the United States] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1982), and John Kosa, "A Century of Hungarian Emigration," *American Slavic and East European Review*, Vol. XVI (Dec. 1957), pp. 501-14.

[5]Pelényi claims to have believed that, in the event of a German occupation of Hungary, the government would have to go into exile, thereby depriving Hitler, and any group in the country willing to serve him, of legitimacy. A government-in-exile, Pelényi reasoned, would also be able to direct active resistance to German rule. John Pelényi, "The Secret Plan for a Hungarian Government in the West at the Outbreak of World War II," *Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 34 (1964), pp. 170-77. Elsewhere Pelényi stressed that a government-in-exile, or at least a Hungarian "contact-person" in the West would be useful for Hungary in case the country's regime succumbed to German pressure and, especially, to counteract the influence of the Czech emigration. Undated memo by Pelényi [ca. spring 1939], János Pelényi Papers, Archives Department, Dartmouth College Library. For a sample of my earlier writings on the plans for a Hungarian government-in-exile in the West see "Bridges to the West: The Horthy Regime's Reinsurance Policies in 1941," *War and Society*, Vol. 7, No 1 (May 1989), pp. 1-23.

[6]Born in 1888, Eckhardt received his university training in Budapest, Berlin and Paris, and began his career as a county official. In 1918-19 he resisted Hungary's revolutionary governments and continued his involvement in rightist causes during the 1920s. In 1930 he joined the Independent Smallholders Party and became its leader two years later. During the late 1930s he became an advocate of a pro-British orientation in Hungarian foreign policy, along with Habsburg restoration and closer ties among Budapest, Vienna and Prague to resist Nazi expansion. Despite this change in his outlook, for many left-wing émigrés he continued to symbolize the regime that had been born in the "white terror" of 1919. Eckhardt is a controversial figure even with historians. Hungarian historian Tibor Hajdu, for example, explains Eckhardt's change of heart in foreign policy orientation by saying that he "put his money" on "another horse." Tibor Hajdu, *Károlyi Mihály. Politikai életrajz* [Mihály Károlyi: A Political Biography] (Budapest, 1978), p. 474. Other historians have accepted his abandonment of right-wing activities as genuine. See, for example, Thomas Sakmyster, *Hungary, the Great Powers, and the Danubian Crisis, 1936-1939* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1980), p. 141.

[7]Gyula Juhász, *Hungarian Foreign Policy, 1919-1945* (Budapest, 1979), p. 181. In his earlier works, Juhász had denied that the plans of 1939-40 for a government-in-exile were ever resuscitated.

[8]O'Malley was informed about the Hungarian plans by Regent Horthy. See O. O'Malley's letter to Anthony Eden, 26 January 1941, FO417, no 42 (C837/837/G), in the Public Records Office (PRO), London, United Kingdom. Three years later O'Malley began to claim that the plan for a Hungarian government-in-exile originated with "Me, Horthy, Bethlen, Teleki, Eckhardt..." Memo by O'Malley, 1 April 1944. FO371 no 39246 (C4287/1/2/9) PRO. I am indebted to Professor Thomas Sakmyster for bringing these documents to my attention.

[9]Memorandum by Spencer Taggart, "Activities of Hungarian Nationalists in the United States," 8 Dec. 1943, pp. 47, 69f. Department of Justice Records, 864.01 B 11/73, National Archives of the United States.

[10]The most important members of the committee were the Reverend George Borsi-Kerekes, and the committee's organizing secretary, Tibor Kerekes. Borsi-Kerekes

was "borrowed" from the Hungarian Reformed Federation, while Kerekes, a historian at Georgetown University, was the AHF's executive secretary. For more details see Taggart, "Activities," pp. 47-50.

[11]The German government apparently got wind of Eckhardt's planned departure and took the Hungarians to task. They in turn claimed no knowledge of the opposition politician's plans. See the memo by László Bárdossy, Minister of Foreign Affairs, about his conversation with Otto von Erdmannsdorff, German Minister at Budapest, 6 Feb. 1941, printed as doc. no. 567 in *Magyarország külpolitikája a nyugati hadjárattól a Szovjetúnió megtámadásáig, 1940-1941* [Hungary's Foreign Policy from the Western Offensive to the Invasion of the Soviet Union, 1940-1941] ed. Gyula Juhász (Budapest, 1982), pp. 856f. See also, Tibor Eckhardt, *Regicide at Marseille: Recollections of Tibor Eckhardt* (New York, 1964), p. 245.

[12]The "boys being home by harvest time" refers to a phrase used by Hungarian Chief-of-Staff, Henrik Werth, in a memo urging a Hungarian military alliance with Germany in the late spring of 1941. *Magyarország és a második világháború* [Hungary and the Second World War], M. Ádám, Gy. Juhász, and L. Kerekes, eds. (third ed. Budapest, 1966) doc. no. 141. One sign of the Hungarian leadership's change of heart was the removal from office of Werth and Premier Bárdossy, the main architects of the country's involvement in the war against the USSR.

[13]The declaration stated that Hungary's independence had been "destroyed" when that country had been "tricked" and pressured into the war on Germany's side. Hungarians living in free countries had "not only the right but also the sacred duty to give voice to the genuine convictions of the Hungarian people and to take up the fight against Nazi domination." The proclamation's authors also declared that the existing Hungarian government did not represent the aspirations of the Hungarian people.

[14]Canadian official Tracy Philipps, writing in early 1942 from Washington, identified some of Eckhardt's opponents: "Germano-philes,... some German-Americans and... some allegedly Jewish-controlled organs." Memo by Philipps [13 Jan. 1942], "Magyars in North America," Records of the Canadian Department of Citizenship and Immigration, RG 26, vol. 7, National Archives of Canada.

[15]Taggart, "Activities," pp. 48 and 73. Also, Miklós Szántó, *Magyarok Amerikában* [Hungarians in America] (Budapest, 1985), p. 85. Historian Mario Fenyo cites some evidence indicating that the cancellation of Eckhardt's and his associates' Hungarian citizenship was intended to improve their credibility in the West. Mario Fenyo, *Hitler, Horthy and Hungary* (New Haven, 1972), p. 112.

[16]György Dózsa led a popular uprising against Hungary's landed elite in the early part of the sixteenth century. The rebellion was suppressed and Dózsa was tortured to death. His martyrdom established him as the champion of the oppressed peasantry of Hungary. The story of Bartók's support for the "Dózsa Party" comes from a student of his, identified as informant "E," in Vilmos Juhász, *Bartók's Years in America* (Washington D.C.: Occidental Press, 1981), p. 68.

[17]Stephen Satory, "Bartók and Kodály: A Parting of the Ways," *Hungarian Studies Review*: Vol. 19 Nos 1-2 (Spring-Fall 1992), pp. 60-62. On the young Bartók's patriotism and political ideas see also Bertalan Pethő, *Bartók Rejtekutja* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1984), pp. 102-115 *in passim*. Pethő says very little on Bartók's political activities in America, and whatever he writes is confused. (*Ibid.* pp. 102f.)

[18]Teleki's government probably hoped that the measures would take the wind out of the anti-Semitic agitation by the extreme right. Rather than achieving that aim, the

anti-Jewish measures only whetted the appetite of pro-Nazi elements for further actions. Bartók talked about his joining the protest against the measures in an interview he had with Oszkár Róbert, "Látogatás Bartók Bélánál" [A Visit with Béla Bartók], *Amerikai Magyar Népszava* [American Hungarian People's Voice] 5 Nov. 1942, reprinted in Tibor Tallián, *Bartók fogadtatása Amerikában, 1940-1945* [Bartók's Reception in America, 1940-1945] (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1988), pp. 189-92. Another, somewhat shorter newspaper report on Bartók's work is by Ernő Lorsy, "Bartók Béla szerb melódiákat hallgat" [Béla Bartók listens to Serb melodies], in *Harc* [Struggle], 11 July 1942, reprinted in the appendix to Zoltán Fejős, "Harc a háború ellen és az új Magyarországért" [Struggle against the war and for the new Hungary], *Medvetánc [Bear-dance], Jan. 1988, pp. 296-97.*

[19]*Ibid.*, pp., 190f. A highly readable and sympathetic overview of Bartók's years in America can be found in Everett Helm, *Bartók* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971), chapter XI (pp. 66-73).

[20]In late 1940 and throughout 1941 Bartók spent much time obtaining the documents and visas necessary for Péter to come to North America. His efforts bore fruit in the spring of 1942. Helping Bartók were prominent Hungarians, including the noted conductor Frigyes [Fritz] Reiner. Béla Bartók (Jr.), *Apám életének krónikája* [The Chronicle of My Father's Life] (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1981), pp. 439-444 *in passim.*

[21]Minutes of the Organizing Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Movement for an Independent Hungary, 2 Oct. 1941, Washington, D.C., in the Mayflower Hotel, the Papers of Tibor Eckhardt, box. 5, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford, California.

[22]Minutes of the meeting of the EC of the MIH, 9 July 1942, New York City, Eckhardt Papers, Box. 5.

[23]Letter, Bartók to Reményi, 27 June 1942, reprinted in László, *99 Bartók levél*, pp. 180-82. Bartók asked Reményi to keep the invitation confidential until a list of those who responded to his pleas positively could be drawn up.

[24]Róbert, "Látogatás Bartók Bélánál," pp. 189-92.

[25]Bartók had been diagnosed with an atypical variety of leukaemia in the spring of 1942, but the news was kept from him. His symptoms became worse, in fact quite debilitating, in the late winter of 1942-43. Bartók (Jr.), *Apám*, pp. 445-47. On Bartók's illness see also Malcolm Gilles, *Bartók Remembered* (Boston: Faber & Faber, 1990), pp. 194-96.

[26]N.F. Dreisziger, "Oscar Jaszi and the Hungarian Problem: Activities and Writings during World War II," in *Oscar Jaszi: Visionary, Reformer and Political Activist*, N.F. Dreisziger and A. Ludanyi eds. (Toronto and Budapest: *HSR*, 1991), pp. 62f. Vámbéry was a self-promoter who tended to exaggerate his achievements. His papers are deposited in the Archives of the Hoover Institution in Stanford, California. Unfortunately, they are not very informative on the 1941-44 period of his life.

[27]*Ibid.*, pp. 63f. On the AFDH's executive were Vámbéry and Jaszi, as well as Ignácz Schultz, a recent arrival from occupied Czechoslovakia and the author of some of the most vituperative attacks on Eckhardt.

[28]Samples of this periodical can be found in the Rusztem Vámbéry papers, in the Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford, California.

[29]Dreisziger, "Oscar Jaszi," p. 65.

[30]Most of my information on the HACD derives from American intelligence reports coming from various branches of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS),

especially the Foreign Nationalities Branch (FNB), whose records are available on microfiche. Copies of the FNB's printed reports can also be found in the records of other OSS document collections (at the National Archives of the United States [NAUS], in Washington D.C.), in the Records of the Department of State (also at NAUS), and sometimes in the records of wartime Canadian agencies such as the Nationalities Branch of the Department of National War Services, and in the records of the Department of External Affairs (available at the National Archives of Canada in Ottawa, Ontario). Some OSS reports alluded to above are: "Hungarian Politics in the United States," 30 Sept. 1942 (OSS Records, RG 226, Regular Series, 21786, NAUS); "The Hungarian Political Scene in the United States," July 8, 1943, (FNB Records, file number 140), an untitled confidential report dated 27 Aug. 1943 (*ibid.*, file no. HC 178); "Hungarian Politics in the United States Reviewed," 13 Oct. 1943 (enclosed in a letter, DeWitt C. Poole to A.A. Berle, 23 Oct. 1943, State Department doc. no. 864.01/444, NAUS); OSS censorship report on the Free Hungary Movement, 8 March 1944 (FNB Records, HU 498); "Hungarian Notes" an OSS report from Chicago, 17 Jan. 1945 (FNB Records, HU 709).

My search of the Rusztem Vámbéry Papers turned up very little that was useful on this subject. More helpful was my interview with André Gabor (9 March 1994, Chicago, Sears Tower, in the director's office of the Kemeny Import-Export Co.). I have also received information from Zita Schwartz, directly by mail, and via Oliver Botar.

[31]Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Moholy-Nagy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1969) 2nd ed., pp. 5f. A much more informative source on Moholy-Nagy's years as a child and young man is László Péter, "The Young Years of Moholy-Nagy," *New Hungarian Quarterly*, 13 (summer 1972), pp. 62-72. Sibyl Moholy-Nagy writes that László's father had gambled away the family fortune and then abandoned his family. Péter is reluctant to make such an accusation and suggests only that he had failed as a tenant of a wealthy landowner. Both note that he then spent some time in America, presumably to redeem himself financially.

[32]Walter Gropius, in his Introduction to Sibyl Moholy-Nagy's biography of her husband, *Moholy-Nagy*, p. viii.

[33]*Ibid.*, p. 189. Moholy's determination and energies, like those of Bartók, were broken only by deteriorating health and the diagnosis of leukaemia. He outlived his compatriot by little over a year.

[34]Arthur Lennig, *The Count: The Life and Films of Bela "Dracula" Lugosi* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1974), pp. 42-44. Lennig remarks that Lugosi "was intense — almost a fanatic. He tended to be 100 percent for or against something." (p. 43.)

[35]Robert Cremer, *Lugosi: The Man Behind the Cape* (Chicago: Henry Regenry Co., 1976), p. 193.

[36]János F. Varga, "Károlyi Mihály és az antifasiszta emigráció egységfrontja" [Mihály Károlyi and the United Front of the anti-fascist emigration], *Történelmi Szemle*, Vol. XVIII, nos. 2-3, (1975), p. 238.

[37]A part of Jaszi's letter of 14 Oct. 1942, is quoted *ibid.*

[38]*Ibid.*

[39]The *Magyar Jövő* [Hungarian Future]. See the OSS report: "Hungarian Politics in the United States Reviewed," 13 Oct. 1943, *loc. cit.*; and, "Hungarian Notes" an OSS report from Chicago, 17 Jan. 1945, *loc. cit.*

[40]Jaszi expressed his concerns regarding this possibility to Károlyi in a letter on 6 Aug. 1943. Parts of this letter are quoted in György Litván, "Egy barátság doku-

mentumai: Károlyi Mihály és Jászi Oszkár levelezéséből" [The documents of a friendship: from the correspondence of Mihály Károlyi and Oszkár Jászi] *Történelmi Szemle*, Vol. XVIII, nos. 2-3, (1975), pp. 204f.

[41]See the appendix to "The Bela Lugosi Career," in Gregory William Mank, *Karloff and Lugosi: A Story of a Haunting Collaboration* (London: McFarland & Co., 1990), pp. 335-42, *in passim*. Toward the end of his life Lugosi was almost invariably typecast and his substance abuse worsened. After treatment for this problem, he made his last films in 1956. Moholy also had his share of disappointments at the end of the war: he felt that his participation in the HACD had reduced his chances of obtaining American citizenship. See the documentation published in this volume by Oliver Botar.

Appendix.

An American Intelligence Report on the Hungarian-American Council for Democracy.

With the release in recent years of the document collection of the Foreign Nationalities Branch (FNB) of the wartime Office of Strategic Services (OSS), intelligence reports concerning the Hungarian-American community's political activities have become more accessible. We have published a few of these reports in an earlier volume of the *Hungarian Studies Review*, in particular as an appendix to my study "Oscar Jaszi and the Hungarian Problem: Activities and Writings during World War II," in *Oscar Jaszi: Visionary, Reformer and Political Activist*, N.F. Dreisziger and A. Ludanyi eds., a special volume of the *HSR*, Vol. XVIII, Nos 1-2 (Spring-fall 1991), pp. 59-79. Unlike some of the reports we published then, the one printed here is not an FNB document, but one that had been produced by officials of the U.S. Office of Censorship. In fact, what we print in this appendix are excerpts from a larger intelligence "digest" on the subject of the "Free Hungary Movement." This work is dated March 8 1944 and a copy of it was sent to the OSS a week later. We reproduce mainly those portions of this document which deal directly or indirectly with the Hungarian-American Council for Democracy (HACD), the organization of László Moholy-Nagy and Béla Lugosi. The part of this report that deals with the Movement for an Independent Hungary, the political undertaking that had for a brief time attracted Béla Bartók to its leadership, does not contain information on the activities of the composer, and is not reproduced here.

The Office of Censorship document on the Free Hungary Movement was a highly secret report that was declassified only in the summer of 1986. It was meant only for the eyes of those officials who needed to know its contents for the "prosecution of the war." The warning on the document goes on to say that

in "no case should... the information [provided in it be] used in legal proceedings or in any other public way without the express consent of the Director of Censorship." Though the report has been declassified, we also hope that the information it contains will not be used against anyone, and that it will not embarrass any individual. In fact, most of the people mentioned in the report were middle-aged or old at the time, and have passed away decades ago. In fact, the only young man mentioned in the document (we do not know the age of everyone listed) is George Faludi, the noted poet and writer.

The information contained in the report is based in large part on letters and telegrams sent by émigré Hungarians to each other. These were intercepted and read by Allied intelligence agencies and, in the case of the communications mentioned in our document, were "passed," i.e. they were sent on to their intended destinations. But some of the information was derived from government agencies or ordinary reference works. In our document nine such sources are identified, and they are listed at the end of the manuscript in the following manner:

1. ONI-Survey Report.
2. District Intelligence Office - 3rd Naval District, NYC.
3. OSS-FN Handbook.
4. Investigation Division - Foreign Funds Control, Treasury Department, NYC.
5. Immigration & Naturalization Service, NYC.
6. SID - 2nd Service Command, NYC (Military Intelligence).
7. "Titled Nobility of Europe".
8. "Who's Who - International" 1942.
9. "Who's Who in America" 1943-44.

Like most government reports, the document at hand reveals a great deal not only about its subject, but also about its authors. It tells us that America's postal censors opened just about every political emigrant's mail, and the Allied intelligence apparatus spent much time gathering information on Hungarian political exiles and their activities. How much of this wealth of information reached the decision-makers in wartime Washington is a question that can be answered with certainty only after further research. Nevertheless, a tentative answer to this query has been provided in one of my studies: "Az atlanti demokraciák és a 'Szabad Magyarországért' mozgalmak a II. világháború alatt" [The Atlantic Democracies and the Movements for a "Free Hungary" during World War II], in *Magyarország és a nagyhatalmak a 20. században* Ignác Romsics ed. (Budapest: Teleki László Alapítvány, forthcoming in 1995). This paper suggest that America's leaders considered the Hungarian-American émigré community so divided, especially over the issue of what kind of government should be installed in Hungary after the war's end, that they felt it useless to try to enlist its help in the effort to prosecute the war.

