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Special Volume:

Women and Hungary:
Reclaiming Images and Histories

Edited by
Marlene Kadar and Agatha Schwartz

Essays in Politics, History,
Literary and Art History,
and Biography

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Edited by

Marlene Kadar and Agatha Schwartz

Essays by:

CHRIS CORRIN
ÉVA THUN
JUDIT ACSÁDY
KENNETH McROBBIE
AGATHA SCHWARTZ
MARLENE KADAR
ÉVA KISS-NOVÁK
KATHERINE GYÉKÉNYESI GATTO
PHILEEN TATTERSALL

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Hungarian Studies Review, Vol. XXVI, Nos. 1-2 (1999)

Women and Hungary: An Introduction

Agatha Schwartz and Marlene Kadar

To date, the participation of Hungarian women in various aspects of public life has not been sufficiently documented. Hungarian women's participation in both politics and the arts has been recognized, if at all, mainly in relation to the role Hungarian women fulfilled as mothers and wives and supporters of men in their fight for various causes. Or, as for the arts, their work has been measured by standards set by a largely male-dominated establishment whose interests do not necessarily serve the interests of women writers and artists. Often the contributions of women to the culture both in Hungary proper and in the Diaspora have been undervalued or misinterpreted according to masculinist norms of quality, aesthetics and reason. It is no surprise that in Hungary, as in Western Europe and North America, women's intellectual work is denigrated as trivial, dealing with topics not considered adequately "universal" to be taken seriously by the legitimate judges of taste and value. During the communist era in Hungary, publications about women's issues were scarce, and a critique of the state socialist interpretation of "the woman question" was all but forbidden. According to communist party doctrine, women were emancipated by their equal right to and acquisition of paid labour. Hungarian women, like Russian women, were portrayed as happy workers, released from the drudgery of home and hearth.

Nevertheless, there were signs of equity in the public sphere: women had the right to work and were paid the same salary for the same type of work as men. Moreover, the state provided inexpensive childcare. But the ideology that supported these otherwise progressive initiatives was conventional, unchanged and oppressive for women in the family and in other aspects of both the private and public spheres. Thus, women still tolerated oppressive laws and social controls in Hungary. They persevered the double burden of paid productive labour and unpaid "unproduc-

tive" labour in the household; gender stereotypes were reproduced in the family, in society and understandably extended into the workplace; women's bodies and reproductive rights were still in large measure controlled by the state. To make matters worse, these important topics were rarely discussed in a public forum. As a matter of fact, the National Council of Hungarian Women, the "official" women's organization during the communist era, helped the state maintain the hypocritical ideology because, as an organ of government, this Council did nothing to foster a critique of either the communist agenda for women, nor the condition of women's lives.[1]

In the years following the fall of the Iron Curtain, a heightened awareness of women's issues has emerged in Hungary. Women have organized themselves politically and initiated diverse political groups. There has been more research with a focus on inequalities and discrimination based on gender, be it in education or in society in general. Moreover, Hungarian scholars are, like feminist scholars abroad, interested in uncovering women's forgotten history. Although women's studies as a degree programme is still not taught at Hungarian universities, in the past decade several initiatives at a few universities have resulted in courses in various disciplines that fall within the disciplinary category of women's studies. At Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, Éva Thun, one of this volume's contributors, has been teaching a course on feminist pedagogy for several years now, and Judit Acsády, another of our contributors, initiated, while still a student, a series of lectures on "Woman and Society" in 1989. Publications on various women's and gender studies-related topics have multiplied over the past years, in the form of articles in newspapers and/or magazines; special volumes (such as *Férfiuralom* [Male Rule], Miklós Hadas, ed., Replika-series, Budapest, 1994); anthologies (*Magyar költőnők antológiája* [Hungarian Women Poets' Anthology]; Margit S. Sárdi and László Tóth, eds. Budapest, 1997); monographs (Anna Fábri, *"A szép tiltott táj felé": A magyar írónők története két századforduló között, 1795-1905* [Hungarian Women Writers Between 1795 and 1905] Budapest, 1996); conference proceedings (*Szerep és alkotás: Női szerepek a társadalomban és az alkotóművészetben* [Women's Roles in Society and the Arts], Beáta Nagy and Margit S. Sárdi, eds., Debrecen, 1997); or translations from various languages (Kaari Utrio, *Éva lányai: Az európai nő története* [Eve's Daughters: A History of European Women], Budapest, 1989). Scholars outside Hungary have followed along the same lines, as can be seen from publications such as Chris

Corrin's *Magyar Women: Hungarian Women's Lives 1960s-1990s* (London, 1994).

The present volume was compiled with the intention of contributing, from outside of Hungary, to this positive tendency in recent Hungarian scholarship. We chose the title of this volume, "Women and Hungary: Reclaiming Images and Histories," for several reasons. The first part of the title, Women and Hungary, indicates our wish to interrogate the much-connoted syntagma, "Hungarian Women." Not only is it difficult to say what constitutes "Hungarian," but what constitutes "Hungarian" or "woman" is not a fixed entity. "Women and Hungary" as opposed to "Hungarian Women" opens up the possibility of a new, creative relationship of women with this changing geographic place called Hungary. A new relationship anticipates better representation for women, and less reliance on unchanging categories of gender and nation. On the other hand, "Hungarian Women" already defines our subject in a specific, preset context, where "woman" herself is understood in a narrow way, and "Hungarian" is understood according to some unprovable (and therefore dangerous) genetic, biological or national equation.[2]

One of the objectives of gender studies is to deconstruct preconceived notions of femininity or masculinity; in our context these are the stereotypes of a "good," a "typical," the "way-it-should-be" Hungarian woman. In addition, this woman could only be determined by an enumeration of the genes which would be "Hungarian" and those which would be "other." Reclaiming Images and Histories indicates that women in relation to Hungary are both Hungarian-born, and/or born elsewhere, and they may define themselves as both Hungarian and /or at the same time something else. Women in relation to Hungary are in the process of claiming their own space, of defining their identity in their own words and not only according to the geographic boundaries of birthplace (which in relation to modern Hungary are also unfixed) and genes.

Reclaiming is the process of taking back what had once been inscribed as "Hungarian Woman," her place or rather the lack of it in the writing of history, and the images that had been created for her about herself. The articles in this volume follow up on this process of reclaiming the images of women in Hungarian history, politics, literature, and the arts. The contributors to this volume attempt to remove the layers that different ideologies have imposed upon women over long periods of time. They aim to reclaim histories and images for the purpose of understanding women's influence in Hungary and on Hungarian research anew.

The articles in this collection were written by academics and non-academics alike, both from Hungary and from the English-speaking world. They offer therefore a wide spectrum of diverse approaches to various topics. Indeed as time passes, the most cogent feminist theorizations of gender in Hungary or among Hungarian women in the Diaspora have developed among scholars in the Diaspora — in Britain, the United States, France, and Canada. Think, for example, of the work of Chris Corrin, Zsuzsa Ferge, Barbara Einhorn, to mention a few.

Part I, "Politics and History," draws a circle from the present through the past back to the present again. The articles gathered in this part concentrate on the scope of women's political participation and its history in Hungary. Chris Corrin and Éva Thun present the reader information on most recent developments in Hungarian political culture and its gender bias as well as the legacy of the communist past that in certain respects has negatively impacted — and continues to so impact — women's broader inclusion into Hungarian politics. Judit Acsády deconstructs the myth of the lack of a feminist tradition. She uncovers details about women's active political participation in Hungary in the past centuries. Moreover, Acsády includes information on various policies and traditions that in the long run have improved women's condition and women's lives in Hungary.

As mentioned above, our contributors come from very different backgrounds and therefore present their ideas in a number of distinct forms. Kenneth McRobbie, for example, gives a short introduction to the life of a remarkable Hungarian — later Hungarian-Canadian — woman, Ilona Duczynska, followed by a longer excerpt from her translated memoirs. Thus we can follow the process of the object (of the article) becoming a subject who speaks in her own voice, a process that reflects what women's studies and women's activism stand for: to find women's own voice(s) and express women's ideas about themselves, their identity, their history, and allow them to paint their own images in relation to it.

Parts II and III present essays on women in Hungarian literature and the arts. Part I treats women in Hungarian literature as authors, subjects and characters, and translators. Here we start with the past, a century ago, a period that brought about, as we have seen in Part I, not only the first organized women's movement but also an intensified literary production among women with an awareness about their new place in society. Next to a few famous names, such as Margit Kaffka — who is considered "the" lady of Hungarian modernism — other women writers emerge. Despite success and recognition in their own time, these women

(Emma Ritók, Anna Szederkényi, Terka Lux, Renée Erdős) have been, according to Agatha Schwartz's research, forgotten or ignored by recent literary history.

Éva Kiss-Novák tells the stories of contemporary Hungarian women writers who talk about women's current problems in their country. They diagnose the gaps between the burdens of tradition that women carry on their shoulders consciously or unconsciously and their desire for happiness in an emancipated lifestyle; in the given circumstances, this often proves to be impossible and results in a breakdown. This group of articles allows the reader to reflect on how much emancipation has really been achieved by women within Hungary, how much the gender patterns have changed or remained the same yet disguised, in what ways women still carry the double burden of another century. Although feminist theorists in the West often speak of the double burden of women in the West, and of inequities in the public sphere and the private sphere, women in Hungary suffer a delayed reaction to these issues in their country. After 1989 unemployment soared among women, child care became less readily available, and the right to abortion, threatened. So, although there are some similarities in the experiences of women in the West and women in Hungary, there are also significant differences. Some of the more poignant differences are addressed in the essays that follow.

Marlene Kadar's article on Ilona Duczynska Polanyi's contribution as a literary translator can be read as a paradigm for women's work throughout the centuries: women as helpers of men whose names history would record but whose own names may be forgotten. The case of Ilona Duczynska does not fall strictly within this category, of course, since Duczynska's political work has been given due recognition, and in Kadar's essay, her name appears at the bottom of the translation of Attila József's poems, alongside Earle Birney's. Yet the position of the woman as "midwife", the one who helps in the process of birthing of anything assigned to the glory of men has been unduly underestimated and insufficiently documented, especially in regard to the writing of Hungarian political, cultural or intellectual history. It is particularly positive to have this article in our volume since it talks about the "midwife" in the complex process of translation, and not so much about the translator and his or her particular biography.