As is the practice of our journal, the document appended here is reproduced very much as it had been written in 1944. Hungarian diacritical marks are not provided where they had been omitted by the document's authors (they were almost invariably omitted). Furthermore, the underlined words are reproduced underlined rather than italicized, and proper names and names of organizations are printed in all capitals, if the original document did so. A few editorial explanations are given in brackets. The report can be found in the OSS records that have been made available on microfiche by the National Archives of the United States, and its identification number is HU 498.

OFFICE OF CENSORSHIP

MEMORANDUM DIGEST

CONFIDENTIAL March 8, 1944

From: Infod, CNY

To: Digest Section, Office of the Director

Subject: FREE HUNGARY MOVEMENT

Summary: FREE HUNGARY MOVEMENT is a term generally applied to groups of Hungarian nationals in the United States and elsewhere who are interested in Hungary's present and future political welfare. More specifically, this term is used to designate the organization started in London by COUNT MICHAEL KAROLYI, first President of Hungary, who in 1919 turned over his government to the Communist, BELA KUN. The political developments which have occurred in Hungary since the first World War have influenced the growth of factionalism in the Hungarian population in the United States. The principal issues which have served to bring groups together, and at the same time have emphasized the lines of cleavage, include: The Trianon Pact, which revised Hungary's frontiers; the Communist Movement; the Horthy regime; the Hapsburg interests; and the position of Hungary in the post-war adjudications. In June, 1943, the Communist drive for a united Hungarian-American front against Fascism resulted in the formation of the HUNGARIAN-AMERICAN COUNCIL FOR DEMOCRACY under the leadership of Michael Karolyi as honorary President, and BELA LUGOSI, Hollywood actor and former Communist Party member in Hungary, as national President. This group was promoted by JOHN ROMAN, editor of the Communist-subsidized newspaper, "MAGYAR JOVO", New York, N.Y., who though identified with certain Communist activities, has been variously described as Fascist and pro-Horthy in his support. Many of the Hungarian organizations and their leaders have affiliated themselves with the Hungarian-American Council for Democracy. Among them are PROFESSOR RUSTEM VAMBERY, NYC, former legal adviser of Count Karolyi at his treason trial and now associated with the AMERICAN COMMITTEE OF THE NEW DEMOCRATIC HUNGARY MOVEMENT, New York, N.Y., and with Czecho-Slovakia restoration group; PROFESSOR OSCAR JASZI, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio, member of

Count Karolyi's cabinet in 1918 and now a leader of the AMERICAN FEDERATION OF DEMOCRATIC HUNGARIANS; JOHN TEREBESSY, reportedly rabid communist, now with the Hungarian section, O.W.I., NYC [Office of Wartime Information, New York City — ed.] and an associate of Vambery in the publication of "HARC" ("FIGHT").

Outstanding among the opposition groups are the adherents of the policies expressed by the newspaper "AMERIKAI MAGYAR NEPSZAVA", NYC, owned by MAXIMILIAN F. WEGRZYNEK (Yj 4601), which are considered representative of the conservative and so-called "Revisionist" element. This group, while whole-heartedly cooperating with the United States war effort, maintains a pro-Hungary, anti-Czech, and somewhat anti-Russian attitude. The supporters of the TIBOR ECKHARDT (Gjf 4601, 7708, 6595), "Movement For Independent Hungary", now inactive, have in some instances joined with the Hungarian-American Council for Democracy.

Prominent Hungarians who have not accepted the Council's leadership include TIBOR KEREKES, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., who is also secretary of the AMERICAN HUNGARIAN FEDERATION INC., Washington, D.C.; PROFESSOR FRANCIS DEAK, Columbia Law School, former attache of the Hungarian Consulate; PROFESSOR JOHN PELENYI, Dartmouth college, former Hungarian Minister to the U.S., who resigned when Hungary joined the Axis; and VIK(C)TOR BATOR (Y 7615), prominent attorney for wealthy Hungarian interests....

1. This report was prepared by INFOD CNY because an examination of cable traffic revealed that, despite a similarity in titles, the Hungarian-American organizations in the United States represent a diversity of political goals and reflect an overlapping in both the leadership and membership of many of the organizations. An attempt has been made to define briefly the affiliations and background of prominent Hungarians and to identify the groups which acknowledge COUNT MICHAEL KAROLYI of London, England, as spokesman for the Hungarian people.

2. In discussing the historical background of the Hungarian Movements in the Unites States, a Government agency (1) points out that the foundation of the present thinking, aims, and groupings of the Hungarians in the U.S. is rooted in the political changes which occurred in Hungary after World War I. In the space of one year following the termination of hostilities, Hungary was subjected to considerable upheaval. Count Michael Karolyi was President of the first Hungarian republic from 1918 until April 1st, 1919, when he turned over his government to the Communists under BELA KUN. In the fall of the same year, the Bolshevist government was replaced by the counter-revolutionary group, headed by ADMIRAL NICOLAS HORTHY. The "white terror" which followed resulted in large numbers of Hungarian communist Party functionaries fleeing the country. Many of these emigrated to the U.S., changed their names, and became citizens. For the first decade, from 1921 until 1931, most of them remained politically dormant.

3. A Government agency (1) points out that Hungarian political activity in the U.S. is divided roughly into three groups, each supported by a section of the Hungarian language press, and each attracting in whole or in part certain of the organized groups of Hungarian-Americans. These groups include pro-Nazi Hungarians, a small minority group, whose opinions found expression in the newspaper "EGYETERTES", Bridgeport, Connecticut (now defunct); the Revisionist Hungarians, the dominant political group, whose chief aim appears to be an endeavor to place Hungary in a more favourable light, despite the assistance that country has rendered the Axis, and whose views are expressed by "AMERIKAI MAGYAR NEPSZAVA", NYC; and the Communists and "Fellow Travellers", whose vehicle is the "MAGYAR JOVO", NYC. This last-named newspaper was founded by ALEXANDER RAKOSI, JOHN GYETVAI-NAGY, and

JOHN ROMAN, with the backing of the Hungarian section of the Communist International Workers Order. The Communist clique, which seems to center about John Roman, cloaked most of its agitation under a guise of anti-Fascism, succeeded in winning over a number of neutral figures, and attempted infiltration into the Hungarian beneficial and insurance societies.

A. FREE HUNGARY MOVEMENT
328 Fenchley Road
London, England

1. COUNT MICHAEL KAROLYI
99 Haverstock Hill
London, England

Count Michael Karolyi was born in Budapest on March 4th, 1875. (His family is also known as KAROLYI VON NAGY-KAROLYI, according to source 7). Before and during World War I, he was leader of the Opposition in the Hungarian Parliament, and at one time led the Independence Party. Following the collapse of the monarchy, he became Prime Minister, and later President, of the Hungarian Republic (1918-1919). His government fell after the Bolshevist coup d'etat. Since then, he has lived in Czecho-Slovakia, France, and Great Britain, and is at present the leader of the "Free Hungary Movement" in London, England (source 8).

A Government agency (1) states that "although Karolyi was probably sincere in his efforts to democratize the country (Hungary) and maintain her territorial integrity, informants here claim that he lacked the courage of his convictions, and attribute the resultant peace treaties to his mild rule and the poor advice of his associates." Before the outbreak of World War II, Count Michael Karolyi in England started collecting his associates in North and South America into his "Free Hungary Movement". RUSTEM VAMBERY and PROFESSOR OSCAR JASZI became his strongest supporters in the United States. (Vambery defended him at his treason trial in Hungary, and Jaszi (8) had been a member of his cabinet.)

Communications in CPNY and CNY files reveal that Michael Karolyi has a number of friends who are working with him in this country. Although many of them are identified with individual Hungarian groups, professing a variety of aims and motivated by different considerations, the changing world picture has emphasized the necessity for one recognized leader as spokesman for Hungarian interests. Utilizing the apparent need for a united Hungarian front, source (1) reports that the Communist-controlled group of the Hungarian-American population sponsored a convention in Chicago on June 27th, 1943 to coalize [sic] the Hungarian-American factions under the leadership of Count Karolyi and BELA LUGOSI. This meeting resulted in the formation of the HUNGARIAN-AMERICAN COUNCIL FOR DEMOCRACY, with Count Karolyi elected as Honorary President.

2. CNY cable files contain messages of greeting and endorsement from the following organizations directed to Count Karolyi as leader of the Hungarians:

INTERNATIONAL WORKERS ORDER
Branch 1073-1015, Cleveland, Ohio

HUNGARIAN DAILY JOURNAL
413 East 13th Street, New York, New York

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF DEMOCRATIC HUNGARIANS
ERNEST LORSY, SAMUEL RACZ
Cleveland Branch, Cleveland, Ohio

AMERICAN COMMITTEE OF THE NEW DEMOCRATIC HUNGARY
325 East 80th Street, New York, New York

HUNGARIAN-AMERICAN COUNCIL FOR DEMOCRACY, CONNECTICUT
JOSEPH KOSZTA, President, LOUIS VECSEY, Secretary
Bridgeport, Connecticut

ADY ENDRE SOCIETY, HUGO GELLERT, RUSTEM VAMBERY
New York, New York

HUNGARIA LIBRE DE MEXICO
GUILLERMO WEINSTOCK, ALADAR TAMAS
Mexico City, Mexico

FREE HUNGARIANS BRAZIL
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

HUNGARIAN CULTURE CLUB OF CHICAGO
HUNGARIAN BRANCHES OF INTERNATIONAL WORKERS ORDER
ALEX STONE, Secretary
Chicago, Illinois

PETOFI CLUB,... INTERNATIONAL WORKERS ORDER
ANDREW SCERDY, Secretary
Detroit, Michigan

HUNGARIAN-AMERICAN DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION OF CHICAGO
Chicago, Illinois

HUNGARIAN FEDERATION OF DETROIT
JOHN BANYAI, President
Detroit, Michigan

3. Correspondence reveals that the following prominent leaders of Hungarian thought in the U.S. are in communication with Count Michael Karolyi and have openly declared their support.

RUSTEM VAMBERY, NYC American Committee
[New Democratic Hungary Movement]

OSCAR JASZI, Ohio,
Editor "Magyar Jovo"

JOHN ROMAN, NYC,
Editor "Magyar Jovo"

JOHN GYETVAI-NAGY, NYC, Editor "Az Ember"
Committee of Americans of Hungarian Descent for Freedom & Democracy

BELA LUGOSI, Hollywood, California
President Hungarian-American Council for Democracy

HUGO GELLERT, NYC,
Painter

DR. EMIL LENGYEL
President of Ady Society, NYC

JENO HAJNAL
Leftist-Associate of John Roman

MOZES SIMON (Gsv 4601), NYC
Assistant Editor "Magyar Jovo"

DR. HUGO RONY, Chicago
Prominent liberal

LASZLO MOHOLY-NAGY, Chicago
Artist and Painter

DR. ALEXANDER VINCE (VINCZE), Chicago
Hungarian-American Democratic Federation

JOHN TEREBESSY, NYC
OWI script writer associated with "HARC", NYC
American Federation of Democratic Hungarians

GEORGE FALUDY
325 East 80th Street, NYC

4. In spite of the expressions of support of the Hungarian-American Council for Democracy, as revealed in the files of CNY and CPNY, the attempt to make the Council the major representative of Hungarian thought has met with opposition. In the communications directed to various South American groups, John Roman states that the "Horthy press", with the Hungarian Daily, "AMERIKAI MAGYAR NEPSZAVA", in the van, are attacking the formation of the Council. Correspondence on file at CNY and CPNY indicates that, even among the close associates of Count Karolyi, there is a lack of agreement as to the best means of promoting the Hungarian cause. Following Count Karolyi's announcement of his acceptance of the Honorary Presidency of the Council for Democracy, Oscar Jaszi and Rustem Vambery cabled him July 22nd, 1943 as follows: "SORRY WE CAN NOT FOLLOW YOU IN YOUR NEW COURSE" (Passed)

Karolyi replied that he had "NO NEW LINE" and stated that if unity were lost, the responsibility would be theirs. Count Karolyi sent two cables on July 27th, 1943 appealing for unity. The first one, addressed to MOZES SIMON (Gsv 4601), NYC, reads:

> "PLEASE ASK LUGOSI AND CHICAGO HUNGARIAN COUNCIL IN MY NAME TO PUT ASIDE DIFFERENCES AND COLLABORATE WITH JASZI VAMBERY VINCE IN FACE MUSSOLINI CALL UP FORM IMMEDIATELY CONCENTRATION OF LEFT SENT SENT JASZI VAMBERY SIMILAR REQUEST"
> (Passed per CCC 145126-43)

The second, directed to Oscar Jaszi, in Oberlin Ohio, is as follows:

"IN FACE OF COLLAPSE OF MUSSOLINI IT IS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE YOU SHOULD IMMEDIATELY INVITE LUGOSI VINCE AND ALL PROGRESSIVE HUNGARIANS TO CONFERENCE SERIOUS AND CLOSE COLLABORATION HAVE CABLED SIMILAR REQUEST TO THE CHICAGO COUNCIL TO COLLABORATE WITH YOU" (Passed per CCC 143224-43)

Vambery's opposition to the Council was set forth very clearly in a letter to Mozes Simon which was forwarded by Simon on August 14th, 1943 to Count Karolyi. In the letter, Vambery, while acknowledging that unity among the Hungarians in America was desirable, stated that "such unity, however, is an impossibility, a priori, because the AMERIKAI DEMOKRATIKUS MAGYAR SZOVETSEG (DMASZ) (AMERICAN HUNGARIAN DEMOCRATIC ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE) are not willing to collaborate with such democratic elements as have the principles that we have. On the other hand, realistically, "All of the Non-Nazi Associations" means nothing else but the DMASZ and the presently formed council--which adopted the principles of the DMASZ--but in which the communists predominate. As to myself, I don't "think a popular front is desirable. Moreover I have definite knowledge from competent RUSSIAN sources that such a grouping is not held to be desirable even on the Russian side. Also I am not at all convinced that a joint declaration of the DMASZ and of the Council would carry much weight with the Allied Governments and particularly with the U.S. Government.

"After the formation of the Chicago council, I have obtained information just to the contrary from competent places, expressed in non-uncertain-terms.

"This of course does not eliminate the possibility of all the non-Nazi Associations making some steps together. But this is beyond me, as the Committee of New Democratic Hungary, being composed of Hungarian citizens only, may not participate in domestic, American, political activities."

It is apparent that Count Karolyi was successful in his appeal, inasmuch as Vambery indicated his willingness to negotiate, and on October 22nd, 1943, together with Jaszi, sent the following message to Count Karolyi:

"...WE HAIL THE VALIANT UNSWERVING LEADER OF OUR MOVEMENT WITH WARMEST SINCERE SYMPATHY" (Passed)

5. RUSTEM VAMBERY
New School of Social Research
66 West 12 Street, NYC

A Government agency (2) identifies Vambery as a former professor of Oriental Science at the Hungarian National University at Budapest. During the "white terror" (Horthy regime), he was deprived of his position and subsequently came to the U.S. He defended Count Michael Karolyi before the Hungarian Court of Last Appeals in his trial for treason (1). He has been active in promoting the American branch of the Karolyi movement. He is also a leader of an Hungarian group subsidized by the Czecho-Slovakian legation in New York City, which advocates the reconstruction of pre-World War Czecho-Slovakia. In this connection he works with IGNAC SCHULZ, who is said to be an employee of the Czecho-Slovakian Legation in New York City.

According to source (3), Vambery is the leader of the AMERICAN COMMITTEE OF THE NEW DEMOCRATIC HUNGARY MOVEMENT. This organization was formed in 1942 as a liberal, anti-Horthy, anti-Hapsburg movement. It has worked closely with THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF DEMOCRATIC HUNGARIANS, which is under the direction of Oscar Jaszi. This latter group was formed in 1941, and it differs from Vambery's organization only in the fact that its members must be American citizens (of Hungarian descent).

6. The close tie-up between the two organizations is further revealed by cable communications to Count Karolyi which are signed jointly by Vambery and Jaszi in the names of their respective organizations. The principles for which these organizations stand are expressed in two cables. One, dated September 20th, 1942, reads as follows:

> "BOTH THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF DEMOCRATIC HUNGARIANS AND COMMITTEE FOR A NEW DEMOCRATIC HUNGARY IN THEIR MEETING TODAY EXPRESS THEIR SINCERE ADHERENCE TO THE PRINCIPLES WHICH YOU SO VALIANTLY EMBODIED STOP PLEASE ACCEPT OUR STRONG SOLIDARITY WITH YOUR RELENTLESS STRUGGLES FOR A FREE AND DEMOCRATIC HUNGARY WHICH AS WE ARDENTLY HOPE WILL JOIN A FEDERATION WITH HER DEMOCRATIC NEIGHBORS" (Passed)

The other message, quoted below, was filed on December 3, 1942:

> "EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF DEMOCRATIC HUNGARIANS AND THE AMERICAN COMMITTEE OF THE NEW DEMOCRATIC HUNGARY MOVEMENT TODAY FOREGATHERED IN A JOINT MEETING.... EXPRESSED ITS ADMIRATION OF YOUR LEADERSHIP WE ARE UNITED IN FIGHTING AGAINST THE HAPSBURG RESTORATION AND FOR FREEDOM OF THE HUNGARIAN PEOPLE" (Passed)

7. OSCAR JASZI
131 Forest Street
Oberlin, Ohio

Aside from his leadership of the American Federation of Democratic Hungarians, correspondence on file at CNY reveals that Professor Jaszi is a very important figure in Hungarian-American activities. According to sources (8) and (9) he was born in Nagy-Karoly, Hungary, on March 2nd, 1875; obtained his Ph.D. at the University of Budapest in 1896; married RECHA A. WOLLMANN-RUNDT in 1923; and has two children, GEORGE and ANDREW.

Jaszi was a member of the State Department of Agriculture in Hungary from 1898 to 1908. From 1912 to 1918 he was an assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Kolozsvar. From 1918 to 1919 he was Professor at the University of Budapest and Minister for National Minorities in the Cabinet of Count Michael Karolyi. Jaszi came to the United States in 1925 and became a naturalized citizen in February, 1931. At the present time, he is a Professor of Political Science at Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio. He has published many books and has contributed to the large national magazines on subjects related to Political Science, with particular references to the situation in Central Europe.

In spite of the prominent part which Jaszi plays, he informed CNY Service Division on July 13th, 1942 that, as an American citizen, he did not participate in the politics of the Hungarian factions in this country, but that he was sponsoring the aims of the American Federation of Democratic Hungarians. As far as Karolyi was concerned, Jaszi indicated that "he asks occasionally my opinion concerning Hungarian issues in America." This information was presented in connection with a cable Jaszi received from Count Karolyi regarding the trustworthiness of certain prominent Hungarians who were formerly associated with an opposing faction.