Part III includes two contributions, one by Katherine Gyékényesi Gatto on the Hungarian filmmaker, Ildikó Enyedi, the other by Phileen Tattersall on the Hungarian-Canadian sculptor, Dora de Pédery-Hunt. The discussion about women in the arts is always thorny: do women lack a

voice because they were not there, did not have a presence, or because of a lack of adequate interest in and knowledge about their work? We tend to believe that it is for the second reason: women artists still do not generate the interest or the exposure their male counterparts enjoy. The reasons for this sad fact could be exposed at length.

The two artists discussed in this section are, however, well known in the countries where they make their homes — in Hungary and/or in Canada. Ildikó Enyedi's films have been screened at international film festivals and movie theatres around the world, and Dora de Pédery-Hunt is one of Canada's finest artists. It is important to have these two articles included in our volume for they show, particularly in the case of Enyedi, that women in the arts are about to gain fame when they treat topics that relate to women's experiences in the Hungarian context. Accordingly, the subjects reveal a feminist approach to gender issues and questions of identity, while maintaining a sense of subtle irony and humour about their work.

The editors hope that the readers will find the objectives outlined in the introduction confirmed in the contributions themselves and that this volume will be one other pebble in the construction of a path to changing the images of women in relation to Hungary and its Diaspora.

NOTES

The editors would like to thank Professor George Bisztray and the Hungarian Studies Association of Canada for their assistance with this special issue. Professors Chris Corrin, Katherine Gatto, Marlene Kadar, Éva Novák, Agatha Schwartz and Éva Thun first presented their papers at the annual meetings of HSAC. The editors would also like to thank Professor Nándor Dreisziger for his careful attention to this project. He has been a fine colleague, a discerning editor and translator, and a helpful advisor from start to finish.

[1] The existence of this "paper" organization made women's grassroots activism practically illegal. Such was the case of a campaign organized by a group of university students to protest the passing of the 1974 legislation restricting abortion. The organizers of this campaign were excluded from university and many of them left the country.

[2] For more information about the potential danger inherent in national labels, see Vera Ránki, *The Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion* (New York and London: Holmes and Meier, 1999), especially pp. 1-24 and pp. 37-51.

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Part I

POLITICS AND HISTORY

Essays by:

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ÉVA THUN

JUDIT ACSÁDY

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JUDIT ACSÁDY is a sociologist affiliated since 1995 with the Sociology Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of the Sciences, where she has been working on various projects relating to women's history. Earlier she had been instrumental in establishing a women's and gender studies program at Budapest's Eötvös Loránd University. Most of her publications deal with the history of the women's movement in Hungary. She is also an activist who since 1989 has been involved in feminist, pacifist and

CONTRIBUTORS (continued from p. 7)

anti-authoritarian grassroots organizations in Hungary. She is co-editor of the feminist magazine *Nőszemély*.

CHRIS CORRIN is Reader in Politics and Convenor of the Centre for Women Studies at Glasgow University, Scotland. She has worked for many years with women's groups in Central and Eastern Europe and continues to be involved with women's politics across 'Europe' particularly on issues of violence against women and women's political participation. Her publications include *Superwoman and the Double Burden* (1992); *Magyar Women: Hungarian Women's Lives 1960s-1990s* (1994); *Women in a Violent World: Feminist Analyses and Resistance across 'Europe'* (1996); *Feminist Perspectives on Politics* (1999); and *Gender and Identity in Central and Eastern Europe* (1999).

KENNETH McROBBIE has taught cultural and intellectual history at the University of Manitoba and the University of British Columbia. Since 1959 he has been translating poetry and writing on cultural matters pertaining to Hungary, a country he has visited many times. His publications include *The Selected Poems of Ferenc Juhász* (Oxford, 1970) and (with Tony Connor) *The Selected Poems of László Nagy* (Oxford, 1973). He has edited selected papers from international conferences of the Karl Polanyi Institute (Concordia University): *Humanity, Society and Commitment* (Black Rose, 1994) and (with Kari Polanyi Levitt) *Karl Polanyi in Vienna* (Black Rose, 1999). When he was Editor of *Mosaic: a journal for the comparative study of literature and ideas* (University of Manitoba), he produced a special issue on *The Eastern European Imagination in Literature* (Summer 1973, 238 pp.). He is working on a biography of Ilona Duczynska, and an edition of her writings and correspondence.

ÉVA THUN is Senior Lecturer in Language Teaching Methodology and Women's Studies at the Teacher Training College, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. Her publications include articles on gender issues in education and on feminism in Hungary. She is currently exploring the subject of gender representation and communication in the Hungarian educational system. The project is funded through an OTKA (Hungarian National Research Fund for Social Studies Research) research grant.

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Gender Politics and Women's Political Participation in Hungary

Chris Corrin

The primary focus of this paper is a discussion of women's political participation within Hungarian society at a variety of levels, from both traditional and alternative perspectives. Aspects of women's participation are assessed within the frameworks of changing state/society perspectives, parliamentary developments in Hungary, and in terms of the construction of women's identities and changing conceptions of citizenship. The aim of this assessment is to contribute to ongoing debates about the ways in which considerations of politics, when broadened, encompass a wider field of analysis and enable analysts to recognize that 'woman' does not denote an unproblematic political category that remains a stable entity over time or space.

Theorising 'the political'

Concentration in traditional theorising about politics has been on conventional, constitutional, political behaviour. Alternative theories, from the moral perspectives of oppositionists — such as Hungarian political analyst György Konrád in his book *Anti-Politics*[1] — to those of feminist theorising about women's political participation, have had the effect of 'problematizing' the traditional definitions. Most attempts at defining politics share certain assumptions, such that politics is recognised as having a social context and, at a minimum, can be seen to involve the question of how people influence the distribution of resources. Alternative analyses

view politics as a process of articulation, the working out of relationships within given power structures. The divisions between public and private are not rigidly defined in such alternative perspectives — unlike traditional associations of maleness with the public and femaleness with the private. Recognizing 'the political' as part of our everyday lives allows politics to remain part of the social whole. In terms of theorising about women's lives, the 'personal as political' became a key feminist principle in Western feminism after the 1960s.[2] The connotations of personal as political took on different dynamics within oppositional writings about politics in Hungary and elsewhere in Central and Eastern Europe. Beginning with the 1960s, 'the political' began to be questioned from the perspective of anti-politics and considerations of resistance to statist oppression.[3]

Western feminist analysis has not arisen in a social vacuum but as a response to the changing circumstances and opportunities associated with industrialism. Forces have been at work across societies which are helping to undermine systems of male dominance. Feminist analysts aim to accelerate and consolidate the impact of these forces by bringing gender issues into the public political arena for further consideration. Public policies can be seen to have played a part in maintaining women's subordinate status in Western, Central and Eastern Europe, certainly in terms of employment and childcare issues, yet women can and do use public politics in their own interest.[4] Differing definitions of 'the political' do set parameters for our conceptions of participation in questioning the role of political participation in differing political systems. These questions are important in attempting to locate the nature of changing political perspectives in Hungary.

Despite the changes over time, with the expansion of the 'public' arena in scope and with increased governmental intervention, traditional views of politics still hold that an apolitical private sphere exists. Such a private sphere centres mainly upon family life which still defines and limits many women's wider social engagement. Some political analyses recognize that politics does occur outside the public sphere. Generally, however, the wider focus tends to concentrate on community-level politics so that little is considered with regard to familial relationships. The focus remains 'external' to home life. In Hungary, considerations of the importance of 'family politics' have changed very much over time. Differentiations can be made broadly between the decades of 'state feminism' in the 1950s and 1960s, characterised by concern for the

position of women in the labour market during extensive industrialisation, and the conservative turn in the 1970s. This new ideological trend replaced the image of the 'working woman' — able to fulfil commitments in parallel with male workers — with that of women who accepted traditional family values and were able to fulfil a double function as employees and mothers.[5] The political changes of the past decade, both the social processes and political policy decisions, have reinforced the prevailing ideas of traditional families and roles for women. In order to explain how women influence, and are in turn affected by, the changing ideological climate and the system of social allocation of resources, feminist analysts consider this broader sense of social power relations.

Political participation

What is political participation? One definition is: 'Those legal activities by private citizens which are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of government personnel and/or the actions they take.'[6] This raises various questions. Is this definition adequate, given its emphasis upon legal and autonomous activity? What knowledge is gained in assessing participation, not only in terms of electoral turnout, but of party and group membership and participation in community activities? Do the changing conceptions of citizens' participation 'fit' into such conventional definitions of political participation? For many political analysts the above definition is too narrow. It excludes attitudes towards, and beliefs about politics and much civic activity in general. The 'private' citizen in such a definition falls within a traditionalist conception excluding sexual politics and familial political activities.[7] Such political participation as taking part in demonstrations (legal and illegal) and local community activities are excluded from this narrow definition. Certainly it is too limited for analysts who view politics as affecting not only the actions and decisions of governments and state forces but also interactions within societies, communities and our homes. Broader definitions owe much to feminist considerations of 'the personal as political' as well as to the 'new politics' initiated by the activism of new social movements which are seen as challenging the old ideas of activities around elections and voters as making up the central core of what politics is about. When considering the 'new politics' — illustrated by peace campaigners, ecological groups plus many women's groups and campaigns — within the broader

conception, it is apparent that the term 'participation' considerably widened.

The notion of alternative politics and wider definitions of participation have become important in this connection over the last two decades, especially with respect to state/society divisions in western liberal democracies and certain of the state socialist countries including pre-1989 Hungary.[8] Strong moral and ethical convictions underlie the new political demands and goals, and the debate is extended beyond ideological distinctions of left and right, stressing universal principles and consequences.[9] Recognition of the importance of women's activism in politics, as citizens within hierarchical politicised frameworks, is shown by Biljana Kasic in her forward to the collection *Women and the Politics of Peace*:

> The political, in the understand[ing] of many of the presenters at the Forum, is expressed as a search for public responsibility for peace as an unquestionable value, an ethical imperative and the only alternative, and equally relevant to international makers of global politics of development as well as local institutions of government, civil society and the population at large.[10]

Here Kasic is breaking down some of the binary divisions between state politics (at national and local levels) and those of citizens in society, invoking the 'ethical imperatives' in the tradition of democratic oppositionists such as Konrád and Havel.

Old and new politics in Hungary

In Hungarian politics two movements were crucial sites of new political interaction and forms of expression in the 1980s — the 'Greens' or ecology movement and the student/youth movement. As has been outlined elsewhere, various factors led to the demise of the former and to the spectacular political success of the latter.[11] Women's participation was apparent in both movements, yet when the Alliance of Young Democrats, FIDESZ, succeeded in gaining representation in Parliament in 1990 the gender balance of its representatives did not differ from that of other Hungarian political parties. The rise of issue-based groups concerned with women's issues was also becoming apparent early in 1990

and several became established. Such groups as the Hungarian Feminist Association, the Hungarian Women's Foundation (MONA) and Hungarian Women Entrepreneurs, have been considered more fully elsewhere.[12] Given the fact that the politics of 'the Party' (the former ruling communist party) had been very much discredited, it was apparent in 1990 that many Hungarians were not prepared to support political parties.[13] Many women, in particular, did not identify with the newly-emerging political parties and did not choose to become visibly active within them.[14] This development parallels the disenchantment in party politics in Western states, although for very different reasons with regard to backgrounds and histories of participation.[15]

Hungarian politics in transition

The events which spread throughout Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union in 1989/90 began a transition in which the active and chosen political participation of masses of people was highlighted. This was encapsulated in the famous chant in Leipzig during the candlelight vigils — 'we are the people'. Formal mass participation or mobilisation in politics was always supposed to have been higher in the 'socialist' states than elsewhere. In part this was connected to the broader definition of what was seen as participation in 'socialist' politics which included ideas concerned with loyalty and solidarity, and because citizens were often heavily encouraged or strategically co-opted into sitting on committees, joining campaigns and serving on people's organisations. Even young people were more or less expected to join communist groups such as the Pioneers. In part this derived from Marxist conceptions of power being vested in the people and from practical concerns of Party control. The Party's needs — to stay in power in defence of a political economic system, in opposition to capitalism — were always paramount. This meant that the quality of participation was less important than the appearance of participation, guided by Party officers supposedly in the 'interests of the people'. Certainly in many Central and Eastern European countries a small number of activists were participating in activities in opposition to their regimes. In the Hungarian context economic activities around 'private' work had been important in terms of the development of the 'second society'.[16] It is clear that throughout Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and China in the 1980s, the Party/State apparatus appeared to have, generally, lost touch with 'the people'. Mass

demonstrations have always been a feature of political participation but after the revolution in 1956 in Hungary and the Prague Spring in 1968 in Czechoslovakia, such demonstrations were more apparent in Paris or Rome (and in some areas of Poland) than in Budapest, Prague, Leipzig or Bucharest.

The phenomenon of 'anti-politics' (however hard to define) had long been apparent in oppositional writings in Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia (e.g. *Beszélő, Samorzadnösc* and *Krytyka*). Anti-politics tended to be both a critique of power per se and a form of tactical intervention. Considering 'anti-political politics' Vaclav Havel noted a belief in politics as a practical morality:

> Yes, anti-political politics is possible. Politics 'from below'. Politics of people, not of the apparatus. Politics growing from the heart, not from a thesis. It is no accident that this hopeful experience has to be lived just here, on this grim battlement. In conditions of humdrum 'everydayness' we have to descend to the very bottom of a well before we can see the stars'.[17]

Such analyses opened up political thinking within the oppositional circles in certain Central and Eastern European countries by broadening conceptions of 'the political' beyond Western traditionalist definitions. In this context, there are parallels with feminist analyses in considerations of the importance of familial politics, as will be assessed. However, the fact that many oppositionists assumed governmental office in the aftermath of 1990 elections in Hungary and elsewhere, did leave something of a vacuum in terms of civil opposition to governmental authority and reduced considerably the environment in which more abstract political theorising was fostered, certainly in terms of critiques of policy direction. Some arguments regarding 'civil society in power' pointed up the dangers of not having voices from below and critical appraisals of the new government elites.[18] In Hungary, several prominent (former oppositionist) MPs did leave Parliamentary politics in order to return to their roles as 'critical participants' within society.

Democratic developments in Hungary

Given the differing interpretations of politics outlined above, the focus of divergence between traditional and alternative, especially feminist inter-

pretations, has broadly been considered in terms of public/private distinctions. In Western feminist conceptions the removal of distinctions between public (valued external 'male' world) and private (undervalued, internal/domestic 'female' world) became crucial in understanding broader conceptions of political activity and engagement and the gendering of certain processes and identities. This included issues of sexuality, of women's autonomy in control of their bodies, resistance to male violence and gaining autonomy in living their chosen lives. In breaking down perceived distinctions between varying arguments the issues of different outlooks and cultural backgrounds became important.

This was similarly a 'live' consideration in Hungary, within a different context. The existence and consequences of a 'second society' has been ably demonstrated.[19] Following the delicate contract between the Kádárist state and Hungarian society after the 1956 revolution, changes within society during the late 1970s and early 1980s meant that families became viewed as alternative sites of 'privatized development' within the second economy. Júlia Szalai points out that the fragile compromise between the Party and society after 1956 was: "a tacit acceptance, even a gradual expansion of the space for individual autonomy, based on the ideological-practical 'rehabilitation' of the one and only institution which was legitimately independent of direct political control, i.e. the family."[20]

Participation in informal productive activities to attain individually-chosen goals developed into a vast social movement within Hungarian society. Families organised and made choices in terms of their own conceptions of modernity rather than following 'officially declared' expectations. Due to labour-power shortages in socialist enterprises, employers came to accept the seasonal dictates of small-scale agriculture and workers spending an extra hour on 'informal' work at the expense of official work. In this delicate political balance adjustments were made and 'peaceful coexistence' became the guiding principle within a considerably broadened arena of 'politics'. Connotations from a 'personal is political' perspective began to take on other forms in terms of 'people power' challenging state power. When critical elements of 'the people' take up governmental positions, conceptions of 'personal' and 'political' become sites of reconsideration once more — certainly in terms of civil society "in power."

Changing the compromise

In Hungary during the 1970s the negotiated compromise between the majority of citizens and government officials was undergoing definitive changes. Women's work situations became more flexible at this time, especially with the introduction of the child care allowance in 1967 (reintroduced in 1985 as the child care 'fee'), which allowed women to care for children in the home with some financial support while their jobs remained open. In its first year the allowance was used by almost 70% of women entitled.[21] These measures showed an ideological shift of a conservative nature in the protection of 'the family' and reestablishing traditional roles within the family. Nemény i notes families' defensive strategies against the wide-ranging social policies which resulted in the development of the new model of nuclear family consisting of two wage-earners and children, born soon after marriage and placed in part-time child care institutions. This type of family proved unstable as was shown by frequent divorces, remarriages and an increasing number of single parent families. At the same time a nostalgia for a traditional form of family was suggested even though most families had not experienced such living arrangements.[22]

By 1986 the rate of women taking up child care leave — for at least part of the three years of their eligibility — had risen to almost 90%. These policies clearly represented advantages and disadvantages for different women and groups of women within Hungarian society.[23] Other social policy measures followed which allowed various groups within the workforce to withdraw for periods of time, whilst retaining the official ties with their workplaces. This lessening obligation for full participation in the 'socialist' arena was double edged in that it was both gender- and age-biased. Women and elderly male workers were the main subjects and their opportunities in the private sphere were offset publicly by the possibility of lower wages, fewer openings for promotion and lower rates of occupational mobility. Yet as Szalai notes:

> Thus, besides its face-value in demonstrating material progress, the increase of private consumption had another significance: it expressed alternative notions about modernization, it induced and realized alternative taste (opposing the cultural patterns dictated by the authorities in

> control over the public realm) it created scope for alternative socialisation of children, and helped to acquire alternative knowledge which one could never get in institutions of the officially-run system of formal education.[24]

The various political, economic, social and cultural changes evolving within this second society led to the recognition of alternative conceptions of living. The importance of this lay in the gradual questioning of the very essence of the delicate compromise between state and society. Evidently, alternative communities posed threats to overall control from above. Over time developments within the family-based economy eventually became the organising principle of everyday life so that people were less defenceless in the face of official authority and were able to resist attempts at political intervention from above. The effects of these developments were keenly experienced by women, who were in large measure the main organisers of family enterprises. Here is a key to analyzing the Hungarian case and to the difficulties of theorising the differential impact of democratization processes in Hungary upon various women's situations. In the years following the changes of 1990, women's influence (and that of many men) in second economy activities within Hungarian society seem to have become considerably changed and, in many cases, reduced in scope. This was in large measure due to the immense economic changes that neo-liberal economic thinking introduced into Hungarian society.

It was apparent during the 1980s that women's involvement within kindergartens, schools and hospitals was such that changes in determining standards and priorities were being enacted. The involvement of community- and family-based participation in these areas became part of the overall running of these institutions and determined certain changes of direction and provision in services.[25] In building upon these developments a peaceful route to establishing a political framework was opened in the completion of social and economic transformation of Hungarian society. This route appeared to have some conflicting aspects with regard to participation and ongoing involvement of citizens within the formal political sphere. There was a form of 'embourgeoisement' emerging which set up differing expectations throughout Hungarian society, part of which concerned political expression and representation. In the course of these changes divisions between 'rich and poor' became sharper and more

apparent as state support for vulnerable groups was not keeping pace with other developments, especially inflation.