B. HUNGARIAN-AMERICAN COUNCIL FOR DEMOCRACY
535 Fifth Avenue
New York, N. Y.

1. As previously indicated in Section A, paragraph 1, the Hungarian-American Council for Democracy was the outgrowth of the Chicago conference, which was called by the Communist-controlled group in an effort to attract other than left-wing support. In addition to the election of Count Karolyi, the Council named BELA LUGOSI, Hollywood actor, as the President of the organization.

The origin of this conference is indicated in correspondence to COUNT KAROLYI on file at CPNY. On June 26th, 1943, DR. ALEXANDER VINCE, Chicago Socialist, and a member of the Executive Board of the American Federation of Democratic Hungarians in 1942, wrote Karolyi that he was aware of the Karolyi movement's financial and other difficulties in London, and therefore he decided either to start a movement himself, or to join one having financial backing. Vince stated that the visit of Bela Lugosi had come at an opportune moment, as a conversation between him and Lugosi had resulted in the latter's decision to start a "Karolyi movement" among American-Hungarians.

On July 1st, 1943, MOZES SIMON (Gsv 4601), NYC, (former legal advisor to the Communist Party in Carpatho-Ukraine, and Assistant Editor of "MAGYAR JOVO"), wrote to Karolyi (CPNY 296943-43). The letter was summarized by the Postal Examiner as follows:

"A few of Karolyi's friends looked up Mr. Lugosi, who happened to be in Chicago, and asked him to call a conference for the purpose of convoking an Hungarian-American meeting. This was to proclaim that Michael Karolyi, and only he, can be the leader of the Hungarians. Lugosi, being on a tour, arranged things with Hungarians in other cities and that was the time, when writer had cabled to addressee, to send a welcoming telegram to the conference....He now advises addressee to write a warm letter to Lugosi, thanking him for foundation of the organization. Writer considers this letter important, as he claims that the greater part of the non-Nazi or non-Fascist Hungarians in America are supposed to be represented in the New organization....Writer further claims that the new group is backed by "such serious American factors as SENATOR PEPPER'."

2. The files of Postal Censorship, NYC, revealed that the Communist paper, "Magyar Jovo", has carried on an extensive drive to win support for the Council and acknowledgement of the leadership of Count Karolyi.

3. Postal intercepts further disclose that on September 3rd, 1943, JOHN ROMAN, editor-in-chief of the "HUNGARIAN DAILY JOURNAL" and "Magyar Jovo", contacted the following organizations, soliciting endorsements of the Hungarian-American Council for Democracy, and pressing for the unification of all movements abroad under the leadership of Karolyi:

MR. ADAM GYORGY
c/o SZABAD MAGYAR COMMITTEE
Casilla 1374, La Paz, Bolivia

MR. LIPOT ABRAHAMOVITS c/o SZABAD MAGYAR MOZGALOM
Uruguay 1856, Montevideo, Uruguay

HAVAS & A. SIMON
HUNGARIA LIBRE DEMOCRATICA
Casilla 13251, Santiago, Chile

MR. BELA SZASZ
Casille Correo 1245
Buenos Aires, Argentina

MR. LAJOS KADAR c/o HUNGAROS LIBRES DO BRAZIL
Caixa Postal 2094
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

HUNGARIA LIBRE
Calle De Sultepec 34
Mexico, D.F., Mexico

In the course of the appeal, Roman set forth a list of prominent Hungarian-American writers, professional men and educators who were backing this organization, and included the information that the following newspapers were supporting its activities:

"MAGYAR HERALD"
New Brunswick, N.J.
Editor, HUGO KORMOS

"MAGYAR TRIBUNE"
Chicago, Illinois
Editor, SAMUEL SANDOR

"AZ EMBER"
New York, N.Y.
Editor, FERENC GONDOR

"AZ IRAS"
Chicago, Illinois
Editor, IGNACIO IZSAK

4. The present composition of the Hungarian-American Council for Democracy is revealed in a cable directed to Count Karolyi on the anniversary of the Hungarian October Revolution. The cable, dated October 23rd, 1943, is as follows:

"MICHAEL KAROLYI
99 HAVERSTOCK HILL
LONDON N.W.3

WE ARE WITH YOU IN YOUR GREAT FIGHT AIMED LIBERATION HUNGARIAN PEOPLE TITLES OF MEMBERS ARE LUGOSI BELA - GONDOR FERENC - GYETVAI NAGY JANOS - GELLERT HUGO - LENGYEL EMIL - ROMAN JANOS - HAJNAL JENO - SIMON MOSES - VERTES MARCELL
HUNGARIAN AMERICAN COUNCIL FOR DEMOCRACY" (Passed)

(Information developed in the course of this inquiry regarding the prominent individuals listed in the above cable as members of the Hungarian-American Council for Democracy is given in the following paragraphs.)

5. BELA LUGOSI
1084 Whipple Street, North Hollywood, California, and
535 Fifth Avenue, NYC

A Government source (2) states that Lugosi was born in Lugos, Hungary, in 1884 and attended the Academy of Theatrical Art in that country. It is alleged that during the Bolshevist regime of BELA KUN in Hungary, Lugosi was openly a Communist Party member, and consequently was forced to flee to the U.S. when this Bolshevist government was overthrown by the reactionary group. He remained politically inactive until the late spring of 1943, when he

contributed a series of articles to the "Magyar Jovo". On June 27th, 1943, he was elected President of the Hungarian-American Council for Democracy in Chicago (source 1).

CNY cable files indicate that Lugosi has exchanged messages of greeting and of acknowledgement of mutual esteem with Count Karolyi.

In commenting on Lugosi's election, Dr. Mozes Simon (CPNY 306348-43) stated: "Lugosi is a very happy choice. He set out to work with enthusiasm and achieved great unexpected success. I hope that through him the valuable, moderate-leaflet-elements will also join our movement."

6. EMIL LENGYEL
76-15 35th Avenue
Jackson Heights, L.I.

Emil Lengyel appears in "Who's Who in America" (1943) as an author and educator who was born in Budapest on April 26th, 1895. He came to the U.S. in 1921 and was naturalized in 1927. He was a journalist in Hungary and in Vienna. In the U.S., he has been featured as a forum leader and was adjunct professor of history and economics at Brooklyn Polytechnical Institute. He is President of the ADY SOCIETY, NYC, and a member of the AUTHOR'S LEAGUE OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF FOREIGN PRESS CORRESPONDENTS.

7. JOHN ROMAN
"Magyar Jovo"
413 East 14th Street
New York, New York

A Government agency (2) reports that, in June, 1941, Roman became editor of the newspaper, "Magyar Jovo". Although this paper is said to be owned by ARTHUR REICH, NYC, a registered Communist in the 1936 elections, and is reportedly published by the HUNGARIAN DAILY JOURNAL PUBLISHING CO., NYC, it is known to be subsidized by the International Workers Order. "Magyar Jovo" is classed as a labor paper and its main source of news is said to be the "DAILY WORKER" and the "DAILY PRESS"....

This same Government source reports that Roman, who professes to have been born in Olah Balska, Hungary, March 29, 1906, claims to be a naturalized U.S. citizen. His mother and father are listed as ELIAS and SARAPHINA FRIEDMAN. Roman is reliably reported to be a Communist Party and Comintern functionary, charged with the direction of and liaison with the Victory Conference of the Foreign Language Press. Roman, ABNER GREEN, DR. DAVID KRINKIN, (editor of the allegedly Communistic newspaper, "RUSSKY GOLOS"), and MICHAELL PROBERS, comprise the Steering Committee of the AMERICAN COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE FOREIGN BORN.

8. JOHN GYETVAI-NAGY
413 East 14th Street
New York, New York

A Government source (1) describes Gyetvai-Nagy as one of the founders of the "Magyar Jovo". He is still believed to be the real editor of the paper, in spite of the fact that Roman replaced him officially. A Government agency (2) indicates that he and John Roman are also connected with the Hungarian language monthly magazine, "NOK VILAGA", which is published at the same office as "Magyar Jovo". This magazine is stated to be definitely pro-Communist in its editorial content, and it publishes articles by the editors of "Magyar Jovo". Although the publication lists ERNA FODOR and ANNA SZEVIN as the owners, and the

National Committee of the Women's Federation as publisher, it is said that the magazine is actually owned by the International Workers Order and ALEXANDER RAKOSI, managing editor of "Magyar Jovo".

Rakosi is also known as ALEXANDER ROTH and ALEX RATOSI, 48-25 46th Street, Woodside, L.I. Source (2) reports that he was born on April 18th, 1907 in Kisvorda Szabols, Hungary. He came to New York on September 1st, 1923, and was naturalized in Cleveland, Ohio on January 5th, 1940.

9. A Government source (1) indicates that some of the news stories featured by "Magyar Jovo" have resulted in considerable disturbance among the Hungarian population. In 1942, John Roman, RUSTEM VAMBERY, and FERENC GONDOR, editor of "AZ EMBER", held a press conference at the Hotel Biltmore at which they announced the formation of the INDEPENDENT NATIONAL FRONT, an underground movement in Hungary. The story was published by the "New York Times" without comment, and this article in turn was circulated in the local foreign language press by the Overseas Branch of the OWI. Investigation showed that "Magyar Jovo" had not received the information by cable from Switzerland, as reported, but that the information had come to them by a dispatch from the INTERCONTINENT NEWS SERVICE in Moscow, Russia. A further check revealed that the OWI Overseas Branch, Hungarian Section, employed JOHN TEREBESSY, Vambery and Ferenc Gondor; MRS. PIROSKA HALASZ, widely reported as a member of the Communist Party; and FRANCOIS DOBO, a former leftist social democratic journalist and radio man in Hungary. In referring to this incident, source (1) stated: "Subsequent developments, as well as reliable informants, indicate that the Independent Hungarian National Front was a Communist-inspired hoax."

10. A Government agency (2) identifies Terebessy as an employee of the Radio Bureau Section of the New York branch of the OWI, where he and Mrs. Piroska Halasz are responsible for the radio scripts used in short wave broadcasts to Hungary. He is the son of a former Hungarian deputy who is at present chief justice in the Czecho-Slovakian Government under Hitler control. Terebessy is reported to be rabidly Communistic. He was involved in the Communist movement in Hungary, and organized the "Sickle Movement" in Czecho-Slovakia among the Communist youth. He was appointed commissar for Czecho-Slovakia and later served in the Czecho-Slovakian government at Prague.

Cable files indicate the Terebessy is associated with the weekly periodical "HARC" ("FIGHT"), which is described by source (3) as a small liberal paper representing the views of Rustem Vambery's organization, and also as the organ for the group headed by OSCAR JASZI. News items for "Harc" are directed to Terebessy's residence.

11. CPNY files and source (2) indicate that "Magyar Jovo" featured a series of articles concerning the "Movement for an Independent Hungary"... indicating that VICTOR BATOR (Y 7615), prominent Hungarian banker, was the chief of a secret Hungarian Fascist center on Nantucket, an island off the coast of Massachusetts. These articles state that the secret organization was spreading Fascist literature under the guise of a calendar of the World Federation of Hungarians. When these stories were investigated, the editor of "Magyar Jovo" stated to a Government agency (1) that he had no actual information to substantiate the articles.

12. DR. MOZES (MOSES) SIMON (Gsv 4601)
1 University Place
New York, N.Y.

Source (2) states that Dr. Mozes Simon was born on November 17th, 1890, in Mukacevo, Czecho-Slovakia. He is married to EDITH SIMON, and both have applied for U.S. citizenship. A successful Czecho-Slovakian lawyer and former legal advisor to the Communist

party at Berehove, Carpatho-Ukraine, Simon escaped to England in March, 1939, where he registered with the Czecho-Slovakian Refugee Trust Fund as a member of a group of Sudeten Communists. He later resigned. Simon came to New York City August 27th, 1942,...

Simon is a frequent correspondent of Count Michael Karolyi in London. In a letter dated August 4th, 1943 (CPNY 306348-43) Simon informed Karolyi as follows: "I delayed writing, because I had hoped that I might be able to convey sure news on financial matters in a few days.... there is hope that a few moneyed men (of Hungarian origin) will give a loan to your movement, Mr. President. According to present intelligence, 100,000 dollars were mentioned which would have to be paid back only at home. You, Mr. President, would have to guarantee repayment personally, in case you re-acquired your personal fortune. May mention that I, too, own considerable property at home and should be glad to guarantee the re-payment on the aforementioned basis, if such loan - to be spent entirely for the purpose of National liberation - could then be repaid by the liberated country...."

In connection with a cable received from Count Karolyi stating "...WIRE JASZI WORK WITH VINCE GELLERT LENGYEL", Simon advised Serdiv CNY on January 12th, 1943 that (Alexander) Vince lived in Chicago, (Hugo) Gellert was a painter in New York, and (Emil) Lengyel was the President of the Hungarian Relief Committee. He stated that this was all the information that he had, as he was not particularly interested in this whole affair, but was only doing it as a favor to Karolyi. Inasmuch as Karolyi cabled him, he felt it only polite that he should answer.

13. FERENC GONDOR
320 East 79th Street
New York, N.Y.

Gondor is identified by source (2) as the publisher and editor of the Hungarian newspaper "As Ember" ("The Man"). This publication is described in a Government bulletin (3) as a weekly newspaper which was founded in 1925 and has a circulation varying from 2,000 to 15,000. "As an independent liberal journal it has had considerable influence among intellectual Hungarians." Gondor is reported by Government agency (2) to have left Hungary during the Communist regime in the early 1920's. He fled to Vienna, where he first established his newspaper, and when he came to the U.S. approximately twenty years ago, he resumed its publication here....

In a report dated April 2nd, 1942, (source 2), Gondor is alleged to be pro-Horthy and a supporter of the revision of the Trianon Pact. His paper has been reported friendly to the movement of Tibor Eckhardt, an alleged Fascist with Nazi connections.

In a survey of the Hungarian situation prepared by source (1), Ferenc Gondor is referred to as a "neutral figure" who, together with REV. GEZA TAKARO, was won over by the Communists who openly joined forces with Karolyi, Vambery, and Jaszi for the successful prosecution of the war "against Horthy and Hitler".

An article in the "New York Herald Tribune", dated September 20th, 1942, deals with an interview given by Mr. Gondor with reference to the underground movement in Hungary. Gondor is identified as a member of the COMMITTEE OF AMERICANS OF HUNGARIAN DESCENT FOR FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY, whose offices are located at 551 Fifth Avenue, N.Y.C. As a member of the Hungarian-American Council for Democracy, Gondor joined with the rest of the Council, including Simon, Lugosi, Gyetvai-Nagy, and Roman, in cabling Count Michael Karolyi on October 23rd, 1943, as follows: "WE ARE WITH YOU IN YOUR GREAT FIGHT AIMED [AT THE] LIBERATION [OF THE] HUNGARIAN PEOPLE" (Passed)

The Committee of Americans of Hungarian Descent for Freedom and Democracy, in a report supplied by the Czecho-Slovakian Information Bureau, NYC, which is in the

files of a Ferenc Gondor with the backing of his close friend, IMRE BEKESSY (Y 7793) and his son, HANS HABE-BEKESSY (Y 7793) (see CYNY Memorandum Digest on Imre Bekessy and Hans Habe-Bekessy dated September 19th, 1943). This organization is presently under the leadership of Rev. Geza Takaro.

14. IMRE BEKESSY (Y 7793)
220 East 73rd Street
New York, N.Y.

The files of a Government source (2) describe Imre Bekessy as an Hungarian newspaperman who specialized in blackmailing. During the Communist regime in Hungary (1919) he was editor of the Government news agency and close to Bela Kun. When Horthy came to power, Bekessy wrote reactionary articles defaming his former associates. He was the only Communist who thus escaped prison. He is reported to have practised blackmailing both in Vienna, Austria (leaving there only when threatened with libel suits), and in Budapest, Hungary. In a letter dated December 28, 1943, Bekessy informed Serdive CNY that in 1940 he came to the U.S., where he has continued his activities as a writer and journalist....

15. DR. GEZA TAKARO
344 East 69th Street
New York, N.Y.

Dr. Takaro, Pastor of the Hungarian Reformed Church on 69th Street, is reported to be a tool of the Hungarian Communists in the New York area (2). He refused to sign a document referred to as the "The Clergy Speaks" manifesto, which was an affirmation of gilt to the U.S. Government. In a series of open letters published in "As Ember", Dr. Takaro stated that the manifest was aimed at whitewashing leaders of the American Hungarian Federation, and that some of the signatories were monarchistic and uncooperative toward the American War Effort, while others were definitely pro-Nazi in belief (CPNY 211986-43). It is noted that the conservative newspaper, AMERIKAI MAGYAR NEPSZAVA" (CPNY 208805-43), in commenting on Takaro's attack, suggested that he participate in the house cleaning of the American Hungarian Federation....

16. THE NEW YORK COUNCIL OF HUNGARIAN AMERICANS FOR VICTORY is described (source 3) as liberal in character and composed of Americans of Hungarian descent. It was formed in 1942 to stimulate the participation of the Hungarian nationals in the war effort. The support accorded it by the Communist group has given the Council a distinct leftist political leaning. The President of this group is PROFESSOR LOUIS TOTH (CPNY 208094-43), lay leader of Dr. Takaro's church....

Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XXI, Nos. 1-2 (Spring-Fall, 1994)

The One Who Could Photograph the Soul: Rudolf Icsey and Hungarian Filmmakers in Brazil.[1]

Ágnes Judit Szilágyi

In recent years, the fate of Hungarians living outside Hungary's borders has been studied by that country's historians with growing interest. The same interest has traced the history of Magyar emigrants to Latin America. This research, done mainly by Ilona Varga and by members of the Latin American History Research Group at József Attila University, revealed several important aspects of the history of Hungarians living in South America. Now that a historical overview has been provided, it is important to present more specific perspectives on the lives of individual emigrants. Accordingly, this study traces the career of Rudolf Icsey, an outstanding Hungarian-born cinematographer who emigrated to Brazil.

Before the Second World War it was natural for Hungarian filmmakers to spend a part of their apprenticeship abroad. They worked as technicians with big film studios, or gained experience as assistant cameramen. This well-trained group of filmmakers then returned to Hungary with professional connections and international experience. Along with their talent, the expertise they had gained both at home and abroad enabled them to be successful in emigration once they left Hungary for good. This is certainly true of the Hungarian emigrant artists who made their way to Brazil.