With the democratic developments and the formation of new political cultures in Hungary after 1990, questions arose regarding legitimation, state/society compromise, civil society as critical public, and once again, the primacy of economic considerations over political problems. With regard to women's political involvement, the question was raised: Have these political openings brought with them spaces for citizens', particularly women's, activities? Central to this question are issues of equality and difference between the sexes and the changing conceptions of citizenship which are emerging.

Parliamentary developments in Hungary

Women's participation in the initial stages of social and economic transition after 1989 can be clearly seen and was apparent to an extent at the public political and policy levels throughout 1989-90. Subsequently women's involvement in public, political initiatives seems to have subsided. The overall declining political participation within Hungarian society generally, can be considered in terms of the speed and direction of party development and Parliamentary politics.

The speed of events in 1989 caught almost everyone, especially the political elite, by surprise. The rapid loosening of power by Hungarian Communists during their efforts at 'controlled reform' pushed the opposition social movements into an electoral situation more quickly than was envisaged.[26] The pace and history of change in each of the Central and Eastern European countries was very different, with Poland and Hungary having a much richer recent history of oppositional activities, so that communist power there was becoming undermined from the early 1980s. In 1989 the regimes in these countries were showing the weaknesses that had been 'papered over' in preceding years. That they had provided security of life in terms of employment, housing and basic material necessities now had to be assessed against the reality of economic decline, sometimes concealed temporarily by borrowing in the West. The policies followed by the Communist leadership up to the late 1980s did have one rationale — the maintenance of the Party's hold on power.

Western countries developed their capitalist economies on firm ground before they established liberal, democratic institutions; these

political arenas were well-prepared for the fluctuating levels of citizen participation within the parameters of individual competition and pressure group and interest group politics. Establishing participatory democracies in Eastern Europe, at both the national and grass-roots levels, is proving more complex and contradictory as the transition from centralised economies to capitalist infrastructure has to go on at the same time. When to this fact is added the psychological pressures of social insecurity after forty years of stability, the mobilization of different social groups in defence of living standards and the social safety net has become necessary. Whether these social groups can influence decision-making is still unclear as are the routes that protests and lobbying may take.[27]

In terms of 'transition' and 'democratization', analysts point to several factors as necessary in developing a democratic multi-party system within Hungary as elsewhere in Central and Eastern Europe. These include: creating a bureaucracy accountable to elected officials and with fewer economic functions; further directing the economy away from centralised demands and towards greater marketization, privatization and free trade; resolving issues of responsibility for the crimes of the communist era; and developing closer links 'with Europe' in economic and political-military affairs.[28] The fact that the transition, however dramatic, could not become a complete break with past, was realized in the first years of democratic government, particularly with regard to the need for experienced policy-makers. Basically, the 1990 election in Hungary produced a parliament of male, well-educated but politically inexperienced representatives. The percentage of women representatives was approximately that of the UK at this time.[29]

Gaining release from the economic burdens generated by 'Soviet socialism' was eased to some extent by the existence of a 'second economy' in Hungary. Nevertheless, difficult economic tasks still had to be faced: structural adjustment, creation of a modern economy, ecological repair and a transition towards capitalism.[30] Concentration in the immediate transitional years of 1990-92 was on political developments within the Parliamentary system, often at the expense of political consolidation within interest groups in society, economic and legal reforms and in broader social policy initiatives. The legacy of conceptions of 'The Party' and 'The Power' for active citizenship meant that whilst Hungarian citizens enthusiastically joined the larger social movements in 1989, when these movements had to form party identities — largely in the shape of the MDF (Magyar Demokrata Forum [Hungarian Democratic Forum], the

leading party in government coalition) and the SzDSz (Szabad Demokraták Szövetsége [Federation of Free Democrats], the leading party in the opposition coalition) — participation and identification drastically decreased.[31]

Party participation and representation

After interviewing women members of parliament and leaders of large women's organizations in 1990, Éva Fodor noted three viewpoints on women's role in society which corresponded to the ideological orientations of the parties: the Christian-nationalist stand, the liberal views and the moderate socialist ideas.[32] The Christian Democrats — who were widely organized especially in the countryside, and appealed to women engaged in charitable work — offered classes on domestic management and provided entertainment for families. Their preference was for state intervention to promote women's role as bearers and educators of the nations' children. Of the two liberal parties, FIDESZ (Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége [Alliance of Young Democrats]) true to classical liberal ideology, did not wish to have any affirmative action for women as it smacked of socialist paternalism. The SzDSz introduced new topics to the political agenda such as sex education, sexual harassment and domestic violence. The Foundation of the Women of Hungary (MONA), established by women activists within the SzDSz, has become successful in evaluating and participating in the formation of policy decisions concerning women directly or indirectly. Whilst the Hungarian Socialist Party's (Magyar Szocialista Párt or MSZP) women's organization deals with issues of health, the environment, motherhood, sex education and abortion rights, their primary focus remains women's rights within the workplace.

Before 1989 women in Parliament had largely meant 'women in seats', rather than politically-active women voicing demands in the decision-making arenas. Was it then to be expected that there would be a sudden increase in women politicians in the post-communist era? It seems plausible that the legacies of communist politics would affect women's representation most critically in three areas. Firstly the belief widely held by women and men, that politics is a 'dirty business' which some men are prepared to undertake, yet few women are willing to become involved in — because personal reputations are at stake and in such arenas women's reputations regularly become sexualized. There is

also the legacy of the public/private divide in Hungary, in which women are perceived to be more concerned with the 'domestic' aspects, in terms of servicing male politicians, working in the offices, i.e. being active 'behind the scenes'. This appears to be also true of women's work within the second economy following marketization. Scattered and anecdotal evidence suggests that women's activities within the newly registered private business sectors are less apparent than those of men.

A second reason for a decline in women's participation in party politics concerns the extent to which party membership and participation have been encouraged and engendered. Under communist rule it was felt that women could choose not to join the Party, whereas for certain professional males membership was viewed as a definite career necessity. This meant that involvement with party politics became gendered. Not to join 'The Party' meant long-term privations for many men, whether or not they chose to be involved within the oppositional groupings. With the formal quotas that had existed for 'women', 'the working class,' and other groups within the Communist Party, the aggregated figures from the 'socialist' decades offer no evidence of such nuanced 'choices' on the parts of identical men and women.

The third aspect of the gendered nature of party participation became apparent in men's and women's reactions to the collapse of the old system. Since for many men not joining 'The Party' was a moral choice from which their future careers suffered, it has been argued that many men viewed the new democratic political arena as one in which they could return to a positive career path. Júlia Szalai points out that:

> The rapid emergence of the new parties promised to make a correction in the unjustly broken careers. Party politics became the arena of meeting men's needs within a short time. Thousands of previously non-existent posts were opened, offering dignified and responsible positions to a great number of well-educated, politically motivated men who earlier could not find acceptable forms to realise their ideas. In turn, however, the current situation reinforced women's scepticism towards party politics.[33]

Here Szalai is arguing that rather than viewing participation in party politics as creating alternative visions of social development, Hungarian citizens saw this kind of involvement as a means of correcting certain

'masculine' patterns of occupational mobility. In this context, some women were able to seek professional advancement other than in the new political posts in professions requiring language skills and in banking, accounting and finance. The virtual absence of women within the political elites gave importance to informal political participation which became more apparent when analyzing Hungarian politics from a gendered perspective.[34] Women's involvement in non-elected part-time social policy Commissions has been high and their presence tends to safeguard the rapid modernization of local childcare facilities, day centres, homes for the elderly, and other infrastructure for the protection of vulnerable social groups.

Given the more marked differentiation between groups of citizens in Hungary since 1990, women's choices of political involvement obviously vary for different groups. Older, retired women, Roma women, younger unemployed women, or mothers unable to work through lack of childcare facilities, are often the most hard hit since they exist on fixed incomes in circumstances of ever-increasing costs.

State and societal factors shaping women's lives

I have argued elsewhere that the Hungarian state under 'socialism' played a key role both in shaping a female political subject — the new 'socialist woman' — and structuring 'the woman question'.[35] The terms state and society are used to relate to changing conceptions of political participation and social interaction. Definitions of the state usually include aspects of the monopoly of the legitimate use of force. Yet, who defines which forces are legitimate? Generally not women. Some theorists have viewed the state as a neutral instrument of public policy such as equal employment but others argue against this.[36] For many feminist theorists the state is actually a combination of forces, the strongest being male dominance. Here there is an apparent difference between the so-called 'liberal' strategies of women's emancipation — which is concerned with adaptation, i.e. women gaining individual 'rights' as they are already defined within society — and the more 'radical' efforts towards liberation concerned with redefining the whole arena of such 'rights'.[37] For women in Hungary the fusion of 'rights' and 'duties' by the statist forces meant that women generally lost out. For many men in this situation their so-called rights and duties were not only compatible but complementary. For women their 'right' to work conflicted with their 'duty' as mothers.

Women's duties have always been more emotive and stressful than those of men, because men have generally distanced themselves from the domestic sphere. Women were often caught in the double bind: while their domestic responsibilities were not as important as men's worldly ones, men were allowed to countenance failure without being devalued personally. If any aspect of domestic life failed to live up to often idealized assumptions, it often happened that women were held personally responsible and made to feel guilty about whatever it was that had not lived up to expectations. These situations were not unique to Hungarian society.