Those Hungarians who left Hungary in the wake of the Second World War and chose Brazil as their destination, had studied at various prominent institutions and studios in Berlin, Paris, Rome and London, or at the biggest studio in South America, the Alex in Buenos Aires. The fine training and high international standards of the members of São Paulo's Hungarian community of filmmakers helped to raise the professional level of the Brazilian film industry in the late 1940s and the early 1950s.

The emigrant Hungarians contributed to Brazilian filmmaking in various ways. The fashion salon of Katalin Karádi and Irma Frank provided hats for costumes. András Kálmán, Károly Szily and Tibor Szűcs offered production services. Graphic artist and cartoonist Jenő Márkus was the 'master of visual effects'.[2] Rudolf Rex Lustig, Adalberto Kemény and Dezső Grósz founded the first film laboratory in Brazil, and "Rex Film" became well-known all over the

world. György Jónás settled in São Paulo in 1951, and in 1957 he founded the first Brazilian colour film laboratory named Lider Cinematográfica.[3]

One of the first successful Hungarian filmmakers to go to Brazil was Dezső Ákos Hamza. He had worked in Hungary as a successful and prolific director and producer. After the Second World War Hamza became a member of the National Board of Motion Picture Supervision, president of the film-makers' trade union, and manager of MAFIRT (the Hungarian Film Bureau Ltd). He never planned to leave Hungary permanently. Years later he explained the circumstances of his leaving Hungary: "I was assigned by Gyula Ortutay, the president of the Hungarian Central News Service, to undertake a study of the French Television and TV films in order to help prepare the Television Department of the Hungarian Radio.... I was neither an emigrant nor a deserter. After all, I received a passport, some help and even a car, that took me to the border.... But my friends, who knew about my acquaintance with László Rajk, suggested that I should not return for the time being."[4] There is some evidence that Hamza's departure was hastened both by attacks on him and his work in the press, and by a lucrative contract offer from abroad.[5] As with most emigrants, Hamza's decision to leave reflected an array of personal, economic, and political factors. After leaving Hungary, he stayed in Europe until 1955 when he went to Brazil to work as an artistic consultant to the Maristela film company. Once there, Hamza opened the door for the young Rudolf Icsey. "At that time, the film industry in Brazil was still quite young. [The Brazilians] did not have a good cameraman, so at [Hamza's] request... the producer had Rudi Icsey brought over. He also stayed and had a terrific career, working in a lot of movies"[6] and he taught Brazilians the art of cinematography.

Rudolf Icsey, or Rodolfo Icsey de Szabadhegy was born on 18 May 1905, to József Icsey, a photographer, and his wife Erzsébet Hollóssy in the village of Poprádfelka, in present-day Slovakia. Though his parents named him Rezső, he became famous in the Hungarian and international press under various other names. Thus, though he was known to the Hungarian public as Rezső, an invitation for the premiere in 1943 of the *Sziámi macska* [Siamese Cat] was addressed to him as "Rudolf," a name which for non-Hungarians was easier to pronounce and remember. Abroad he became known by this name. However, newspapers were not consistent with the spelling, referring to him variously as "Rudolf," "Rolf," "Rodolfo," "Rudolph," or "Rudi." Sometimes journalists and typesetters were also confused the surname, spelling it "Iezey," "Iosey," "Icscy," or "Icssey."

When he was a school-boy, the future cinematographer learned the craft of taking pictures from his father.[7] After completing high school in 1919, he started his serious training in photography. For two years he was an apprentice in the studio of Béla Brun Hüber in Budapest, in 1924 he worked as an assistant cameraman to Béla Zitkovszky at the Educational Film Studio, and in 1925 he became a cameraman at the Hungarian Film Bureau. Soon, however, the previously prosperous Hungarian feature film industry came to a standstill.[8] The

number of Hungarian feature films declined from a peak of 102 in 1918 to 4 in 1922 — the year in which Icsey began his career — to 2 each in the years 1926 and 1927.[9] This might explain why the young cameraman began his career with the production of documentaries and short films. Between 1925 and 1936 he worked as a newsreel reporter, during which time he received some international recognition. For example, the film *Halali* (1934), which he co-directed and photographed this film with István Somkuti, was awarded the bronze medal at the Venice Film Festival. Later, *A magyar falu művészete* [Art of the Hungarian Village] (1937) which he directed and photographed, received a silver medal at the Paris Universal Exhibition.

Icsey's career as a short-filmmaker and reporter ended in 1936 when he became employed by Hunnia Film Studio. From that time on, he photographed mainly feature films, initially working as an assistant cameraman. The first feature he made as a cinematographer was *Pókháló* [Cobweb] in 1936. Increasingly, his work was well-received in the press. "So far, Icsey has shot reportage and newsreel, and for that a different technique is needed than for feature films. However, Icsey went to study abroad and learned how to shoot feature films. He was a good student. He stood the test... his photography is like painting."[10] Occasionally, he was given special tasks. He participated, for instance, in the shooting of the first Hungarian "aviation film," *Magyar sasok* [Hungarian Eagles] (1943). One film critic commented: "We can only speak highly of Rudolf Icsey, the cameraman who risked his life several times while shooting the daring flying scenes."[11] When reviewing *Futótűz* [Wildfire] (1943), another critic emphasized Icsey's novel technique which: "... created candlelight effects with quite audacious lighting, which is rare in Hungarian films."[12]

According to his friends and the people who knew him, Icsey was quiet and well-balanced at work: "...in the quarrelsome, loud, excited atmosphere [of the studio] [Icsey] is the most quiet and peaceful person. His childlike smile never fades from his face. He is cheerful even in the middle of the most cruel drama: he is so good at his job."[13] He made a very good colleague. Thanks to his flexibility and calmness, directors liked to work with him. That Icsey was a successful and honoured filmmaker is proven not only by the favourable reviews but by his countless assignments. Between 1936, when Icsey shot his first feature, and 1947 when he left Hungary, 323 feature films were produced in Hungary.[14] Icsey participated in more than 60 of them; together with the documentaries, short films and short features he had worked on more than 80 films.[15] In the beginning he was a camera assistant or second cameraman, later cameraman and sometimes both director and cameraman.[16]

Icsey had always thought it important to help younger members of his profession. Among his students were Ferenc Fekete, György Illés, Barnabás Hegyi, Gyula Kolosvári, and, later while in Italy, Giovanni di Venonzo who at the time worked with Fellini. Even in Brazil he continued teaching. He believed that good techniques were fundamental for making good films, and for that, experience had to be passed on, the young had to be trained.

A flourishing filmmaking industry in Hungary during all but the final months of the Second World War allowed Icsey to remain active. He resumed shooting in 1945-46 and taught at the Faculty of Film of the Academy of Performing Arts. Hungary's second feature film produced after the war, *Arany-óra* [Golden Watch], was photographed by Icsey. He tried something new. According to a student of Hungarian filmmaking, "... Icsey established the [film's] atmosphere... within seconds the introductory images, in which he use[d] the tilted and upright position of the camera consistently."[17]

A look at the list of Icsey's works reveals that the political messages of the films he photographed were contradictory. The documentary *Honvédek előre!* ([Hungarian Soldiers, Forward!] 1941) was made by József Horváth, Ernő Kiss, László Nagy, Gyula Zsabka and Icsey, who followed the Hungarian soldiers as war-correspondents. The contemporary press described this film as "The most monumental and the best Hungarian war documentary... [depicting] the glorious... [drive] of the Hungarian soldiers... against the Bolshevik threat."[18] Then a few years passed and things changed politically. In 1946 Icsey worked on a film with a completely different ideology, entitled *A Szovjetúnió Magyar-országért* [The Soviet Union for Hungary]. His synopsis handed to the National Board of Motion Picture Supervision contained the following: "This film, which was made for the first national convention of the Hungarian Soviet Cultural Society, is dedicated to Generalissimo Stalin and to the glorious Red Army [that] liberated our country."[19]

We do not know much about Icsey's political orientation, but as a true cameraman he was present at, and photographed the important events of his age. To edit and interpret these events was not the task of the technical crew but of the screenplay's authors. Directors, regardless of their political motives, liked to work with a respected cameraman. Icsey might have regarded these tasks as new challenges for a cameraman. He was not alone among his colleagues in having this attitude; many who lived to see the stormy years of Hungarian history in the 20th century had it. For instance, Vidor Török was filming at the convention of intellectuals gathered by Hungarian fascist leader Ferenc Szálasi in December of 1944, and later, it was again he who shot the newsreels at Szálasi's execution.[20]

Earlier we mentioned that many different motives can prompt emigrants to leave their native land. Little is known about Icsey's emigration other than a few basic details gleaned from his correspondence. In 1947 he signed a contract in Austria. Between 1947 and 1948 he worked there and in Munich shooting a few commercials, cultural films, and documentaries. While in Munich he also worked as cameraman on feature films directed by Sándor Szlatinay — who had been living abroad since 1940 — as well as by Hans Wolff and Rudolf Carl. In 1949 Icsey continued filming, this time in Italy. Here he shot mainly commercials, short films, documentaries, and cultural films; though he was cameraman for a few feature films as well. In Rome and Milan he was able to work with fellow Hungarian filmmakers, such as D. Ákos Hamza and Géza Radványi, both

of whom had been his partners in Hungary. He also worked with Italian directors, such as Goffredo Alessandrini and Giuseppe Acattino.

Between 1949 and 1954 Icsey was probably not thinking about a journey to South America. Yet, at that time in Brazil the situation was becoming ripe for an influx of European filmmakers. The first period of Brazilian sound-film, 1931 to 1949, had been marked by Humberto Mauro, and the following one by Alberto Cavalcanti. Both artists had been born in 1897, but their paths to becoming filmmakers were very different. Cavalcanti left Brazil for Europe in 1920, where he gained recognition. In the 1920s he was influenced by the French avant-garde, in the 1930s he worked with the English documentarists, then until the mid-1940s he was employed by Ealing Studios in London. When he returned to his country — which had virtually no filmmaking industry at the time — he became the only famous Brazilian filmmaker. Mauro was over thirty when he left Brazil and returned only in the 1960s, by which time his films had become popular in his native land.[21]

With the return of Cavalcanti and with the establishment of the Vera Cruz Studio, financed with Italian capital, European influence became dominant over Brazilian traditions. Cavalcanti's "main objective... was to bring some technical innovation into usage in Brazil, which was indispensable for efficient filmmaking."[22] Unfortunately, Mauro was forgotten, as Cavalcanti relied heavily on Italians, dozens of whom were invited to Brazil. Most of the foreigners that came to Brazil to work soon left, but not before they shared important trade secrets with their Brazilian colleagues.[23] D. Ákos Hamza, who was living in Italy at that time, arrived in Brazil with this wave of newcomers. He was contracted by the Maristela Studio in 1955 to direct a film entitled *Quem Matou Anabela?* [Who Killed Anabela?]. Hamza invited Rezső Icsey to photograph this film. Unlike many of his European colleagues, Icsey did not leave Brazil, although he still considered himself Hungarian. By the 1950s he decided that after living in Hungary, Austria, Germany and Italy, Brazil would be his final home. In 1957 he obtained a permanent residence permit in Brazil for his relatives living in Vienna, including his first wife Gizella Bucsinszky, their daughter Edina, his sister Lídia Icsey and her husband, Lajos Rakó.[24] A few years later, in 1960, Icsey became a Brazilian citizen.

The ambitious project of Cavalcanti and the Vera Cruz studio to make the Brazilian film industry prosperous soon failed. The mid-1950s brought changes. São Paulo's monopoly was challenged by two new filmmaking centres.

> The great Vera Cruz Studio went bankrupt in 1954, and its collapse caused the failure of several other companies — Maristela, Multifilmes, Kino Filmes — all three in São Paulo. The official film industry returned to its "normal" routine, that is to the carnivals, insignificant comedies, adventure films of low standard. However, it did not mean that the Brazilian film industry was wrecked. Just the opposite happened.

> This atmosphere provided an opportunity [for] the critics of "Rio realism" to attack the "Paulist" popular film industry.[25]

Some filmmakers from Rio de Janeiro learned the profession in São Paulo and then became engaged in the movement of the "cinema nôvo," the Brazilian new wave. Most of the Hungarian filmmakers, including Icsey, stayed in São Paulo, the Hollywood of Brazil. "São Paulo and its environs is the industrial centre of the country. It plays the role of a colonizing metropolis... at the same time, it is the centre of the popular, commercial film industry —including, of course, television — so fiercely hated by the authors of the 'new film'."[26]

In the void left after the collapse of the big companies, the Hungarians quickly found opportunities to participate in the revival of São Paulo's film industry. This meant either shooting films, or financing them — as did Thomas Farkas who financed the documentary "cinema nôvo" in the 1960s[27] — or founding companies, such as Lider Cinematográfica, Cinebraz, or Rex. Most Hungarian immigrants to Brazil had settled in the ever expanding cosmopolitan city of São Paulo. They were attracted by the rapidly expanding industrial centre which promised the chance to succeed; moreover, the pleasant climate and European features of the city, as well as the presence of many Hungarians and other Europeans, helped their integration. Icsey, in particular, was attached to São Paulo mainly as a result of his professional connections. While he worked there, he was influenced by North American filmmaking practices which were based on the traditions of the international entertainment industry. This is not surprising given the fact that his European experience and work was closer to this style than that of the "cinema nôvo". Hungarian audiences of the 1930s and 1940s had reacted in the same way to happy stories such as the 1934 film *Mese-autó* [Dream-car] as did Brazilian audiences in the 1950s. In their leisure time Brazilians did not wish to see misery, but preferred, for example, the chattering of the *chanchadas* [musical comedies].[28] The "cinema nôvo" had a strong documentarist trend as well. However, Icsey was not connected to it despite his documentarist past, for he did not know Brazil well enough. Indeed, even Brazilian-born filmmakers had not really discovered their country until the 1950s and 1960s. They were mainly interested in two different subjects: the world of the *favela* [the city slums] and the *sertão* [jungle or wilderness]. As one critic wrote, "The 'new Brazilian film' of the 1960s [fit] organically into Brazilian culture, and its ambition [was] to become the common language of a community."[29] This ambition was pursued by a young generation of Brazilian filmmakers.

Icsey shot his first films in Brazil under Hungarian directors such as D. Ákos Hamza and Ferenc Fekete. Icsey won the Mayor's Award in 1957 for his cinematographic work on Fekete's *A Doutora é Muito Viva* [The Doctoress is Very Passionate]. His outstanding abilities were soon discovered by non-Hungarian directors as well, including Walter Hugo Khouri. Khouri was a Paulist, but he was one of those directors who "... broke with the traditions and

prepared grounds for the 'new wave' of the sixties."[30] His first film, *Estranho Encontro* [Strange Encounter] (1957) which he shot as an amateur, was photographed by Icsey. For this work too, Icsey received good reviews in the press.[31]

The most important Paulist film award is the SACI, the Brazilian Oscar. Icsey received this award three times: in 1958 for *Cara de Fogo* [Fiery Face], in 1962 for *Tristêza do Jeca* [Jeca's Sorrow] and *Mulheres e Milhões* [Women and Millions], and in 1965 for *O Corpo Ardente* [Ardent Body] directed by his frequent collaborator, Khouri. For the camera work of *Estrano Encontro* and *Cara de Fogo* Icsey received the gold medal in the category of "*melhor fotografia*" [best photography] at the first Brazilian film festival, the Festival de Cinema de Curitiba.

Khouri became a controversial, but important, personality of the film world in São Paulo. He demonstrated his hermetic temperament in his films *O Gigante de Pedra* [The Stone Giant] and *Estranho Encontro*. His work represented two different trends in independent filmmaking. "The first one aimed at making Brazilian films of social subjects, and their ideal was *Rio Quarenta Graus* [Rio, Forty Degrees]; the objective of the second trend was to shoot formalist, universal, metaphysical films, and their model was *Estranho Encontro*."[32] Another film of Khouri, *Na Garganta do Diabo* [In the Throat of the Devil] of 1960, brought Icsey the prize "*O Melhor Fotografia em Preto e Branco*" [best black and white photography]. Then, in 1961, another film they made together, *A Ilha* [The Island] was awarded the "*Governador do Estado*" [the Governor of the State]. *Noite Vazia* [Empty Nights] of 1964 won the "best photography" award of the City of São Paulo (Prémios Municipais). In 1966, Icsey received the same award for *O Corpo Ardente*. Icsey also worked on a number of films with the director-comedian Amácio Mazzaropi, including *Tristêza do Jeca* [Jeca's Sorrow] which brought Icsey his second SACI award.[33] Still another remarkable director who Icsey worked with was Galileu Garcia. Besides Khouri and Roberto Santos he was the third "... young man of about thirty who showed great promise in the filmmaking of São Paulo in 1958."[34]

It is undeniable that, unlike the "cinema nôvo," the Paulist cinema did not aspire to 'art film' status. The filmmakers of Rio had always attracted more attention in the world than those who worked in São Paulo, although the latter obviously attracted larger audiences, and their technical expertise was unquestionable. Icsey was part of this well-trained team, and his skills brought him much work in Brazil. He shot at least forty feature films in Brazil, though altogether he might have shot more than a hundred films. Among his short films, *Mario Gruber* was nominated for the 1966 Berlin Film Festival.

Thanks perhaps to the favourable opportunities for work, or to his second wife, Odina Monteiro whom he married in 1963, Icsey remained loyal to his new country until his death on 8 January 1987. He was a prominent, if eccentric personality of the Brazilian national film industry. As one critic commented: "... Rudolf Icsey is an odd character around midnight: in his dark glasses, his cap covering his face, wearing his canvas trousers."[35] His fame was duly emphasized

in the Paulist press which was never short on praise: "The colour images of Rudolf Icsey, the greatest cameraman of our national film industry, are outstanding, the best part of the film *Casinha Pequenina* [Small House] is his work...." wrote one critic,[36] while another referred to "the cameraman, this great and competent artist, Rudolf Icsey..."[37] And we conclude with a particularly telling opinion: "[t]he photography of *A Compadecida* [The Merciful One] was the work of the best-known and the most decorated Brazilian cameraman, Rudolf Icsey. This says everything."[38]

NOTES

Most of the data in this study is from Icsey's Papers, deposited in the Hungarian Film Institute by Ladislao P. Szabó of São Paulo. The papers can be found in the Institute's library and contain the following: personal correspondence; photographs, pictures; film prospectuses, posters, program notes, periodicals; newspaper clippings; one album with newspaper clippings and one photo album.

[1]"Rudolf Icsey, the excellent cameraman, who is considered to be able to photograph even the soul with his lens,..." unidentified newspaper clipping from the album, Icsey Papers .