State policy on 'liberating' women

It is now recognized that the total form of state within Hungary during the period of 'classical socialism'[38] was one that placed primary emphasis on economics. All other issues, including welfare and social policy matters, were measured in importance against the economic imperatives. In the period 1956-67, when socialist policies were consolidated, this economistic approach, coupled with state rhetoric of women's equal place in society, led the way to the so-called 'double burden' which women in Hungary and similar Soviet-type societies suffered. Women were free to work 8 hours each day at the public, paid workplaces and then come home to another 4 hours or so in the private, unpaid workplaces. The psychological strain of this is well summed up by Mária Márkus when she writes of women having to 'explain' their behaviour constantly in terms of the worker/mother duality.[39] These psychological stresses were not broadened out onto a group level as they might have been in some social situations, but remained at a personal level for the great majority of Hungarian women.[40]

My research work was undertaken in the 1980s, towards the end of the time of 'reform socialism' from 1968-89. It became clear to me that two factors played equally decisive parts during the 1980s in confirming women's responsibility for home work and their desire for 'smooth' family lives. The state/society divide was probably the major factor in women's desire not to problematize their extra work in the home — the domestic division of labour. Most women considered that their lives were hard enough, their partners also worked very hard often in second and third jobs within the second economy, so that it did seem reasonable to them to carry out their second or third job in the home and

caring for children. Yet the structure of second economy work, coupled with women's unpaid working responsibilities, meant that very few working women, unlike some intellectual women such as language teachers, could participate in this economic activity which generally gave status and respect to those engaged in it. In couples where both men and women worked at more than one job it remained the case that the women did the majority of housework, and all of the child care. When men did share some responsibility for domestic work it was viewed as 'helping' women. The state encroachment into most spheres of women's lives was underlined by the activities of the Magyar Nők Országos Tanácsa (National Council of Hungarian Women). This was not an autonomous movement but was virtually a branch of the Party which women saw primarily as 'a paper organization'. The fact that *the* Women's Organization existed meant that no groups of Hungarian women could gather together legally as there was no 'real need' for any other organization to represent them.

In terms of child care allowance (*gyermekgondozási segély* or GYES) which was introduced in Hungary in 1967, a good deal has been written.[41] It is enough to note that there have been debates concerning its place in Hungarian social policy in terms of adequacy/efficacy, and how such an allowance is seen to be changing certain structures within society, what it means for families and for women. There was a noted change in opinions amongst doctors concerning children's needs in terms of their socialisation at creche and the pre-school. The fact that there was the potential for rising unemployment in the late 1960s in Hungary was a factor in some of these changes, even though unemployment did not actually become a cause for concern at the time. Many analysts have linked these developments with policy-makers' perceptions of women as a flexible labour force. There are parallels with the situation arising with marketization taking place and debates centering upon women's place within the home.

In theory mothers were respected in Hungarian 'socialist' society and the pro-natalist policies of successive administrations in Hungary point to the government emphasis on raising the low birthrate. In practice many women were often humiliated in more ways than in terms of medical care when trying to control their bodies in terms of conception and childbearing. It was not until the early 1970s that oral contraceptives were made easily accessible.[42] In the mid-1970s and again in 1990 it became clear both to the Hungarian authorities and to the general public

that the government could not expect to smoothly institute a campaign to solve what the authorities viewed as a 'demographic problem' by manipulating abortion laws. Gaining effective control over their fertility is a necessity for women in achieving choice in other areas of their lives and enabling them to play their chosen roles in society. Government concerns about decreasing fertility no doubt stem from the statistics on live births — 125,679 in 1990, down to 100,350 in 1997 and approximately 97,500 in 1998.[43] It is clear that regulations regarding abortion are again being reviewed in the late 1990s with the new FIDESZ government attempting to formulate laws so that terminations of pregnancies will be closely controlled. In addition the withdrawal of financial support for contraceptive pills seriously undermines women's autonomy to make choices regarding their bodily integrity and family planning. In this area, pronatalist state policies are very much considering the needs of women as 'mothers' rather than as citizens.

Analyses of citizenship and women's politics

There have been many ways in which Hungarian women have been able to construct their identities over time and how 'state' and societal forces have intervened and shaped this process. Aspects of women's activities in terms of childbirth and controlling childbearing were considered in addition to issues concerning the duality of the mother/worker roles under which Hungarian women variously laboured over the periods of 'socialism' from 1948-1988.[44] Women as paid workers, domestic workers, childbearers and childcarers are at the heart of social relations, yet as far as decision-making in all its spheres is concerned, women occupy a less than central part. The duality of state/society pressures upon women and the ways in which the statist policies of the 'reforming' Hungarian authorities from 1968 attempted the shape women's expectations and thereby their lives, have long been recognised. Until the political changes of 1988/89 many Hungarian women had little opportunity to try to change particular situations and redress the balance in their lives. In considering women's analyses and activities towards change in the recent period it is possible to assess some of the consequences of the political changes for women. These consequences are apparent at the levels of attitudes, legislation and everyday reality, to enable us to gauge how much space has been opened, what new analyses made and what women's activities have been enabled.

Conceptions of citizenship are integral to an understanding of how state forces and social elements interact in the Hungarian context and of women's perceptions and involvement in these interactions. It has long been argued that the concept of citizenship brings with it notions of inequality. In Western, market-oriented systems status and social class are often contradictory forces within citizenship claims. While such states attempt to guarantee status equality in society, existing social and class barriers perpetuate inequality. In the so-called state socialist countries, such as pre-1989 Hungary, social and class barriers had supposedly been eliminated and were indeed blurred under the Kádárist compromise. Issues of status remained very obviously on the societal agenda. Status was very often measured in economic terms in communist Hungary as well as in terms of influence.

Being a party member brought with it a kind of status, certainly in so far as bureaucrats were able to set the agenda for economically generated differentiation within Hungarian society. Party members also reaped financial rewards through a variety of accepted practices, some corrupt. Yet in other areas of Hungarian life being an oppositionist also brought with it some status in terms of dignity and ethics — concepts often used within Hungarian opposition circles. Invoking the 'ethical imperative' is in the tradition of key democratic oppositionists such as Konrád and Havel. If political decision-making is not based on ethical principles recognised by all citizens, then some safeguards are required for the protection of various interests. If some women become excluded from attaining their full citizenship potential through gender discrimination then the anti-democratic and exclusive political climate is in need of change.[45]

Here the politics of difference and equality is important as it must comprehend both how women are variously excluded from citizenship by gender biasses and how women act to change these situations. In their activism many women in Hungary and elsewhere in Central and Eastern Europe are recognising the 'differentiated universalism' which feminist sociologist Ruth Lister proposes. In arguing for a synthesis of rights and participatory approaches to citizenship which links with notions of human agency, the exclusionary powers of citizenship in relation to both nation-state 'outsiders' and 'insiders' are recognised. In considering outsiders, it is proposed that: "a feminist theory and politics of citizenship must embrace an internationalist agenda.... it offers the concept of a 'differen-

tiated universalism' as an attempt to reconcile the universalism which lies at the heart of citizenship demands with a politics of difference."[46]

In considering the 'equalizing' effect of citizenship, the ways in which the state apparatus viewed women as a collective entity in pre-1989 Hungary is important. The Hungarian state played a large role in attempting to construct and shape the collective identity of Hungarian women. The adoption of Soviet-styled Marxist-Leninist ideology had its effects on Hungarian life. The *modus vivendi* reached under Kádár's government was one in which lip-service was still paid to state-generated equality.[47] Women's 'emancipation' was ensured and women were considered to have achieved or, more precisely, to have been awarded, 'equality'. As noted earlier the concept of equality often confuses more than it clarifies. Who were Hungarian women supposed to be with to? Were working-class Hungarian women or poor women, equal to poor men? Were poor Romany women to be treated on equal terms with poor Hungarian women? Were intellectual women supposedly equal to less educated women and/or intellectual men? There are many and varied elements which make up the different groupings within societies. In terms of Hungarian women's interests, there were of course Party women, rich women, poor women; consequently their concerns remained nuanced and various. The Hungarian state systematically produced policies based on a specific collective identity 'women', which cut across traditional social and economic divisions. Women have never been and indeed cannot become one 'category', yet we do make up half of the world and so are involved in many different arenas of life. Despite the fact that around 97% of Hungarian women are of Magyar origin, cultural and ethnic diversity amongst women in Hungary exists. These are most marked in the case of women of Romany origin, and less obvious for rural Slavic women and women of German descent. Of course fundamental differences exist in economic activities, household patterns and life styles amongst Hungarian women and the urban/rural divide is a very important one. Also, as noted when considering citizenship, the issues of class and status often outweigh sex in making up women's perceptions of themselves in terms of their identities.[48] But the facts that Hungarian policy-makers and scholars considered 'women' as an entity in policy making and sociological study, and that women suffer inequalities on the basis of their gender — and thereby are ascribed gender attributes which are socially and often officially constructed — remain important areas for consideration.

Ever since the 1960s, various groups within Hungary have pointed out inequalities beyond those based on gender. The Hungarian 'right' to free medical treatment basically has always meant very poor medical treatment for ordinary citizens, regardless of the tipping system, because of the inadequate infrastructure of the health service generally, within a crisis-stricken economy. For women the 'right to work' lost all meaning over the years as it was associated with the total exhaustion of working all day in paid work and most evenings and weekends at home. The same applies to abortions. In this connection, 'women's right to choose' is not the first argument that will be taken up. However, women's right to control their fertility is viewed as a necessity by many Hungarian women and men, and the debates over reproductive rights take similar forms all over the world.[49]

Active women's groups since 1990

Of the different 'types' of political participation by women three examples illustrate something of the range: the Women Entrepreneurs, the Foundation of the Women of Hungary (MONA) and NaNE (Nők Nőkért az Erőszak Ellen — Women working with Women Against Violence). These groups have offered different analyses of social change and work in different ways to achieve it. The models of change within which these groups range are between assimilation and liberation. In the former, the Women Entrepreneurs are basically asking for their full share of the cake — assimilation to the world of men, within an already agreed framework. In the latter group, NaNE, women are seeking to change the rules of the game so that a different cake is constituted. The activists in MONA range across these aims and expectations. In each of these groups are women who are trying to change the terms of debate so that women, men and children can work together to assess terms of reference, including what human equality entails. It has been recognised that the practical constraints for women organisers — of time and money, for leaflets, fares; resources for places to meet, phone lines; energy for housework, childcare; and lack of support in terms of wider community attitudes — mean that establishing women's groups and undertaking women's projects are not easy and straightforward tasks.[50]

Founded in 1991, the Women Entrepreneurs had chosen to break from the Entrepreneurs Association because their voices were not being heard. Knowing their ideas were useful but not recognized within the

larger association, women chose to establish their own association. At least two types of women are interested in their work: successful managers, without job satisfaction, who have personal aims to improve their working lives; and rural women forced into new work through job losses. The main aim of the Women Entrepreneurs is to assist and encourage those women who wish to start their own enterprises but do not have the necessary skills or funding. The women in this Association have looked beyond the borders of Hungary, they consider such organizations as the American Association of Entrepreneurs as well as some of the Italian cooperative associations, as their models. They are making good use of information on marketing and on obtaining loans at home and abroad. In the economic climate of post-1989 Hungary, with its unemployment, this work was very important for a variety of Hungarian women. Working within the assimilation model, these women want 'fair shares' in the marketplace for all women wishing to enter it.