[2]Lajos Kutasi Kovács, "Magyarok a brazil filmvilágban" [Hungarians in Brazilian Filmmaking], *Magyar Hírek* 1983/24, p. 21. According to Fernão Ramos, the producer of *Na Garganta do Diabo* [In the Throat of the Devil] was probably Carlos Szili, while András Kalman participated in the preparation of the *Pensão de D. Stela* [The Boarding House of Dona Stela].

[3]Pál Körmendi, "Magyar filmrendező Brazíliában" [Hungarian Film Director in Brazil], in: *Ország Világ*, 23 Sept. 1970 p. 25.

[4]"Hamza D. Ákos a Magyar Filmintézetben" [D. Ákos Hamza at the Hungarian Film Institute], in: *Filmkultúra*, 1987/12, p. 40. László Rajk was a prominent communist who was accused of nationalist and "Titoist" tendencies and was executed for these "crimes." Hundreds of his friends and acquaintances were subjected to disciplinary measures. See also: Károly Kristófi, "Egy reneszánsz ember" [A Renaissance Person], in: *Mozgó Képek*, 1987/Aug. p. 6.

[5]The report of György Schöpflin dated 23 July 1946, can be found in the Archives of the Institute of Political History in Budapest, Inv. no. 247.f.10/19. The article referred to, which attacked Hamza because of his supposed rightist attitude, was published in *Világosság*, daily paper of the Hungarian Social Democrats. 1946/163, p. 4.

[6]"Hamza D. Ákos a Magyar Filmintézetben," *Filmkultúra*, 1987/12, p. 42.

[7]Márton Icsey, the grandfather, had also been a photographer.

[8]István Nemeskürty, *A magyar film története* [The History of the Hungarian Film] (Budapest: Gondolat, 1965), see the appendix.

[9]István Nemeskürty, *A képpé varázsolt idő* [Time Conjured into Image] (Budapest, 1984), p. 224.

[10]Unidentified newspaper clipping from the album in the Icsey Papers.

[11]Ferenc Baráth's review of *Magyar Sasok* [Hungarian Eagles], newspaper clipping, Icsey Papers.

[12]Unidentified newspaper clipping signed "-s -s", Icsey Papers.

[13]Unidentified newspaper clipping from the album, Icsey Papers.

[14]István Nemeskürty, *A meseautó utasai* [Passengers of the Dream-car] (Budapest: Magvető, 1965.) and the Appendix of *A magyar film története.*

[15]There are no reliable statistics about films made before 1939 in these three categories.

[16]Icsey Papers and according to the research of P. Ábel.

[17]Gábor Szilágyi, *Tűzkeresztség* [Baptism by Fire] (Budapest: Hungarian Film Institute, 1992.) p. 24.

[18]*Magyar Film*, 1942/12 Jan. p. 7.

[19]Documents about the film *A Szovjetúnió Magyarországért* can be found at the Hungarian Film Institute, Inv. no.: TÖ 68.

[20]Péter Molnár Gál, *A Páger ügy* [The Páger Case] (Budapest: Pallas, 1988.) p. 215.

[21]João Bénard da Costa, *Brazil: antes e depois do Cinema Nôvo* (Lissabon: Colóquio Artes 39., Dec. 1978.).

[22]*A latin-amerikai filmművészet antológiája* [Anthology of Latin American Film], Mrs. T. Páldy and Sándor Péter eds., (Budapest: Hungarian Film Institute and Archive, 1983), pp. 113-114.

[23]Glauber Rocha, *A brazil film kritikai áttekintése* [A Critical Review of Brazilian Film], manuscript, translation at the library of the Hungarian Film Institute) p. 44.

[24]Letter by Roberto Jorge des Guimaraës Bastos, Head of the Passport Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 10 May, 1957, Icsey Papers.

[25]*A latin-amerikai filmművészet antológiája*, p. 118.

[26]Károly Csala: *A "chanchada"-tól a "cinema nôvo"-ig* [From the "Chanchada" to the "Cinema Nôvo"], *Filmvilág*, 1971/3, p. 28.

[27]We know little about Thomas Farkas. Some sources mention him as a local businessman who financed the production of several documentaries. *A latin-amerikai filmművészet antológiája*, p. 147.

[28]"Beszélgetések Glauber Rocha-val" [Discussions with Glauber Rocha] In: *Filmélet*, ed: Antal Lukács (Budapest: Magvető, 1968.) p. 334.

[29]*A latin-amerikai filmművészet antológiája*, p. 127.

[30]*Ibid.*, p. 120.

[31]Unidentified newspaper clipping; review by Sérgio Barreto of the film *Cara de Fogo,* Icsey Papers.

[32]Rocha, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

[33]*Ibid.*, p. 52.

[34]*Ibid.*, pp. 88-89.

[35]Unidentified newspaper clipping, Icsey Papers.

[36]A review from an unidentified issue of the *Diário de São Paulo*, Icsey Papers.

[37]Unidentified newspaper clipping, Icsey Papers.

[38]Unidentified newspaper clipping, Icsey Papers.

Appendix:

THE FILMS OF RUDOLF ICSEY

The following list contains all the titles known to the author, but it cannot be considered a complete list of Rudolf Icsey's work. In certain cases the information is insufficient due to the lack of reliable sources, especially in the case of films shot abroad. In preparing this list I consulted the Icsey Papers deposited at the Hungarian Film Institute; the research of Péter Ábel and Erzsébet Komár; data of the Hungarian Film Institute; the appendix of István Nemeskürty's book, *A képpé varázsolt idő* [Time Conjured into Image] (Budapest, 1984), and the book of Fernão Ramos, *História do Cinema Brasileiro* (São Paulo, 1990).

* * *

Rákóczi-induló [Rákóczi-March] (1933. d: István Székely) — assistant cameraman.

Halali (1943. short; with István Somkuti) — director-cameraman.

Szanyi búcsú [Kermis at Szany] (1934. short; d: Béla Paulini) — director-cameraman.

Vigyázat harapós! [Beware, It Bites!] (1934.? short; d: László Békeffi).

Veszprém (1935. short; with Ferenc Fekete) — director-cameraman.

Café Moszkva [Café Moscow] (1936. d: István Székely) — assistant cameraman.

Ember a híd alatt [Man Under the Bridge] (1936. d: László Vajda) — assistant cameraman.

Pókháló [Cobweb] (1936. d: Mária Balázs).

Szenzáció [Sensation] (1936. d: I.Székely, L.Vajda) — assistant cameraman.

A magyar falu művészete [Art of the Hungarian Village] (1937. short) — director-cameraman.

Észak felé [Towards the North] (1938. doc. d: József Bánáss).

A leányvári boszorkány [The Witch of Leányvár] (1938. d: Viktor Gertler).

Magyar gépipar [Hungarian Machine Industry] (1938. short) — director-cameraman.

Magyar kohászat és gépipar [Hungarian Metallurgy and Machine Industry] (1938. short) — director-cameraman.

A magyar villamosipar [Hungarian Electrical Industry] (1938. short) — director-cameraman.

A papucshős [The Henpecked Husband] (1938. d: János Vaszary).

Pusztai királykisasszony [The Princess of the Puszta] (1938. d: Béla Csepreghy).

Varjú a toronyórán [Crow on the Steeple Clock] (1938. d: Endre Rodriguez).

A Bercsényi-huszárok [The Bercsényi Huszars] (1939. d: Sándor Szlatinay).

Beszélő kövek [Talking Stones] (1939. short; d: László Cserépy).

István Bors (1939. d: Viktor Bánky).

Hölgyek előnyben [Ladies First] (1939. d: Emil Martonffy).

Kelet felé [Towards the East] (1939. doc. d: József Bánáss).

Magyar feltámadás [Hungarian Resurrection] (1939. d: Jenő Csepreghy and Ferenc Kiss).

Mátyás rendet csinál [Mátyás Sets Things in Order] (1939. d: Frigyes Bán).

Nem loptam én életemben [I Have Never Stolen in My Life] (1939. d: Béla Balogh).

Párbaj semmiért [Duel for Nothing] (1939. d: Emil Martonffy).

Pénz áll a házhoz [Money is Forthcoming] (1939. d: Béla Balogh).

Rajkórapszódia [Rajkó Rhapsody] (1939. short; d: Endre Rodriguez).

Szervusz, Péter [Hello, Peter] (1939. d: Sándor Szlatinay).

A tökéletes férfi [The Perfect Man] (1939. d: Sándor Szlatinay).

Az utolsó Wereczkey [The Last Wereczkey] (1939.d: Sándor Szlatinay).

Az eladó birtok [Estate for Sale] (1940. d: Viktor Bánky).

Erdélyi kastély [Castle in Transylvania] (1940. d: Félix Podmaniczky).

Erdélyi szinfónia [Transylvanian Symphony] (1940. short; with József Horváth, Ernő Kiss, László Nagy and Gyula Zsabka).

Erzsébet királyné [Queen Elizabeth] (1940. d: Félix Podmaniczky).

Hét szilvafa [Seven Plum-Trees] (1940. d: Félix Podmaniczky).

Kolozsvártól Zágonig [From Kolozsvár to Zágon] (1940. short; with József Horváth) — director-cameraman.

Magyarország műemlékei [Historic Monuments of Hungary] (1940. short; d: László Cserépy).[1]

München után [After Munich] (1940. doc.) — director-cameraman.

Pénz beszél [Money Talks] (1940. d: Jenő Csepreghy).

Sok hűhó Emmiért [Much Ado About Emmi] (1940. d: Sándor Szlatinay).

Te vagy a dal [You are the Song] (1940. d: Endre Rodriguez).

Zárt tárgyalás [Hearing in Camera] (1940. d: Géza Radványi).

Bakonytól a Balatonig [From the Bakony Hills to Lake Balaton] (1941. short) — director-cameraman.

Csákó és kalap [Shako and Hat] (1941. d: Emil Martonffy).

Európa nem válaszol [Europe Gives No Reply] (1941. d: Géza Radványi).

Édes ellenfél [Sweet Enemy] (1941. d: Emil Martonffy).

Életre ítéltek [Sentenced to Live] (1941. d: Endre Rodriguez).

Film a filmről [Film about Film] (1941. short, d: L. Cserépy) — cameraman, actor.

Honvédek előre! [Hungarian Soldiers, Forward!] (1941. battle-line report; with József Horváth, Ernő Kiss, László Nagy and Gyula Zsabka, d: József Bánáss).

A kegyelmes úr rokona [His Excellency's Relative] (1941. d: Félix Podmaniczky).

Régi keringő [Old Waltz] (1941. r: Viktor Bánky).

A szűz és a gödölye [The Virgin and the Kid] (1941. d: Lajos Zilahy).

Annamária (1942. with Ferenc Fekete; d: D.Ákos Hamza).

Álomkeringő [Dreamwaltz] (1942. d: Félix Podmaniczky).

Bajtársak [Brothers-in-Arms] (1942. d: Ágoston Pacséry).

Dél felé [Towards the South] (1942. doc. with József Horváth) — director-cameraman.

Férfihűség [Male Fidelity] (1942. d: József Daróczy).

Fráter Loránd [Brother Loránd] (1942. d: László Kalmár).

Keresztúton [At the Crossroads] (1942. d: Viktor Bánky).

Szabotázs [Sabotage] (1942. with István Berendik; d: Emil Martonffy).

Szeptember végén [At the End of September] (1942. d: Kálmán Zsabka).

Szép csillag [Beautiful Star] (1942. d: Imre Jellinek).

Szíriusz [Syrius] (1942. d: D. Ákos Hamza).

Boldog idők [Happy Days] (1943. d: Endre Rodriguez).

Egy szoknya, egy nadrág [A Skirt and a Pair of Trousers] (1943. d: D.Ákos Hamza).

Futótűz [Wildfire] (1943. d: Zoltán Farkas).

Machita (1943. d: Endre Rodriguez).

Magyar sasok [Hungarian Eagles] (1943. with József Karbán, Zoltán Kárpáti, Mihály Paulovics, Rudolf Piller; r: István László and Ábris Basilides).

Muki (1943. d: Ákos Ráthonyi).

Nászinduló [Wedding March] (1943. d: Zoltán Farkas).

Orient expressz [Orient Express] (1943. with Ferenc Fekete; d: László Cserépy).

Ragaszkodom a szerelemhez [I Insist on Love] (1943. d: D.Ákos Hamza).

Sárga kaszinó [Yellow Casino] (1943. d: Károly Lajthay).

Sziámi macska [Siamese Cat] (1943. d: László Kalmár).

Szováthy Éva [Éva Szováthy] (1943. d: Ágoston Pacséry).

Egy ember tragédiája [The Tragedy of a Man] (1944. d: Antal Németh).

Egy pofon, egy csók [A Smack and a Kiss] (1944. d: Emil Martonffy).

Éjféli keringő [Midnight Waltz] (1944. d: Sándor Zákonyi).

Fiú vagy lány? [Boy or Girl?] (1944. d: László Kalmár).

A három galamb [The three Doves] (1944. d: Frigyes Bán).

Mesegép [Fairy Tale-Machine] (1944. short; d:?).

Szabadság felé [Towards Liberty] (1944. short; d:?).

Aranyóra [Golden Watch] (1945. d: Ákos Rátonyi).

Az MKP nagy júliusi népgyűlése Szegeden 1945-ben [The Great Convention of the Hungarian Communist Party in Szeged in July 1945] (1945. short, with István Berendik; d: Béla Pásztor).

Kommunisták Budapestért [Communists for Budapest] (1945. d: D.Ákos Hamza).

Szabad május elseje Budapesten [Free May Day in Budapest] (1945. ed. by Viktor Gertler).

Az elhagyott gyermek [The Abandoned Child] (1945. short; d: Pál Kertész).

Mesél a film [The Film Tells a Tale] (1946. d: Lajos Pánczél).

A Szovjetúnió Magyarországért [The Soviet Union for Hungary] (1946. short; with István Berendik, d: Pál Kertész).

Magyar gépipar és kohászat [Hungarian Machhine Industry and Metallurgy] (1947. short; with Károly Seidl, d: Tamás Fejér).

Der Hofrat Geiger [Counsellor Geiger] (1947. with László Szente; d: Wolff Hans).

Das unheilige Haus [The Unholy House] (1948.? d: Sándor Szlatinay).

Der Leberfleck [The Liver-Spot] (1948. d: Rudolf Carl).

Cantoria d'Angeli [D'Angeli Choir] (1949. d: D. Ákos Hamza).[2]

Rapture [Hysterics] (1949. d: Goffredo Alessandrini).

Buffalo Bill a Roma [Buffalo Bill in Rome] (? with László Szente; d: Giuseppe Acatino).

Donna Senza Nome [Nameless Woman] (1950. d: Géza Radványi).[3]

In Estasi [In Extasy] (1950. d: Goffredo Alessandrini).

Quem Matou Anabela? [Who Killed Anabela?] (1955. d: D. Ákos Hamza).

Pensão de Dona Stela [The Boarding-House of Dona Stela] (1956. with Ferenc Fekete, d: Ferenc Fekete and Alfredo Palácios).

Arara Vermelha [Red Macaw] (1957. d: Tom Payne).

Curuçu (1957. d: Kurt Siodmak).

A Dutora é Muito Viva [The Doctoress is Very Passionate] (1957. d: Ferenc Fekete).

Moral em Concordata [Fair Agreement] 1957. d: Fernando de Barros).

Cara de Fogo [Fiery Face] (1958. d: Galileu Garcia).

Casei-me com um Xavante [I Married a Xavante Indian] (1958. d: Alfredo Palácios).

Chofer de Praça [Driver from the Square] (1958. d: Milton Amaral).

Estranho Encontro [Strange Encounter] (1958. d: Walter Hugo Khouri).

Vou Te Contá [I Tell It to You] (1958. d: A. Palácios).

Jeca Tatu (1959. d: M. Amaral).

Aventuras de Pedro Malazartes [Adventures of Unlucky Peter] (1960. d: Amánico Mazzaropi).

O Mistério da Ilha de Vénus [The Mystery of Venus Island] (1960. d: Duglas Fowley).

Na Garganta do Diabo [In the Throat of the Devil] (1960. d: W.H.Khouri).

Zé do Periquito [Parrot Joe] (1961. d: A. Mazzaropi).

Mulheres e Milhões [Women and Millions] (1962. d: Jorge Ileli).

Tristêza do Jeca [Jeca's Sorrow] (1962. d: A. Mazzaropi).

Casinha Pequenina [Small House] (1963. d: Glauco Mirco Laurelli).

A Ilha [The Island] (1963. with George Pffister; d: W.H. Khouri).

O Lamparina (1964. d: G.M. Laurelli).

Noite Vazia [Empty Night] (1964. d: W.H. Khouri).

Meu Japão Brazileiro [My Brazilian Japanese] (1965. d: G.M. Laurelli).

Perto do Coração Selvagem [Close to the Wild Heart] (1965. d: Maurício Rittner).

O Corintiano [Footbal Player from the Corintias] (1966. d: M. Amaral).

O Corpo Ardente [Ardent Body] (1966. d: W.H. Khouri).

Mário Gruber (1966. short; d: Ruben Biáfora).

O Quarto [The Room] (1967. d: R. Biáfora).

Até que o Casamento nos Separe [Until Marriage Separates Us] (1968. d: Flávio Tabellini).

O Jeca e a Freira [Jeca and the Nun] (1968. d: A. Mazzaropi).

Agnaldo, Perigo á Vista [Agnaldo, Dangerous at a Glance] (1969. d: Reinaldo Paes de Barros).

A Compadecida [The Mercyful One] (1969. d: György Jónás).

Pára Pedro [Stop, Pedro] (1969. d: Pereira Dias).

A Arte de Amar Bem [The Art of Beautiful Love] (1970. d: Fernando de Barros).

A Moreninha [The Brown Girl] (1970. d: G.M. Laurelli).

Lua de Mel e Amendoim [Honeymoon with Hazelnut] (1971. d: F.de Barros and Pedro Carlos Rovai).

As Deusas [Goddesses] (1972. d: W.H. Khouri).

Independência ou Morte [Independence or Death] (1972. d: Carlos Coimbra).

Cleo e Daniel (? d: Roberto Freire).

Grita á Meia-Noite [Cry Out at Midnight] (? d: Carlos Szili).

Janjão (? d:?).

O Vendador de Linguiças [The Sausage Vendor] (? d: Alfredo Palácios).

Notes to the Appendix:

[1]According to *Magyar Film*, 25 Feb. 1939, p. 15, the cameraman of this film was Tibor Magyar.

[2]"The film was photographed by Rudolf Icsey, but because of labour permit complications, his assistant got credit for it." *D. Ákos Hamza at the Hungarian Film Institute*, p. 42.

[3]According to a film prospectus, the cameraman was Tibor Pogány.

Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XXI, Nos. 1-2 (Spring-Fall, 1994)

Documents

László Moholy-Nagy and Hungarian-American Politics II

Introduced, edited, and translated (where necessary) by

Oliver A. I. Botar

In the Spring, 1988 issue of the *Hungarian Studies Review*, we published a set of documents and an interview on Moholy-Nagy's political activities in the context of Hungarian-American politics during and immediately after the Second World War, and how these affected his attempts at becoming a naturalized American citizen.[1] These documents demonstrated Moholy-Nagy's concern for his homeland during one of the greatest crises in its history, and showed his attempts to distance himself from his Leftist affiliations when applying for American citizenship.

Based on information which has come to light since 1988, we would like to place the Hungarian-American Council for Democracy (HACD) into its broader context of Hungarian-American political history, and then, based on interviews with and documents provided by George and Barbara Striker, we wish to supplement and correct the information provided by Zita Schwarcz on Moholy-Nagy's role in the HACD. We would also like to deal briefly with Moholy's role in the Hungarians for Roosevelt Committee. Finally, we will publish Moholy-Nagy's correspondence with the U.S. Immigration authorities concerning his attempts to secure American citizenship.

According to a 1942 confidential report of the Foreign Nationalities Branch in the Office of Strategic Services of the American government, the Hungarian American Council for Democracy was a spin-off of the American Federation of Democratic Hungarians (AFDH), and the related New Democratic Hungary (NDH) group, founded in New York in 1942.[2] Though some members of the AFDH had been "insistently advocating the admission to [the United States] of Count Michael Karolyi," a group of Chicago Hungarians, including Moholy-Nagy, Dr. Alex Vince and Dr. Hugo Rony (not Tibor Ronyi, as reported in the 1988 publication)[3] quit the Federation on the grounds that it had "not supported Karolyi with sufficient energy. These Chicagoans [then] engaged in

gathering ten thousand signatures which they plan[ned] to present to the Department of State to bolster their plea that Karolyi be granted a visa."[4] While Károlyi did not end up coming to the United States, by 1943 the Chicagoans had founded the HACD, with the Count as its honourary president, and the Hungarian-American actor Béla Lugosi as its regular president.[5] This was the organization, the leadership of whose important Chicago Chapter Moholy-Nagy took on.

Of the other active members of the HACD, as Zita Schwarcz has said, George and Barbara Striker were the most important. Some of the gaps and inaccuracies of the introduction to the 1988 publication in the *Hungarian Studies Review* can now be filled in on the basis of two interviews with George and Barbara Striker.[6] A first cousin of the Nobel Prize winning Toronto chemist John Polanyi, György (George) Otto Striker was born in Vienna in 1913, and grew up in Budapest, where he died in 1992. George was an electronic physicist, and Barbara a chemist. They emigrated to the United States in 1938, where George worked for the Zenith Corporation, and Barbara for Lady Esther Cosmetics and later Revere Copper and Bronze. George Striker became involved with Hungarian-American politics during the war, at which time he brought his Leftist convictions and patriotism to bear on his activities. They returned to Hungary at the invitation of the Orion Radio company of Budapest in 1948, and no doubt their Communist sympathies aided them in making this choice which, despite George Striker's political troubles during the early 1950s, they seem not to have regretted.

The Strikers made the following remarks concerning the interview with Zita Schwarcz: Barbara Striker feels that the HACD did not support Károlyi to the extent suggested by Sibyl Moholy-Nagy in her husband's biography.[7] According to the Strikers, in her interview, Zita Schwarcz conflated two different banquets. The banquet Schwarcz most exactly described was that held on February 2, 1947, on the occasion of the first anniversary of the declaration of the Hungarian Republic.[8] Rusztem Vámbéry had been invited in his capacity as Hungary's ambassador to the United States, but he could not attend, so Iván Nagy, First Secretary of the Hungarian Embassy in Washington was sent in his stead. Moholy-Nagy's carpenter friend, who also took part in the HACD, was Kálmán Tomanicka (or Tomaniczka; both spellings are used, but not "Tomolicka", as Zita Schwarcz remembered it). The name was usually shortened to Kalman Toman, as Sibyl Moholy-Nagy reported in her biography of her husband.[9] Tomanicka's wife Katica was also, as were the Strikers and Schwarcz, involved with the broadly-based "American Hungarian Relief" organization, which tried to aid Hungarians in the hardships experienced during the post-war era. Another member of both the AHR and HACD was Béla Ruhig,[10] wrongly spelled "Ruik" in the interview with Zita Schwarcz. László Moholy-Nagy himself, while not active in the AHR, donated the then generous sum of $50 to its operations.[11] He sent the following note with his donation to the AHR: (See Fig. 1) "My Hungarian brothers and sisters, I am with you, I feel with you — continue the big job

with enthusiasm, tirelessly, to aid those suffering in the homeland. I attach a cheque for $50 — a little drop in a big ocean."

The other banquet, which, according to the Strikers, Schwarcz conflated with the 1947 one, was the memorial banquet for Moholy-Nagy, held on December 2, 1946 in the Walnut Room of the Midland Hotel on West Adams Street in Chicago. As the program shows, it was at this banquet that György Kepes may have recited the poetry of Sándor Petőfi and Endre Ady.[12] The Strikers dispute Zita Schwarcz's memory that Moholy-Nagy would have resigned from the HACD, but Schwarcz's view is supported by Moholy-Nagy's own letter to Assistant Secretary of State William Benton of February 14, 1946, published in full in the 1988 selection of documents in the *HSR*,[13] and by Moholy-Nagy's letter of January 17, 1946 to Garrott R. Foley, in which he states: "When Hungary had been liberated and Count Karolyi had been asked by the Russian Government to return to Hungary, I saw my mission fulfilled and I resigned from the Hungarian Democratic Council on May 23, 1945." (See the full text of the letter below.)

Despite his statement to the contrary in the Foley letter, however, Moholy-Nagy's political activism extended beyond his involvement in the HACD. Towards the end of the war, during the fall of 1944, with presidential elections looming, the Leftist and liberal segments of the American Hungarian community organized to aid in the re-election of the president. A "Hungarians for Roosevelt Committee" was formed in Los Angeles, and Moholy-Nagy took on the Chairmanship of its Illinois (or Chicago) chapter, the "American-Hungarian Roosevelt Committee." How strongly Moholy-Nagy felt about the importance of Roosevelt's re-election is evident in the passionate text (republished below) he wrote on the subject, which was published in the *Magyarok Rooseveltért* [Hungarians for Roosevelt] brochure, edited by Mathew Torok and published by the "Hungarians for Roosevelt Committee" in Los Angeles.[14] This booklet contains texts supporting Roosevelt by a selection of prominent American-Hungarians including Moholy-Nagy, the screenwriter and dramatist Melchior (Menyhért) Lengyel, Rusztem Vámbéry, artists Henrik Major and Marcel Vertès, actor Béla Lugosi and director Michael Curtiz. After his successful re-election, the unexpected death of Roosevelt on April 12, 1945 must have come as a blow to the members of the Chicago chapter of the AHRC, and a year after this, on April 12, 1946, they organized a first anniversary memorial celebration for Roosevelt at the Midland Hotel in Chicago, where the memorial celebration for Moholy-Nagy himself would later take place.[15] Shortly before Roosevelt's death, on March 11, 1945, Moholy-Nagy also took it upon himself to be the keynote speaker at a (politically) broadly-based celebration of the 1848 Hungarian War of Independence.[16]

In the 1988 Spring issue of the *Hungarian Studies Review*, we reported the "Moholy Nagy László Segélyalap" [László Moholy-Nagy Aid Fund] referred to in the advertisement for the memorial service held for Moholy-Nagy on 27 November, 1946 as having been published in the Newsletter of the Chicago

Chapter of the HACD of 25 November 1946.[17] But the single-page flyer on which this advertisement was printed, is in fact not a copy of an HACD Newsletter (the only issue of which appeared September 3, 1945),[18] though it was published by the HACD. The László Moholy-Nagy Aid Fund remains something of a mystery, for the Strikers do not remember administering such a fund, though they do remember that the fund "to the aid of orphans in Hungary" (the alternative charity mourners of Moholy-Nagy were asked to donate to in the flyer), was begun by then Hungarian Prime Minister Zoltán Tildy, and run by Mrs. Tildy. The Strikers think it possible that the László Moholy-Nagy Aid Fund was organized by Sibyl Moholy-Nagy or Moholy-Nagy's artist friends in Chicago, to aid destitute Hungarian artists. To date, however, no documents concerning such a fund have come to light among Sibyl's papers.[19]

In the Spring 1988 special issue of the *Hungarian Studies Review*, we published the correspondence between Moholy-Nagy and Assistant Secretary of State William Benton, concerning Moholy-Nagy's attempts at becoming an American citizen. Since that time, the correspondence which preceded this of 1945 and January 1946 has come to light, and we publish this material here for the first time. While repeating some elements of the letter to Benton, these letters do offer us new information on Moholy-Nagy's work, his struggle to gain American citizenship, and his attempt to de-emphasize his past political affiliations. His efforts finally did meet with success, and he received his "Certificate of Naturalization" on April 10, 1946, after what seems to have been William Benton's intervention.[20]

NOTES

[1]Oliver Botar, ed., "Documents on László Moholy-Nagy," *Hungarian Studies Review* 15, no. 1 (Spring 1988), pp. 77-87.

[2]Author unknown, "Memorandum: Hungarian Politics in the United States" (1942), pp. 96-100 in Nandor F. Dreisziger with Andrew Ludanyi, eds., *Hungarian Studies Review*, Special Issue: "Oscar Jaszi: Visionary, Reformer, and Political Activist" (17, nos. 1-2, Spring-Fall 1991).

[3]Botar, ed., "Documents...", p. 80. In "Memorandum: Hungarian Politics..." his name is spelled "Hugo Roni," p. 99, and according to the American Medical Association's Chicago Office, he was known as Hugo R. Rony. (The latter information is courtesy of Hattula Moholy-Nagy.)

[4]"Memorandum: Hungarian Politics...", p. 99.

[5]Botar, ed., "Documents...", p. 79. See also "Deklaráció a Magyar Amerikai Demokratikus Tanács politikai irányelveiről" (Chicago, 1943 June 17), item 2 on the list of the Striker Donation to the former Párttörténeti Intézet [Institute of Party History], Budapest, prepared by George and Barbara Striker, November 5, 1986. Xerox courtesy of Hattula Moholy-Nagy. This material was formerly in the Striker donation of the Párttörténeti Intézet, inv. No. 687 f. 17 b.

[6]One of the interviews was carried out by Hattula Moholy-Nagy, the artist's daughter, on July 2, 1989, and the other by Oliver Botar on January 28, 1990, both in the Strikers' Budapest home, in the presence of Levente Nagy, the artist's nephew. George Striker has since passed away.

[7]Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Experiment in Totality*, Second Edition (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1969), 237-239. The indications of the documents available to us (e.g. the letter of Moholy-Nagy to Garrott R. Foley published below, and the "Memorandum: Hungarian Politics...") support Sibyl Moholy-Nagy's claim, however.

[8]"Az A.M.D.T. chicágoi csop. felhivásai a Magyar Köztársaság egy éves évfordulójára (Népünnepély és bankett, 1947 feb. 2)", item 26 on the list of the Striker donation to the Párttörténeti Intézet.

[9]Botar, ed. "Documents..." p. 79, note 2 and p. 80. Also Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Experiment...*, 237-239.

[10]On the AHR, letterhead of the AHR, from the collection of George and Barbara Striker, provided courtesy of Hattula Moholy-Nagy.

[11]Letter from László Moholy-Nagy to the AHR, October 18, 1945. In Hungarian. George Striker material in the archives of the Hungarian National Gallery, Inv. no. 21, 328/1981.

[12]Flyer published by the Chicago Chapter of the HACD. From the George Striker collection, courtesy of Hattula Moholy-Nagy.

[13]"As soon as the war ended I terminated my connections with the Democratic American-Hungarian Council. (sic)" Botar, ed., "Documents..." p. 82.

[14]It is undated, but presumably from sometime before the November 7, 1944 elections and after the one dated letter of support published in the brochure, that of Louis Weinstock of the Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers of America, of September 11, 1944. (Courtesy of Levente Nagy and Hattula Moholy-Nagy)

[15]Invitation to the event, courtesy of Hattula Moholy-Nagy. Another related document, the "Kiáltvány Chicágo és Környéke Magyarságához!" [Manifesto to the Hungarians of Chicago and its Environs!], an undated flyer of the Illinois Chapter of the AHRC, was provided courtesy of Zita Schwarcz. This flyer was mistakenly dated to 1946 on p. 79, note 4 of Botar, "Documents..." It can now be established that it is from 1944.

[16]"Közös márciusi szabadságünnep, műsoros est 1945 III.11.-én, főszónok: Moholy-Nagy László", item 6 on the list of the Striker donation to the Párttörténeti Intézet.

[17]Botar, ed., "Documents..." pp. 78, 83.

[18]According to George and Barbara Striker.

[19]Information from Hattula Moholy-Nagy.

[20]Certificate of Naturalization no. 6309540, in the possession of Hattula Moholy-Nagy. See the telegram William Benton sent to Moholy-Nagy on April 20, 1946 wherein he writes: "If I've been of small help — I'm most happy." (Botar, ed., "Documents...", p. 83.

Documents:

a. From the brochure *Magyarok Rooseveltért* [Hungarians for Roosevelt] Mathew Torok, editor. (Los Angeles: Hungarians for Roosevelt Committee, n.d. [1944]) (Original in Hungarian)

Why Every Hungarian-American Should Vote for Roosevelt

The Opinions of Well-Known Hungarians.

The two thousand miles of ocean which separates America from Europe has in many respects acted as a barrier to the mutual understanding of the two continents. Roosevelt has demonstrated a deep and thorough comprehension of the European events. At a time when "isolationism" was not a dirty word, but the prevalent attitude, it took bravery on Roosevelt's part to openly oppose all forms and manifestations of dictatorship, and to warn the American people, that it will be exposed to attack, and that it may even loose in such a struggle, if it does not prepare itself.

When the war happened, his behaviour was characterized by an impulse to gather together, in his government, or as advisors, the most talented men. Among his workmates there were Christians as well as Jews, those born abroad, just as much as there were New England aristocrats. His complete lack of prejudice made him the friend of all true democrats, and it reduced the danger of a sterile fixation on tradition in the public service.

As in any occupation, in politics also, practice makes perfect. One has only to listen to one of Roosevelt's speeches to understand the extent to which his many years of public service have sharpened his psychological understanding of the masses and his ability to comprehend the complex behaviours of the representatives of foreign governments. Following victory in the war, America will become the centre of world reconstruction, even if only because of the sheer forces of circumstance. As we well know, economic power lends power to the political system as well, and so America will become a crucial factor in the bulk of political decision making.

It would not be wise to assign such a decisive voice at the upcoming conferences to a person who has little or no international experience. Stalin, Churchill and Chiang K'ai-Shek are not new men in world politics, and we must appoint a person on a level equal to theirs.

Roosevelt is far-sighted, wise and brave. Roosevelt is the choice of the people.

László Moholy-Nagy / architect, chairman of the Chicagoan American Hungarian Roosevelt Committee (*sic*)

***

b. (Joseph Edelman of Abbell Edelman Portes and Abbell, Attorneys and Counsellors, Chicago to László Moholy-Nagy)

March 23, 1945

Mr. László Moholy-Nagy
2622 Lake View Avenue
Chicago 14, Illinois

Dear Mr. Moholy-Nagy:

Since your telephone communication of last week I have conferred with several members of the staff of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. I was informed, after considerable insistence, that your matter is still under investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, commonly referred to as the F.B.I. The Naturalization Service is not permitted to invade the territory of the F.B.I., nor, for that matter, is it permitted to inform any one that an investigation is in process there. Moreover, they have no jurisdiction to urge the F.B.I. that the investigation be expedited. These details were conveyed to me by the several men with whom I spoke.

I expressed some irritation at the unfairness of the procedure, and indicated that your record and background were certainly beyond reproach. Moreover, I pointed out that to my knowledge a considerable number of aliens of Hungarian nationality had secured naturalization certificates, in periods varying from six months to a year and a half, and that the delay in your case was inexcusable since your pro-democratic support of our country and the tenets of our Constitution is unquestionable.

I was assured that despite the reluctance of the Department, the F.B.I. would be contacted at once and urged to complete their investigation. I shall hold in abeyance any further contact with them until April 15th, at which time I hope that some report will be forthcoming. Meanwhile, I can assure you that everything is being done to bring the matter to a proper conclusion.

With all kind wishes, I am

Yours very sincerely,

Joseph Edelman

JE:DS

***

c. (László Moholy-Nagy to Andrew Jordan)

November 12, 1945

Mr. Andrew Jordan
District Director
U.S. Department of Justice
Immigration and Naturalization Service
Post Office Building
Chicago 7, Illinois

Re: 730-P-271929
730-P278661

Dear Sir:

On July 27 of this year I was granted a hearing concerning my petition for naturalization. On September 11 you informed Mrs. Emily Taft-Douglas, Congresswoman from Illinois, that an investigation of my support of the Hungarian Democratic Council was still pending. This was two months ago. Altogether my application has now been pending for three and one half years, and my residency in the United States is going into its ninth year.

In this period I have established myself as a painter and designer and I have built up an art school, Institute of Design, a non-profit corporation, at 1009 North State Street, Chicago which has attracted and trained more than 2000 students. Large numbers of returning veterans have enroled this fall, and we have been found worthy of the support of the Rockefeller and Carnegie Foundations. The Board of Directors, listed on the back cover of the enclosed catalogue, comprises top-ranking names of American Commerce and Industry.

I have worked as art advisor and designer for firms like Spiegel Inc., United States Gypsum, and the Parker Pen Company. During these years I was asked by most of the important colleges and universities to lecture and contribute to their publications. This winter two books of mine on arts and education: "The New Vision" and "Vision in Motion" will be published.

All in all I tried to do my best as a loyal and useful citizen, and I feel most bewildered and deeply hurt by the treatment meted out to me by the Immigration and Naturalization service. From time to time I have heard wild rumors of slanderous accusations brought against me, but not once was I give a chance to answer them as a man. The hearing granted me in July was a quick-fire succession of questions concerning the past and present history of Hungary of which I have no detailed knowledge since I left that country twenty-five years ago. It is my deep conviction that what I did for the Hungarian Democratic Council (*sic*) was in the interest of the Allied cause for the

shortening of the war. But this was treated ironically by the investigator. I was given to understand that my support of a democratic movement in Hungary was either too naive or too subversive to be credible. I may tell you, Sir, that I left this hearing deeply depressed, and with a feeling of frustration about the apparent inability of a civil servant to understand the motives of an artist and educator for freedom, democracy and peace.