An embryonic women's group had been established within the SzDSz in 1990. It was short-lived, as were several others set up at that time, within academic and professional circles, and the trade unions. One such organization was the Democratic Union of Scientific and Research Workers. Many of the democratic groupings in the years from 1989-1991, including feminist groups, were short-lived because of the general malaise and unease following the 1990 elections. Expectations were high, perhaps inflated in some quarters, about the possibilities that a complete change of government could herald. Change in many areas was very slow and there was public complaint of a government that was 'all talk and no action'. Much time was spent in Parliament discussing religious education in schools with important budgetary decisions being rushed through at the end of sessions. Yet the women's groups within the SzDSz did reform to become MONA (The Hungarian Women's Foundation) established in November 1992. The main, and ambitious, goal of the foundation was and still is to promote more active participation by women in political life and the civil sphere. Between April 1993 and April 1994 the Foundation concentrated on the project 'Women in Civil Society' which initiated a series of meetings designed to serve as a catalyst for existing women's groups in Hungary and for the inclusion of other interest groups.

The National Women's Roundtable, held in April 1993, was attended by over 150 women from twenty-four different groups. One researcher notes five groups as playing a determinant role in the future of

the Hungarian Women's Movement: The Gypsy Mothers Group, The Hungarian Feminist Network, The Association of Hungarian Women, The Ombudswoman Programme and the Women's Club of Sopron.[51] Of these, the Gypsy Mothers Group is of particular interest, as it has the potential to link with other similar groups within Central and Eastern Europe on shared platforms. There are Roma projects throughout the region, many of which are have been funded under the European Union PHARE Democracy Initiative — a programme to promote economic reconstruction in Poland and Hungary. Alongside this, several of the other groups' first contacts were with international women's associations outside Central and Eastern Europe, although the Feminist Network does work with some feminist groupings in neighbouring countries as well.

The group concerned with violence against women had been initiated by several Hungarian women who had participated in a seminar on 'Violence against Women,' at the Women's Commission sessions of the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly, held in Bratislava, Slovakia. Participants included women from the SOS Hotline in Belgrade which worked with women suffering abuse — in the home, the neighbourhood, or in the war. Within a year the Hungarian group had gained official registration as NaNE and in January 1994 the fourteen founding members established their offices in Budapest. From the start the activities of this group attracted much media attention which meant their service went into operation to service callers earlier than anticipated and so volunteers were required quickly. Following their training in association with activists from the SOS hotlines of Belgrade and Zagreb, their explicit aims included: operating a phoneline for women experiencing violence; reducing the high levels of violence against women and children; pressing for change to relevant laws and policies and their implementation; and improving support services for survivors of physical, psychological and sexual violence.[52] In the following years the group made more national and international contacts with an international conference in May 1994 on 'Violence and Democracy' and direct contact with shelters and hostels offering temporary accommodation to women and children in Budapest as well as Family Assistance Centres operating inside and outside the city. Other groups in provincial areas interested in setting up a phoneline have contacted NaNE to discuss the possibilities. Kriszta Szalay has pointed out that: 'Volunteers in NaNE have had a chance to look into the often grave state of affairs within the Hungarian legal, health care and education system'.[53]

The key to the political participation of women within these groups and their campaigns is their desire to correct the gender imbalances within Hungarian society at large, and the consequences that give women fewer opportunities for involvement at various levels at work and in decision-making. They recognize from their experiences that women are often disadvantaged when participating in community activism and attempting to create change.

Conclusions

This article has considered key themes for analyzing the gendered nature of political participation in Hungary since 1990 through assessments of Hungarian political developments and feminist analyses of politics. The importance of historical legacies in attitudes and beliefs have been apparent. Differences in attitudes, values and expectations have been inscribed into individual histories through socialisation processes over generations. Policies which characterised 'the woman question' in the 1950s were in a very different vein to the ideological trends of the 1970s. Various political, economic, social and cultural changes which evolved during the 1980s in the 'second society' led to the recognition of alternative conceptions of living. In this recognition lay the gradual questioning of the very essence of the delicate compromise between state and society. These ongoing processes of democratisation of Hungarian society called forward key questions about the relationship of the state and the individual. The 'anti-politics' of oppositional movements had found the notion of 'civil society' important for identifying space for the construction of alternative relationships to those of the state power. The dramatic changes after 1990 complemented many aspects of this alternative organising of everyday Hungarian life. The effects of these developments were often contradictory and were keenly experienced by different groups of women in a variety of ways. The consequences of broadening definitions of 'the political' can be seen in the inclusion of women's needs, interests and activities within our ideas about citizenship.

The changed political, economic and social climate in the past decade in Hungary is still very much double edged for different groups of women. When the informal aspects of second economy activity became more formally recognised, some women began to work without pay or recognition — their husbands were the 'businessmen'. There may be less scope for some women's resources within the current capitalist market-

oriented situation than there was in the system that prevailed before 1989. In a more openly competitive financial environment skills of defending family budgets may be overtaken by increasing costs.

The question of sexual politics — defending women's specific interests in areas of choice around childbearing, resistance to male violence and opportunities of public paid work — remains a complex arena of debate. The parallel growth of the second economy within pre-1989 Hungary meant that rather than resisting state forces by direct confrontation, Hungarian citizens were resisting them in alternative forms of by-passing state activities. This was achieved both through privately-generated work, and spending, in both rural and urban areas, so that state forces could not intervene with ease in these processes. Yet post-1990 there have been tensions between a dislike of state intervention and the need for certain sectors within society, such as working mothers, to have impact upon government policies. The arguments of the liberals — and even some of the socialists — for 'rolling back' the state as well as citizens' rights to state support, have given rise to heated debates. The controversies about abortion highlight some of the contradictions inherent in these debates as far as women's interests are concerned.

Certain aspects of cultural change in post-1989 Hungary have been very slow, despite, or perhaps as a consequence of, immense political upheaval. Some old myths live on, particularly those concerned with women's 'natural roles' which were clear throughout 1990 when members of the Catholic Church were encouraging people to sign petitions about restricting or outlawing abortions, while the country's government 'sat on the fence'. In 1999 there is again much discussion in the Hungarian press about abortion issues. As cheap and safe contraception is not available in Hungary to every woman who needs it, the fall-back position of having the right to abortion is essential. When the abortion issue becomes 'newsworthy' due to government proposals to change the existing legislation, various arguments concerning the paternalism of the old regime come into focus: a good example of how the politics of the past can be resurrected to inform the present. As many Hungarians still associate the issues around women's equality and abortion with the old communist administration, it could be relatively easy to dismiss the abortion issue as a communist issue. Yet, in response to such arguments Hungarian feminists in the recent past have proclaimed that: "We regard any regulation drastically interfering in the life of the citizen impermiss-

ible. The era during which individuals' private lives were shaped via centrally issued prohibitions and demands is now a thing of the past."[54]

The spectrum of beliefs represented in this discourse spans the range from feminist to religious fundamentalist and is again under debate from similar perspectives in 1999, with women's rights/needs to have an abortion being once again disputed.[55] Questions here arise concerning the nature of 'transitional' politics, and about Hungarian citizens' trust in, and the legitimacy of, the new political elites and institutions. The failure of the MDF government between 1991-1994 to establish certain basic institutions of a capitalist system meant that, after its electoral victory in 1994, the Socialist Party faced the paradox of being the 'vanguard' of building capitalism. The FIDESZ government since 1998 have been dealing with the threat of a population decline by means of state intervention providing social services to meet women's needs as mothers rather than as citizens.

Given earlier considerations of the part played by familial politics in undermining the state's dominance over Hungarian society, it is clear that to understand the phenomenon of gendered political participation within Hungarian society a wider recognition of 'the political' is required. Analyses need to be fully contextualized, historically and socially, so that the differentiation in processes of 'transition' to a multiparty system with a market economy can be assessed. The efforts of women since 1990 in ameliorating some of the harshest aspects of the economic reforms as they impact upon households, are becoming apparent. Although certain groups of women (such as bankers) have been able to succeed in the competitive, market-oriented framework, many women and groups of women have not. The rapid social differentiation that market economics has brought to Hungarian society over the past decade has resulted in vast inequalities which have yet to be fully dealt with in social policy measures and government legislation. Situations in which women are abused by traffickers and pimps are only recently being investigated and recognised as crimes. Older women living in poverty are not yet adequately counted into the social system. Women suffering violence in the home and elsewhere do not have as many options for support and redress as they need. In these and similar undervalued policy areas feminists and other women's groups have been particularly active over the past five to ten years. The need for long- and short-term campaigns and projects is recognised in such politics and a wide variety — from the small feminist groups to the larger women's organizations within parties — remains a

necessity in adjusting the gender imbalances within Hungarian society. This wide variety of groups is a necessity for the adjustment of gender imbalances because the issues raised for women as citizens, workers and mothers call forward key questions about the nature of democratic society. The processes involved in Hungary's transformation to a post-communist society affect different groups of women keenly and sometimes in contradictory ways. Failure to recognize emergent citizens' initiatives within a wider political perspective may mean that key areas of political activity will be ignored. If gender issues remain imbalanced, the results will render inadequate any accounts of the democratization processes in Hungary and elsewhere. As has been shown, the active involvement of women at various levels in Hungarian democratic politics has been giving support to the social renovation processes at work in Hungary. In so doing, women are challenging perceived imbalances of power within civil society by creating more inclusive and responsive political and economic mechanisms. In this way they are contributing to the creation of conditions for more constructive and egalitarian dialogues in the next millennium.

NOTES

[1] György Konrád, *Anti-Politics: An Essay* (London: Quartet, 1984).

[2] Chris Corrin, *Feminist Perspectives on Politics* (London: Longman, 1999).

[3] In the 1970s Hungarian social and political scientists became aware of a cleavage between the 'first' or official society, and the 'second,' informal or latent, society in their country. During the 1980s this cleavage became the focus of serious research efforts. Elemér Hankiss, *East European Alternatives* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 83.

[4] Gisela Kaplan *Contemporary Western Feminism* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1992); Sheila Rowbotham, *Women in Movement* (London: Routldge, 1992); Chris Corrin, *Magyar Women: Hungarian Women's Lives 1960s-1990s* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1994); Nickie Charles and Felicia Hughes Freeland, eds., *Practising Feminism: Identity, Difference, Power* (London: Routledge, 1996).

[5] See Lynne Haney, "From Proud Worker to Good Mother: Women, the State and Regime Change in Hungary," in *Frontiers* 14 (1994) (3).

[6] N. Nie, and S. Verba, "Political Participation," a 1975 work reprinted in F. Greenstein and N. Polsby, eds., *Handbook of Political Science* (Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley, 1992). vol. 4, ch. 1.

[7] See P. Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Conciousness and the Politics of Empowerment* (London: Harper, 1990); A. Lorde, *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (New York: Crossing Press, 1984); C. Pateman, *Sexual Contract* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1988); A. Phillips, ed., *Feminism and Equality* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987); Júlia Szalai, Women and Democratization: Some Notes on Recent Changes in Hungary, unpublished paper, 1994; also Corrin, *Magyar Women.*

[8] C. Offe, "New Social Movements: Challenging the Boundaries of Institutional Politics," *Social Research,* 52, no. 4 (1985), pp. 817-68; W.L. Miller *et al., Values and Political Change in Postcommunist Europe* (London: Macmillan, 1998); Éva Fodor, "The Political Woman? Women in Politics in Hungary," in Marilyn Rueschemeyer, ed., *Women in the Politics of Postcommunist Eastern Europe* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), pp. 142-67; A. Melucci, "Social Movements and the Democratization of Everyday Life," in John Keane ed., *Civil Society and the State* (London: Verso, 1988).

[9] Melaine Tatur, "Why is there no Women's Movement in Eastern Europe?" in P. Lewis, *Democracy and Civil Society in Eastern Europe* (London: Macmillan, 1992).

[10] Biljana Kasic, *Women and the Politics of Peace* (Zagreb: Women's Studies, 1997), p. 7.

[11] See Chris Corrin, "People and Politics," in S. White, P. Lewis and J. Batt, eds., *Developments in East European Politics* (Basingtone: Macmillan, 1993), p. 19.

[12] See Corrin, *Magyar Women, p. 232*; Reka Pigniczky, "The Making of a Women's Movement" in Tanya Renne, ed., *Ana's Land: Sisterhood in Eastern Europe* (Boulder, Colorado, and Oxford: Westview Press, 1997), pp. 121-132.

[13] Mihály Vajda, "Hungary after the local elections," *East European Reporter*, Vol. 4 No. 3 (Autumn/Winter 1991).

[14] Mita Castle-Kanerova, "Czech and Slovak Federative Republic: The culture of strong women in the making?" in Chris Corrin, ed. *Superwomen and the Double Burden: Women's experience of change in Central and Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union* (London: Scarlet, 1992) pp. 97-124. Barbara Einhorn, *Cinderella Goes to Market: Citizenship, Gender, and Women's Movements in East Central Europe* (London: Verso 1993). Nanette Funk and Marcia Mueller, eds., *Gender Politics and Post-Communism: Reflections from Eastem Europe and the Former Soviet Union* (London: Routledge 1993).

[15] Kay Lawson and Peter Merkl, *When Parties Fail* (New York: Princeton University Press, 1988).

[16] See Hankiss, *East European Alternatives.*

[17] Vaclav Havel in Keane, *Civil Society and the State* [cited in n. 8], p. 398. On the subject of 'anti-politics' see also György Konrád's *Anti-Politics, cit.*

[18] Tamaz Mastnak, in *The HcA's founding assembly* (Prague: Helsinki Citizens' Assembly, 1991).

[19] See Hankiss, *op. cit.*

[20] Szalai, Women and Democratization, *op. cit.* p. 7.

[21] See Mária Némény, "The Social Construction of Women's Roles in Hungary" *Replika, Hungarian Social Science Quarterly,* special issue, 1996, pp. 83-90.

[22] *Ibid.,* p. 86.

[23] Corrin, *Magyar Women,* p. 149.

[24] Szalai, Women and Democratization, *op. cit.,* p. 11.

[25] B. Deacon, *et al.*, eds., *The New Eastern Europe: Social Policy, Past, Present and Future* (London: Sage Publications, 1992), p. 172.

[26] R. L. Tőkés, *Hungary's Negotiated Revolution: Economic reform, social change, and political succession, 1957-1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

[27] T. Cox, "Government-Interest Group Relations in Hungarian Politics," a paper presented at the British Association of Slavonic and East European Studies Conference, Cambridge, March 27-29, 1999.

[28] V. Bunce and M. Csanádi, "Uncertainty in the Transition: Post-Communism in Hungary," *East European Politics and Society*, Vol. 7, no. 2 (1993), p. 243.

[29] Chris Corrin, *Superwomen and the Double Burden: Women's Experience of Change in Central and Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union* (London: Scarlet Press, 1992).

[30] Bunce and Csanádi, p. 245.

[31] Corrin, *Magyar Women,* p. 240.

[32] See Fodor, "The Political Woman?" *cit.*

[33] Szalai, Women and Democratization, *cit.*, p. 23.

[34] See Corrin, 1992, *op. cit.*, and O. Toth, "No Envy: No Pity," in Funk and Mueller, eds., *Gender Politics and Post-Communism, cit.*, pp. 213-223.

[35] Chris Corrin, "Gendered Identities: Women's experience of Change in Hungary," in S. Rai, H. Pilkington and A. Phizaklea, eds. *Women in the Face of Change: The Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and China* (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 167-185.

[36] Elizabeth Wilson in her work *Women and the Welfare State* (London, 1977) argues that the state not only tries to define women but also regulates their sexuality.

[37] Parallels have been made between feminist arguments concerning women's liberation and similar issues for many ethnic and nationalist movements.

This issue is also pivotal for lesbians and gay men. What is involved is not just a radical redefinition of 'rights' but the valuing of the right to nonassimilation, that is, the right to be different. Being different should not mean having to assume a lesser social status.

[38] Szonja Szelényi, *Equality by Design: The Grand Experiment in Destratification in Socialist Hungary* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), p. 7.

[39] Mária Márkus "Change in the function of socialization and models of the family," *International Review of Sociology*, 3, (1975).

[40] Toth, "No Envy: No Pity," pp. 213-23.

[41] Julia Szalai (with the contribution of Agatha Horváth), "Alternative policies for caring for children under the age of 3: the Hungarian Case" (Budpest: Institute of Sociology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1978); Mária Neményi, "Hungary" in M. Cochrane, ed., *International Handbook of Child Care Policies and Programs* (London: Greenwood Press, 1993).

[42] From 1st October 1973 district and company doctors were allowed to prescribe contraceptive pills and the pills were placed in the same category as other medicines so that only 15% of list price was paid.

[43] See the website http://www.ksh.hu

[44] Corrin, *Magyar Women*, *cit.*

[45] See Chris Corrin, ed., *Gender and Identity in Central and Eastern Europe*, special issue of *The Journal of Communist Politics and Transition Studies* 15, 1 (1999).

[46] Ruth Lister, "Citizenship: Towards a Feminist Synthesis," in *Citizenship: Pushing the Boundaries*, a special issue of the *Feminist Review* 57 (1997).

[47] See György Konrád and Iván Szelényi, *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power* (New York: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovic, 1979), for details of inequalities.

[48] This distinction between women's ideas concerning identity and the state notions of women as a category clearly point up the differences between the biological categories of 'sex' and the socio-cultural conceptions of 'gender'. Sex and gender are merely factors amongst others in building up women's identity, yet for the state authorities gender often becomes not only the major defining characteristic for all women but an elastic conception which serves to blur all other divisions amongst women.

[49] For a review concerned with negotiating reproductive rights see Rosalind Petchesky and Karen Judd, *Negotiating Reproductive Rights Women's Perspectives Across Countries and Cultures* (London: Zed Press, 1998).

[50] See Corrin, *Magyar Women, cit.*, pp. 232-34.

[51] Pigniczky, "The Making of a Women's Movement," *cit.*, p. 124.

[52] See Kriszta Szalay, "Domestic Violence Against Women in Hungary," in Chis Corrin, ed., *Women in a Violent World: Feminist Analyses and Resistance Across 'Europe'* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1996), pp. 41-52.

[53] *Ibid.*, p. 50.

[54] Zsuzsa Béres, "Women's Liberation: words of ill repute," *Budapest Week,* vol. 1, no. 2, March 1991.

[55] The government announced their plans to remove the subsidy on contraceptive pills and intention to formulate strict conditions under which the termination of pregnancy will be granted. See *Magyar Hírlap*, January 18th 1999.

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Women in Hungary in Times of Social and Cultural Transition

Éva Thun

The decade of economic and political-social transition in Central Eastern Europe has had modest success in the development of a market economy and in the harmonization of political structures and legal frameworks with those of the European Union (EU). A number of issues, however, remain unaddressed; issues which concern civil society and local cultural traditions as well as individual and collective needs and responsibilities.