After running around in a circle I feel that the only thing to do now is to have a meeting with you as head of the Chicago office and to clarify the whole matter in a personal talk. I am looking forward to a communication when I can see you.

Yours very truly,

L. Moholy-Nagy

mn/sp

1 encl.
cc Mrs. Emily Taft-Douglas

***

d. (László Moholy-Nagy to Emily Taft-Douglas)

November 12, 1945

The Hon. Mrs. Emily-Taft-Douglas (sic)
House of Representatives
Washington D.C.

Dear Mrs. Douglas:

It is not easy for me to bother you again with our naturalization procedures. I only do it because I feel that my work as an educator, and the steadily rising number of students in the Institute of Design make it imperative that I be given the legal and moral protection of citizenship.

In an attempt to break the deadlock I have sent today a letter to Mr. Andrew Jordan, District Director of the immigration and naturalization service in Chicago, of which I am enclosing a copy. There is not much I can add to this letter except that the rumors I am referring to are wild stories about me driving an armored train during the Bela Kuhn uprising (sic), throwing bombs at non-communist Hungarians. This of course is most ridiculous. I took no part whatsoever in the Hungarian revolution, and I have never been a member of any political party.

My very dear friend, Walter Gropius, now Chairman of the Graduate School of Design at Harvard, encountered a similar delay, founded on some similarly gross misstatements concerning his political connections. In this case it was possible for a Senator from Massachusetts to get to the root of the trouble and to straighten out things.

I do not know whether a similar procedure would be possible in my case, and I do not want to take any steps without being advised by you. I have to get from under this absurd cloud, and feel myself a citizen, free to do his chosen task to the best of his abilities.

If your work is too heavy to permit an additional burden, please let me know. But if there are any further steps you can suggest, or persons you may be able to interest in my "case" which would lead to a quick liquidation I would be most grateful.

With kindest regards, yours very sincerely

László Moholy-Nagy

***

e. (László Moholy-Nagy to Garrott R. Foley)

January 17, 1946

Mr. Garrott R. Foley
Foley, Alabama

Dear Mr. Foley:

Your brother Bert was kind enough to call me up a week ago to inform me that he had mentioned our difficulties with the Immigration Authorities to you, and to tell us that you had shown some interest in the case. He suggested that it might be possible for you to gain perhaps the interest of Senator Lister Hill for us, and it is with this hope that I give you a few details of this unpleasant and thoroughly puzzling affair.

In June 1937 while working as art director for Imperial Airways and other large firms in London I was asked to come to this country to head a progressive art school, founded by The association (*sic*) of Arts and Industries in Chicago. I was offered a five years (*sic*) contract and settled with my family in Chicago. After financial difficulties of the Association which led to liquidation of their school I continued with a school of my own which was incorporated as Institute of Design. Its location is 1009 North State Street, Chicago. Walter P. Paepcke, President of the Container Corporation of America is chairman of the board and the names of the directors, which you will find listed in the enclosed school catalogue are well know in American industry and commerce.

The Rockefeller and Carnegie Foundations have granted us repeatedly financial help. The Veteran Administration has recognized the Institute under the so-called G.I. Bill and the Department of Public Instruction and the State Examining Board acknowledge cr[e]dit given for work in our school.

I was asked to sit on the board of the Mayor's Committee for Civilian Defense as a camouflage expert; I have lectured at most of the large universities and colleges in the Unites States and my articles have been published in many journals. I have been doing and still do art work for such firms as The Parker Pen Co., United States Gypsum, Spiegel Inc. and others, and I have published books, two of which: The New Vision and Vision in Motion are scheduled for the next months.

My paintings hang in many United States museums and private collections and the Cincinnati Modern Art Society of Cincinnati will open a large retrospective exhibition of my work in the Museum in February. All in all I feel I have done my best to contribute with my efforts to American art, industry and education.

On May 29, 1942 I filed my application for naturalization, and my wife filed hers 5 months later since she and the children had come a little later to the United States. Our filing numbers are:
L. Moholy-Nagy: 730P-271929
S. Moholy-Nagy 730P-2786610 (listed under Dorothy Pauline Moholy-Nagy)

I never expected any objection to my intention of becoming a citizen of a country, which, I felt, had given me such rich opportunities to serve its culture. But I was never called up to take the final oath and after long inquiries I found out that it was my membership with the Hungarian Democratic Council (*sic*) which was considered an obstacle to my naturalization.

This Hungarian Democratic Council worked for two purposes: it supported Count Michael Karolyi in London as a potential leader of a liberated and thoroughly liberalized Hungary, and it spread democratic information and better understanding of Allied war aims among the Hungarian-born population. When I was asked to become chairman of this group in Chicago I accepted in spite of my heavy commitments because I saw a chance to win my new country more loyal citizens. It never occurred to me that my intentions could be so dangerously misinterpreted. When Hungary had been liberated and Count Karolyi had been asked by the Russian Government to return to Hungary, I saw my mission fulfilled and I resigned from the Hungarian Democratic Council on May 23, 1945.

This connection with the Chicago Hungarians has been the only political affiliation I have ever had in my life, and I was most unpleasantly surprised when at a hearing on July 27, 1945 I was grilled by a young man half my age as if I were a subversive agitator.

Since then I have been once received by the judge and the district director of the local Immigration and Naturalization Service but I have been given nothing but vague

assurances that my matter would be soon decided. The names of the gentlemen in charge were Judge Lenke and District Director Jordan.

I have been in this country for almost nine years in which I have worked untiringly and unsparingly. My children grow (*sic*) up to be Americans. The present state of indecision and vague accusation is most humiliating and bewildering.

With kindest regards and an assurance of our gratitude for your attention, I am

Yours very sincerely

L. Moholy-Nagy

***

(The letters are published through the courtesy of Hattula Moholy-Nagy)

Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XXI, Nos. 1-2 (Spring-Fall, 1994)

Four Poems of 1918 by László Moholy-Nagy

Introduced and Translated by Oliver A. I. Botar

The poems by Moholy-Nagy printed below appeared in *Jelenkor* [The Present Age], the literary and cultural journal which Moholy-Nagy assisted his friend Iván Hevesy in editing in 1917 and 1918. They appear here in English translation for the first time, with the permission of Hattula Moholy-Nagy.

The year 1918 was a period of crisis and transition for Moholy-Nagy. After having been injured on the Galician front of the Great War the previous year, the young reserve officer spent much of his time in Budapest, Székesfehérvár and Szeged, now in the barracks, now on leave with family or friends, trying to complete his legal studies. In his spare time he continued the practice of his pre-war youth, writing poems and short stories, though he had traded in Sándor Petőfi and János Arany for Mihály Babits and Endre Ady as his literary models. As a public marker of his mature artistic persona in formation, he replaced the mundane (and assumed) name "Nagy" with "Moholy Nagy" around March of 1918.[1] Moholy sent poems to his literary mentor Babits for approval, with what results, we do not know.[2] Though he did not like them much, Hevesy agreed to their publication in *Jelenkor*.[3] We have no further information on their contemporary reception, but due to their derivative style and their sometimes awkward grammar and syntax, it was likely not enthusiastic.

Like many young poets of the time Moholy was imitating the style and themes of Ady: the obsessive, self-consciously "decadent" sensuality of poems such as "The Victorious Neck" and "Together all Day, and now Homebound Alone" reflect the young Moholy's fascination with the pre-war poetry of the great Hungarian Symbolist poet, while also reflecting his own sexual experiences of the time in brothels and through love affairs.[4] While engaging in this — by 1918 — out-of-date mode of writing, the young poet also updated it in original ways. One cannot help but remark on the insistent visuality of "The Victorious Neck," its fascination with surface pattern and colour, which prefigures his later concern with *Faktur* (surface effects of material) in painting and photography. In "Like a Telegraph Wire Transmitting Strange Secrets," Moholy's preoccupation with communication technologies is already evident. He employed an unusual technological metaphor, making sophisticated usage of the principles of alternating current within the metaphorical complex and punning wittily on the words *milliom* [million] and "milliohm," topics he would have been informed of through Charles R. Gibson's *Electricity Today*, a copy of which he received as an

academic award in high school.[5] In his most political and thematically avant-garde poem "Together all Day...," Moholy employs the Expressionist trope of the modern metropolis as nightmare, as monstrous organism (in this case the poet's own body), so eloquently expressed in 1895 by Émile Verhaeren in his poem "Villes tentaculaires,"[6] and powerfully restated by the Activist painter János Schádl in *The City and Aurél Bernáth* (also known as *The City*) of 1919.[7] The onomatopoeia of "Forest. May. War." displays Moholy's fascination with non-musical sound as a potential creative medium, an idea which he explored in articles published in 1922 and 1923.[8]

Moholy also wrote erudite criticism for *Jelenkor*,[9] which reflected his wide knowledge of Hungarian and European literature, and spoke well of his excellent education. But unlike Hevesy, Moholy's perhaps ambivalent ambition to be accepted by Kassák and the avant-garde *Ma*-circle, and despite the publication of "Together all Day..." in the last, September edition of *Jelenkor*, this effort was only partially successful; none of his texts appeared in *Ma* while it was published in Budapest.[10] The latest evidence we have of Moholy's literary ambitions is a post-card sent to Babits late in 1918 in which he relates his plan to become a journalist, since making a living from painting proved impossible.[11]

As indicated by this postcard, however, Moholy's principal aspiration by the end of the year was to be a visual artist. Finishing with the long series of sketches on military postcards he had begun after being drafted into the army in 1915, Moholy began the production of more ambitious works: dark, Expressionist landscapes of barbed-wire and rolling hills, and probing portraits carried out under the spell of Oskar Kokoschka, Lajos Tihanyi, Béla Uitz and Róbert Berény, the latter whose evening art classes he attended in 1918. Late in the year he began to exhibit publicly, and to paint landscapes and townscapes on cardboard in deep, glowing colours.[12] He gave his *Hills of Buda* as a gift to the idol whom he succeeded in befriending during his last days, Endre Ady. Moholy's brother Jenő remembered that late in 1918 and early in 1919, the young László was a regular visitor at Ady's Pest apartment,[13] and the poet's death on 27 January 1919 must have dealt Moholy a serious blow, marking perhaps, the final demise of his own literary ambitions. As if to underline the new preeminence of his will to become an artist, Moholy went to Csinszka, Ady's widow, and repossessed *Hills of Buda*.[14]

While Moholy continued his engagement with serious literature throughout his career[15] — and he became particularly enamoured with James Joyce[16] — he now devoted himself almost exclusively to producing works in visual media, and was condemned to mostly speaking and writing art theory in German and English, languages for which he had limited spoken aptitude. His accents in his adopted languages were legendary, as were his turns of phrase.[17] Because of this lack of proficiency, the relatively sophisticated style of his late Hungarian poems, and their rich and variegated onomatopoeia and imagery were not incorporated into his later texts, though the sensuality of the poems resound in both the content and style of his photographs, his fascination with the metropolis

reappears in his films, and his communion with nature suffuses his entire oeuvre, though it is present with particular power in his late work. Moholy's love of the Hungarian language is evident particularly towards the end of his life, when, while dying of cancer, he sought out the company of his handyman Kálmán Tomanicka and of Hungarian doctors in order to be able to speak it. By Sibyl Moholy-Nagy's account, the artist's final words were both poetic and in his native language: "aludni, aludni."[18]

I would argue that rather than being mere late Symbolist juvenalia, these poems, though adolescent and "amateurish," function synechdochally with respect to the oeuvre as a whole. They perform his exploitation of communication technologies for creative purposes; his old-fashioned attitudes towards women; his passionate sensuality; his related love of and play with surface, colour, texture and light; his liberal attitude towards the economy of ideas, his pacifism; and his feeling for and with nature, what I term his "biocentrism." Regarded this way, these poems counter the generally accepted view of Moholy as a merely "rational" and "formalist" Modernist "technician-artist." They help redefine him as the sensuous Modernist "Bioromantic" I see him as having been.

Poem no. 1.

Idegen titkok sürgönydrótjaként[19]

Hogy fáj, hogy rémiszt kedvesem!

Fáj ezer arca, milliom alakja,
Hogy mindig más, de soha sincs bizonyság:
Nekem változik, vagy másnak üzenget,
Hogy engem csókol, vagy rajtam sikong át
Záporló, tűzzel újabb kedveséhez.

Drótjául élek idegen titkoknak,
Hogy rajtam át fusson minden üzenet!
Szerencsétlen fonál, remegve, búgva
Hordozom búmat és minden percemet
Vegyülve buja vágyai tüzével.

De mégis! bennem vágtat áramával,
Engem villámoz rejtélyes hatalma,
Hogy holttá sújtom, ki mohón, meztelen
Villamos kéjt vár s szerelmet hadarva
Akarja kedvesem csókját fölinni.

Like a Telegraph Wire Transmitting Strange Secrets

How my lover pains and scares me!

Her thousand faces pain me, her million[20] forms,
Always different, but there's never certainty[21]
That she alters for me, or signals another,
That she kisses me, or through me rushes,
Spitting fire, to her new lover.

I live as a wire conveying strange secrets,
That all transmissions might run through me!
I carry my pain like some miserable line,
pulsing, humming; my every moment
alternating with the fire of her lust.

But yet! It's through me her charge courses,
Its me her secret power electrifies,
That I might strike him dead, who eagerly
Awaiting raw lightening lust, mumbling his love,
Yearns to lap my lover's kisses up.

Poem no. 2.

A diadalmas nyak[22]

Avas szokás, hogy fáj a szívem.
Pedig be jó a kínban kéjelegni!
A jégbepólyált akarás elaludt
Az a leány ívelt nyakkal tovább él
S nem fúl meg görcsös ujjaim közt.

Én azt akartam, hogy márvány-sétány
Legyen nyaka szegény, feszült ujjamnak
De ujjaim lágy egységgé úgy fonódott,
Hogy reszketőn ír verseket neki.
És büszke, átkos villogó nyaka
A megkergült, kuszált erekkel,
Amelyek kéjes izgalomban
Kéken s pirosan
Rohannak össze-vissza rajta,
Mint ezerágú és rángó polip,

A nyaka — szörnyűség! fehéren,
Épen tündöklik s úgy csókoltatja
Magát az éhes és dülledt szemekkel
Hogy én megőrülök.

The Victorious Neck

A rancid habit, this ache in my heart is.
But ach, it's good to take pleasure in pain!
The desire, now swathed in ice, lies asleep
That girl lives on with her arched neck
Unstrangled by my spasmic fingers.

I wished that her neck might be a
Marbled walk for my wretched, twitching fingers
But they weave themselves into pliant integrality
So that, trembling, they write her poems.
And her proud, cursed, gleaming neck
With its mazed and tangled veins
Which in sensuous excitation
Criss-cross its surface
Blue and red,
Like some tentacular, writhing squid
Her neck — oh horror! stands resplendent,
White and unscathed, and invites
The kisses of hungry, bulging eyes
So that I'll go insane.

Poem no. 3.

Erdő. Május. Háború.[23]

A gőgös május szentséges szerelme
Zizegve, zsongva nő a szívbe.
Az erdő rázza büszke koronáját
S a zsenge falevél sugdos remegve.
Méhecske döng az ablakívbe.
A fűszál finom, hajladó, reng.
Egérke kúsz a napsütésbe.
Az ég kegyeskék s oly szelíd
Hogy fáj a szív.

Kint háború. Itt tompán szól döreje.
Madár csörög s a lenge élet
Ezer hullámos színe, hangja kél itt.
A fecske száll, a villásfarkú fecske!
Az árnyék lila selyme széled.
Csorgó arany a rigó füttye
Mézet csapol a redves kéreg
És termőn, boldogan hasad
A gyenge mag.

A felhő, életem csodás növénye,
Kék habban úszik s úgy virágoz
Vékony szirommal nyílva fönt magassan,
Mint lányka-álom bársony-köntösébe.
Fenyő omol üres csigához,
A csiga árva léttel fénylik.
Egy hangya sürög, csöpp morzsát hoz —
Elejti, húzza... meg-megáll...
Kis lepke száll:

A szárnya kék és csillog, mint a gyémánt.
Csak száll, suhan. Be szép, be pompás!
A nagy világon csönd, szorongás rezdül,
Mélyen reszketve tör a könnyű fény át.
A nap tűnik. Hideg borzongás
Hulláma csap nyakamba mélyen.
Komoran fest a csiga-csontváz.
Testembe-főmbe, ah, vigyázz!
Már ég a láz.

Forest. May. War.

The sanctified love of haughty May
Humming, droning, grows into the heart.
The forest shakes its proud crown
A tender leaf whispers trembling.
A little bee buzzes in the window arch.
The fine, pliant grass blade quivers.
A little mouse scurries in the sun.
The benign-blue sky's so placid
It pains the heart.

Out there — war. Here its thunder dully thuds.
A bird chirps and the myriad sounds and
Fleeting hues of gossamer life rise.
The swallow flies, the fork-tailed swallow!
The shadow's violet silk spreads out.
A thrush's whistling like gurgling gold
Honey flows from the rotten rind
And the delicate seed bursts
Fruitful and happy.

Clouds, those marvellous plants of my life,
Float in blue froth and flower
Their wispy petals on high,
As if on a velvet gown of some maiden's dream.
Pine flows through an empty snail's shell,
The snail glimmers in its orphan state.
An ant bustles, it brings a crumb —
It drops it, pulls it... stops now and then...
A butterfly ascends:

Its azure wings sparkle like diamonds.
It flies, glides. How lovely, how splendid!
Silence in the wide world, fear vibrates.
A thin light breaks through — deep shivers.
Sun's gone. A frigid wave, a shudder
Courses deep into my neck.
The snail's shell: a skeleton lantern.
My body, my head — oh how they churn!
In them these fevers burn.

Poem no. 4.

Egész nap együtt s most egyedül haza[24]

A Vérmező, a tágas Vérmező milliom füszála, tavasza kísért megint.
Az ég sűrű, nehéz. Mindjárt rámszakad! megfulladok!
Szemem duzzad, fülem nagyobb, a testem méretlenre nő.
És megdagadt testembe ronda utca harsog.
S a sivító mozdony lüktet fejemben és a füstös állomás
És röpít a súlyos szél, vad orkán hullámzó fákon átröpít
Hogy új ország és új ész boltosodjék belém.

Mert meg kell őrülni e tikkadt sivatagban.
A déli Rózsadomb lármás szerelmében,
Az esti mozi elterpedt kéjében,
Ahogy a langy délutánnal keveredik most.
És nyúlós, ragadós massza tömi el a szám, orrom és fülem
S már ízlelni sem tudok! mindent kiszítt belőlem az el-nem-csókolt,
agyamban lassan érő, parázna csók,
Hogy ruhám le kell szaggassam magamról, mert hozzáért
és combja rángatózva verdeste szövetét.

A cél, a cél, a cél rángatózzék és verdesse agyam,
Mint húsos női comb,
Mert esztelen szerelem árján vágtatok és nincsen hullám és száguldó torlat,
Mely önerejéből fölborítaná feltarthatatlan végzetem, az örök,
delíriumos, nyomorult táncolást.

Together all day, and now homebound alone

The countless grasses on the Vérmező,[25] spring in the wide
Vérmező, haunts me again,
The sky is thick, heavy. It's about to fall! I'll suffocate!
My eyes swell, my ears enlarge, my body grows infinite.
And a foul street courses through my swollen body.
And a screeching engine throbs in my head, and a smoky station;
And a heavy wind blows, a wild hurricane surges through trees
That a new land and a new mind might arch into me.

For one must go mad in this arid desert.
Amidst the loud loving on the south slope of Rózsadomb,[26]
The languid pleasure of the early evening movie,
As it blends now with this sultry afternoon.
And a sticky, viscous paste fills my mouth, nose and ears
And my tastebuds fail! This unconsummated, lascivious kiss
ripening in my brain has sucked it all out of me,
I'll tear off my clothes, for she touched them;
her writhing thighs have rubbed their fabric.

The goal, the goal, the goal must rub and slap my brain,
Like some fleshy female thigh,
For I ride the surge of mindless love and there is no wave and no
speeding barrier,
Which on its own could hinder my inevitable end, the eternal,
delirious, wretched dancing.

NOTES

[1]While he employed the very common name "Nagy" in his publication in *Jelenkor* no. 3-4 (February 1918), he first used "Moholy-Nagy" to sign his review of László Garami's poems in *Jelenkor* no. 5 (April 1918).

[2]See his postcard to Babits of 17 February 1918 (Documents Division, National Széchényi Library, Budapest).

[3]Krisztina Passuth, interview with Jenő Nagy, in Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy* (Budapest: Corvina, 1982), 356.

[4]C.f. the sketches on postcards evidently made in brothels now in the University Gallery, University of Delaware, Newark. C.f. also his correspondences with young women during this time.

[5]László Péter reports on Moholy's book prizes in "The Young Years of Moholy-Nagy," *The New Hungarian Quarterly* 13, no. 46 (Summer 1972): 63-64. Péter gives the book's title as *Modern Electricity*, which must refer to *Modern villamosság*, translated by Rezső Hajós (Budapest: Franklin Társulat, 1913), the Hungarian translation of Gibson's *Electricity Today. Its Work & Mysteries Described in Non-Technical Language* (London: Seeley & Co., 1907).

[6]On the importance of Verhaeren to the literature of the *Ma*-circle, see Miklós Szabolcsi, ed., *A magyar irodalom története 1905-től 1919-ig* [The History of Hungarian Literature from 1905 to 1919] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1965), 500.

[7]János Schádl, *Város és Bernáth Aurél* [The City and Aurél Bernáth], 1919, oil on canvas, 95 X 75 cm (Janus Pannonius Museum, Pécs). Reproduced in Stephen Mansbach, ed., *Standing in the Tempest: Painters of the Hungarian Avant-Garde 1908-1930* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991), 124.

[8]Moholy-Nagy, "Produktion — Reproduktion," *De Stijl* 5, no. 7 (July 1922): 98-101 and "Neue Gestaltung in der Musik. Möglichkeiten des Grammophons," *Der Sturm* (July 1923): 102-06.

[9]See his reviews of works by László Fodor and Elemér Pajzs in *Jelenkor* no. 3-4 (February 1918), of Árpád Garami in *Jelenkor* no. 5 (April 1918) and of Gyula Török's *A zöldköves gyűrű* in *Jelenkor* no. 6 (September 1918).

[10]On Moholy-Nagy's relations with the Activists in 1918 and 1919, see endnote 6 in Oliver Botar "An Activist-Expressionist in Exile: László Moholy-Nagy 1919-1920," in *László Moholy-Nagy: From Budapest to Berlin, 1914-1923* (Newark, Delaware: University Gallery, University of Delaware, 1995). I say "ambivalent" because of Moholy-Nagy's relative aesthetic conservatism at the time, about which he writes frankly in his autobiographical sketch, *Abstract of an Artist* (New York: Wittenborn, Schultz, Inc., 1947), 67-68.

[11]Postcard to Mihály Babits, 18 December 1918. (Documents Division, National Széchényi Library, Budapest).

[12]On Moholy's art at this time, see Botar, "An Activist-Expressionist Artist in Exile..."

[13]Jenő Nagy, remembrances of László Moholy-Nagy, in Krisztina Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy* (Budapest: Corvina, 1982), 356-57. The contact with Ady must have come through Zsófia Dénes, whom Moholy befriended late in 1918.

[14]The day before Ady's death, Árpád Szélpál published "Forradalmi művészet — vagy pártművészet" [Revolutionary art, or party art] in *Ma*, in which he characterized Ady and Babits as "conservative": "A fiatalok, a forradalmárok, az új művészek, elfordultak tőlük. Új utakat, haladottabb tartalmat keresnek" [The young, the revolutionaries, the new artists, have turned away from them. They search for new roads, more progressive content.] (p. 9) While in the following, February 26 issue of *Ma* Kassák felt compelled to publish an appreciation of the late poet he had admired so much, Szélpál's ill-timed article must have reflected the aesthetic feelings of many of the young members of the Activist circle, Moholy-Nagy, by this time, one of them.

[15]Information from Hattula Moholy-Nagy, July 1995. See László Moholy-Nagy, *Vision in Motion* (Chicago: Paul Theobald and Co.), 292-351.

[16]On Moholy-Nagy and Joyce, see Moholy-Nagy, *Vision in Motion*, 341-351, and for an analysis see Louis Kaplan, *Laszlo Moholy-Nagy: Biographical Writings* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 170ff. Given the centrality profered by Kaplan on the "signature," it is particularly ironic that he misspells "László" every time the name appears. Or is this a meta-pun central to this witty and enlightening book?

[17]See Kaplan on this, *Biographical Writings*, 191-2.

[18]"To sleep, to sleep," recounted in Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, *Experiment in Totality* Second edition. (Cambridge Ma.: The MIT Press, 1969), 246-47.

[19]*Jelenkor* no. 3-4 (February 1918).

[20]*Jelenkor* no. 3-4 (February 1918).

[21]*Jelenkor* no. 6 (September 1918).

[22]*Jelenkor* no. 6 (September 1918).

Appendix

Illustrations

Illustrations to Valerie Majoros' article: "Lajos Tihanyi's American Sojourn in 1929-30." Paintings and drawings by Tihanyi.

Joint illustration to V. Majoros' article: "Lajos Tihanyi's American Sojourn in 1929-30" and Richard Teleky's "'What the Moment Told Me': The Photographs of André Kertész."

1. André Kertész. *Portrait of Lajos Tihanyi*, 1926. Modern silver print. Courtesy: Jane Corkin Gallery, Toronto, Canada. ©André Kertész..... 123

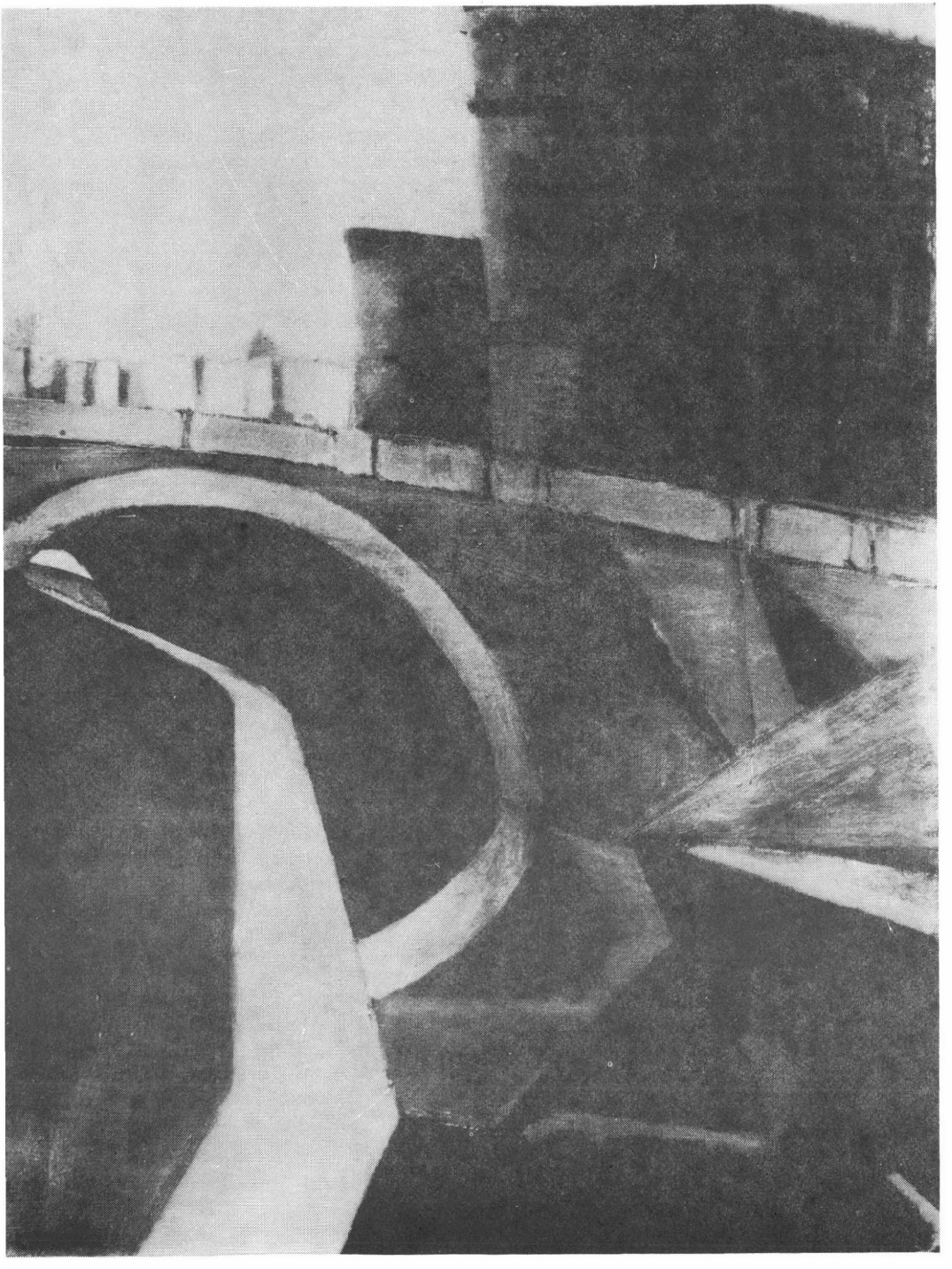
Illustrations to R. Teleky's "'What the Moment Told Me': The Photographs of André Kertész."

1. André Kertész. *Boy Sleeping over Daily Paper*, 1912. Gelatin silver print. Courtesy: Jane Corkin Gallery, Toronto, Canada. ©André Kertész..... 124

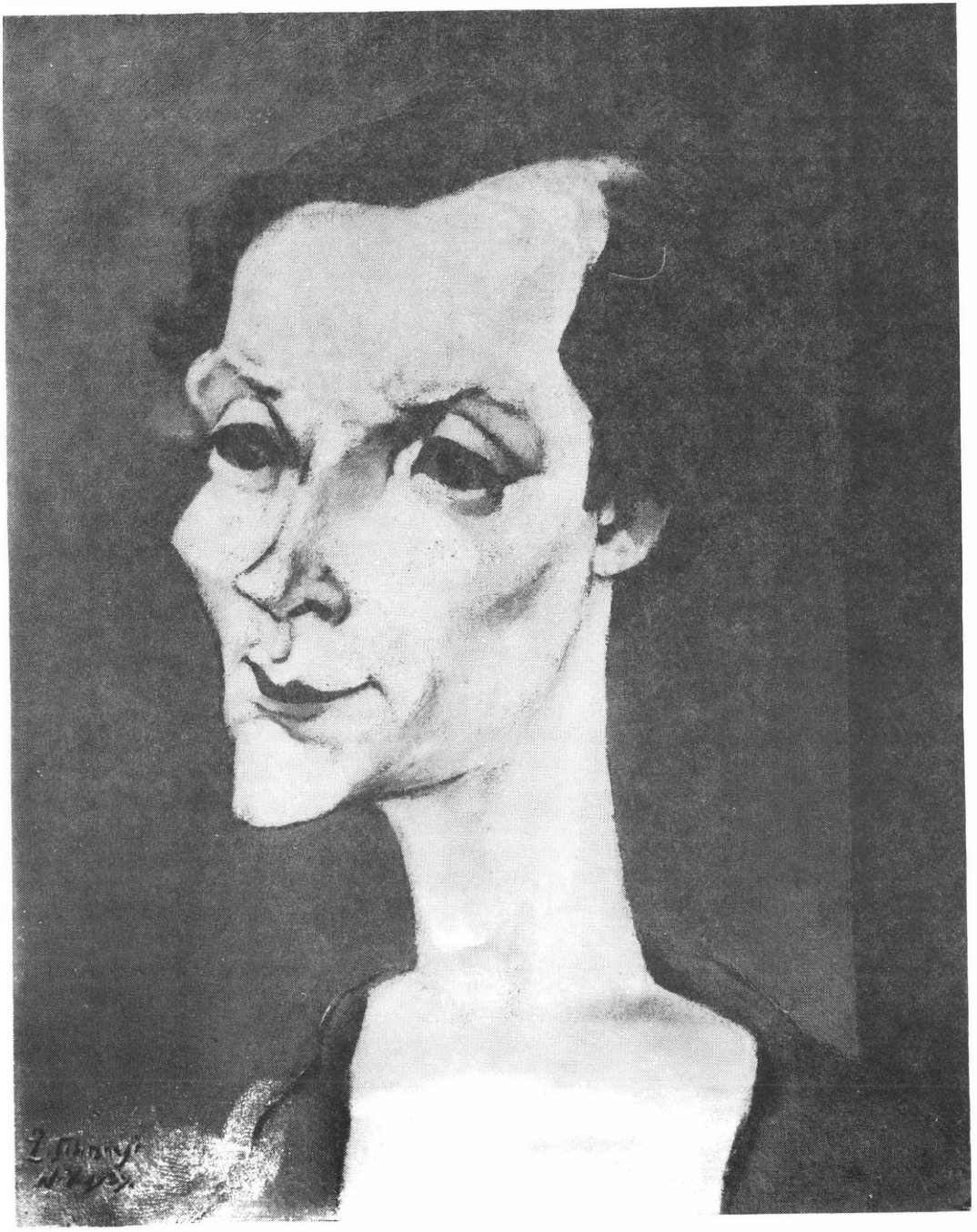
2. André Kertész. *Blind Violinist*, 1912. Gelatin silver print. Courtesy: Jane Corkin Gallery, Toronto, Canada. ©André Kertész..... 125

Illustration to Oliver Botar's documentary articles on László Moholy-Nagy

1. László Moholy-Nagy's note to his "Magyar testvéreim" [Hungarian compatriots], of Oct. 18, 1945, accompanying a $50.00 donation to the Chicago group of the Hungarian-American Relief movement. The note reads: "I am with you, I feel with you — you [must] continue the great task of helping the suffering [people] of the o'country. I enclose a cheque for $50.00 — a little drop in the vast sea...." From file 21 (328/1981) of the György Striker Papers, Magyar Nemzeti Galéria Adattára (Archives of the Hungarian National Gallery). Photo by Zoltán Hasznos..... 126




L. TIHANYI



1945 októ. 18

Magyar testvéreim

veletek vagyok, veletek érzek — folytassátok a nagy munkát lelkesen, fáradhatatlanul az óhaza szenvedői ~~segítségére~~ segélyezésére.

Mellékelek egy $ 50 00/00 csekket — egy kis csepp a nagy tengerben.

Őszinte hiveteк

Mihály Nagy László

---

a magyar amerikai Segélyakció Chikágói csoportjának, Mr George [illegible], titkár

TO THOSE WISHING TO SUBMIT MANUSCRIPTS

1. The editors of the *Hungarian Studies Review* invite the submission of original articles and review articles in the field of Hungarian studies.
2. All manuscripts should be sent to the Editors, *Hungarian Studies Review*.
3. Persons wishing to review books for the journal should get in touch with the Editors.
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 Editors.
5. Since the *Review* does not normally publish highly specialized studies intelligible only to people in a particular discipline, contributors wishing to submit very specialized work should consult the Editors before sending in their manuscript.
6. The submission of an article to the *Review* is taken to imply that it has not been previously published and it is not being considered for publication elsewhere.
7. Manuscripts submitted to the journal are usually reviewed by two members of the editorial board (or outside readers) with the authors remaining anonymous. Comments on articles are conveyed to the authors with the commentators remaining anonymous.
8. Articles submitted to the *Review* should be between 4,000 and 8,000 words (ca. 15 to 30 pages) in length. Review articles should be between 1,500 and 3,000 words (ca. 6 to 12 pages) in length. Manuscripts outside of these limits will be considered if there is some good reason for their exceptional length or brevity. Articles in two parts may be accepted provided each part is independently meaningful and intelligible.
9. All manuscripts intended for publication should be submitted IN DUPLICATE. They should be clearly typed on one side of 8 1/2 by 11 inch or similar size paper. The entire manuscript should be double spaced with ample margins. FOOTNOTES should be numbered consecutively in the text and typed double spaced at the end, beginning on a new page. The *Review* prefers to receive articles in electronic form, in ASCII or compatible format. Articles in such form would save much time in editing and typesetting.
10. To avoid the loss of manuscripts in the mail, authors should always retain a copy of their contribution for themselves. The *Review* will not be responsible for lost articles. To save on postal costs, manuscripts are not normally returned to the authors.
11. On style, authors should follow previous issues of the *Review* or should use the *Chicago Manual of Style*. When in doubt, they should get in touch with the Editors.
12. Contributors whose native tongue is not English should have their manuscripts carefully edited by someone experienced in writing for English-language journals BEFORE submitting their work to the *Review*.