Hungarian citizens are well informed about the global economy and politics. When it comes to knowledge of such matters as civic participation in political processes, social and cultural discourses about human rights — and their relevance to particular social groups, such as ethnic or religious groups and women or others experiencing poverty — Hungarian society displays definite shortcomings. The causes of this lack of social sensitivity, this paucity of public discourse about the emerging social, political and cultural values of the transition era, are not readily evident and should be investigated. In particular, the peculiarities of the social processes involved in the transition from communist rule to the new pluralism and the market economy should be analyzed, because they seem to gravitate towards the exclusion of women from politics and work opportunities, and the silencing of women by drawing on outdated arguments derived from patriarchal traditions. It seems somewhat ironic that while the values of a consumer society and popular culture are being promoted in Hungary, women's concerns are not being addressed.

Besides tracing post-1989 attitudes toward women's roles in society, this paper aims to offer some explanations of why women's

concerns are not in the forefront of Hungarian public consciousness, and to throw some light on the factors that contribute to negative attitudes to women's issues in this era of political and social transformation. This paper will also suggest that in order to begin the process of remedying these deficiencies and shortcomings, Hungarian society — instead of looking entirely to Western European and North American models for solutions — should try to reclaim the rich legacy of Hungarian feminism, a feminism that has grown out of national roots and traditions.

The Political Climate — Political Players/Actors

Conservatism and Blaming the Past

It is still not a widely known fact that Hungary is a signatory to the UN declarations which ban discrimination against women in all areas of life. Despite the existence of this international obligation on the part of the Hungarian state, the prevailing neo-conservative attitudes towards women's issues tend to reinforce the concepts of the patriarchal social and cultural order and do little to end such discrimination. The social status of women, as defined during the period of state socialism and reinforced by the political ideologies of those times, is now seen as part of a negative and unusable discourse. This definition of women's status and role in society included the cultivation of the image of women as strong individuals, a view not foreign to traditional Hungarian culture. In some contrast to the attitudes of the era of state socialism, the newly emerging cultural and social views encourage women to assume their traditional or "natural" role in society and restrict their activities to the home. This ideology is promoted in the argument that women's participation in the workforce and in the public sphere in the state socialist period was altogether wrong. Supposedly, women had been misled and forced to do things which did not naturally fit their character. As a consequence, those women who want to enter men's spaces — that is assume roles in the public sphere — are vehemently criticized, as Mária Neményi has pointed out:

> As a rule, women public actors and politicians are treated differently from men. Without exception, women are asked about their family and about the "problem" of being able to fulfil all the female roles, the role of a wife,

> and housewife — together with their unconventional public responsibilities.[1]

Both politicians and bureaucrats tend to treat women as beings who need patronizing, as citizens who do not have the capacity to make their own decisions. This practice, along with the attempts to discredit the pre-1989 ideological stand on women, persuades many of public leaders to support the traditional patriarchal value system. Examples of this tendency were exhibited in the election campaign of the spring of 1998.

The Cultural Myth of Women's Supportive Role

In a leaflet in many ways typical of the times, a woman candidate for Parliament introduced herself by telling the prospective voters about her husband and children. Only at the end of the leaflet were we informed about her public activities and her political program. In the same campaign some male politicians attempted to attract women voters by using their wives as mediums to communicate their messages to women. These wives suggest that the task of women is to secure a steady, amicable and comfortable background for the men who are engaged in the demanding work of building a new society. For example, candidate György Csóti's wife distributed the following letter during the election campaign of the spring of 1998:

> Dear Madam,
>
> I would like to tell you about György Csóti, whom I have known for decades and whom I love. The actors of public life are far away from the events of everyday life; this is why we do not know much about politicians, though we entrust them with important tasks... I think I will be able to fill in this gap when I share my personal opinion with you, share what I know about my husband, about the candidate of this constituency.
>
> Gyuri is a polite and considerate husband, and a supportive father. He has never abandoned me in the task of bringing up our daughter. He said if he had not shared the responsibilities of her education he would have robbed himself of experiencing fatherhood.... Sometimes I

> worry about him and I wonder how I could assist him. Many times it is enough help that I just listen to what he has to say, or I just cook his favourite meal for supper....
> Your friend, Kati Csóti.[2]

It is also a common belief nowadays in Hungary that those who shape public life are above the mundane, "everyday life." This attitude encourages an atmosphere in which citizens are "grateful" to the politicians for their "sacrifices" for society, and because in most cases these politicians are men, they have to be looked upon by women with gratitude and respect.

Representation and Administrative Methods

Women politicians are few in number, and women's issues are silenced in manipulative ways in the political arena of Hungary. Katalin Lévai, the director of the Office of Equal Opportunity, pointed out that during the general election campaign of 1998 political parties failed to consider the different voting behaviours of women. Instead of doing so, however, the political parties obfuscated women's issues using stereotypical and emotional slogans.[3] There were great many allusions to women's responsibilities in the family, and attention to women has been paid by such empty gestures as handing out flowers to women in the streets on Mother's Day or Women's Day.

Since the power of civic organizations in post-1989 Hungary is limited, women's issues are raised by members of the country's political and bureaucratic elites. The solutions to women's problems are also offered by the same people, invariably without inviting wider public discussion and seeking public approval. For example, prostitution is dealt with as a legal and administrative issue without reference to the underlying social and cultural factors. These administrative strategies create the illusion that the mere fact that a topic has been aired in the media (e.g. discussed in a roundtable on TV) means that it can be considered "solved" for good. Even persistent issues such as abortion or violence against women are dealt with in this manner. Unfortunately, there seems to be no need voiced for serious public discussion of social issues.

Public Debate on Political Issues

In today's Hungary no one seems to question the omnipotent position of *high politics* and the hegemony of traditional cultural myths. There is no effective forum for meaningful public debates, and for the presentation of different views and opinions. The various interest and social groups do not enter into dialogue with each other, they do not communicate with each other. They do not even consider each other's views or allow their arguments to be weighed against each other. The apathy of citizens towards issues of personal opportunity and social justice has also contributed to the emergence of a political atmosphere that does not favour the worthwhile public discussion of women's concerns.

There is another factor which should be focused on when evaluating the preconditions for a meaningful public debate. This factor is the general lack of knowledge of prevailing social conditions in Hungary. This shortcoming results from the fact that there is very little research done in the areas of social welfare, particularly in the areas of women's issues. Statistics that are available to researchers are often incomplete or even biased, and the products of reliable social science research are missing. It is not surprising under the circumstances that the participants in public discussions, when arguing for their point of view, have to rely on anecdotal evidence or personal experiences.

In addition to the problems posed by the lack of tolerance and lack of opportunity for meaningful public debate, Hungarian society is plagued by other shortcomings. Most important among these are the civic leaders' lack of communication skills and their ignorance of the strategies of conflict resolution. Self-confidence, personal responsibility, and the quality of public appearance are things which need to be developed within civic groups, including women's organizations.

The Office of Equal Opportunity

One year after the women's World Conference in Beijing, the Office of Women's Affairs' was established within Hungary's Ministry of Labour. Later the name of this bureau was changed to "Office of Equal Opportunity." The so-called "Mission Statement" of this office describes how the government of the times described its own approach to women's issues:

> The Government sees the civic organizations as partners, not only as mere tools for the realization of their political intensions. The Government invites the civic organizations to take part in the forming of political life and in the identification process of social problems and in finding the solutions. The representatives of the civic organizations set up a Civic Forum initiated by the Office, which offers the opportunity for all the organizations to inform the other groups about their goals and objectives and activities and for networking. A Working Group has been created with the purpose of discussing the most burning issues, such as discrimination against women at work, violence against women, prostitution, etc. The Working Group, with the assistance of inside and outside experts, will develop projects for the practical solutions of the given problems. In this way, the opportunity for constructive co-operation is created, which offers further perspectives for women's organizations.[4]

The Mission Statement of the Office of Equal Opportunity also recognizes the issue of discrimination, which is of course also underlined in such UN documents as the Convention on All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. In the Hungary of the times however, at the highest level of politics such issues were only dealt with superficially and only in an administrative fashion.

The administrative power of state organizations, despite the requirements of international laws, did little to improve the state of affairs concerning women's issues. The failure of the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) to achieve its goals is clearly reflected in the personal career of its director, Katalin Lévai. She was gradually marginalized as a civic leader. The government substantially reduced the OEO's scope of activities and thereby curtailed her role as Hungary's chief spokesperson on women's issues. The OEO assumed a "token" role of representing women's interests. Lévai's public activities were limited to publishing articles in the daily papers on women's issues as a sociologist; in effect she was banned from functioning as a lobbyist or political activist. The department's main goal of facilitating the dialogue between individual citizens and civic organizations on the one hand, and the country's political elite on the other, was forgotten.

Despite its marginalized position, the OEO has gained a measure of public approval. One of its successful actions was a lawsuit targeting discrimination against women in employment. Another high-profile OEO project was the compilation of life histories of women who had been victims of discrimination. Andrea Rimay described how the OEO's action had prompted her to go public with her story:

> After a long search the Office of Equal Opportunity had reached me. I felt I had to act on what happened to me. The main motivating factors for my choice to go public were the practices of restricting women's work opportunities. I am aware that discrimination will never cease to exist, but I believe that it can be alleviated. Of course I am not talking about women driving tractors, since the biological differences between men and women cannot be disputed. Someone, however, has to set a precedent so that women should not be stopped in achieving their potential.[5]

The Office of Equal Opportunity, however, never addressed such issues as abortion, violence against women, and prostitution, in spite of the fact that these issues were touched upon in the press either as a result of actual incidents or because of the ongoing process of harmonizing Hungary's laws with international and EU legislation. The issues mentioned above were discussed by the Constitutional Court of Law, with the intent of recommending draft legislation to Parliament, but Hungary's parliamentarians have yet to take effective action.

Lack of Civic Society

In post-1989 Hungary, civic society and civic activism, as they are understood in Western democracies, hardly exist. Civic organizations exist, but they are often severely criticized and their work is hindered. The governments give them neither encouragement nor adequate funding. Neither the state nor private persons and entrepreneurs with substantial financial means acknowledge their valuable work. Alas, in today's Hungary charity is interpreted as giving a few pennies to the people begging in the streets. Financial support for social and civic purposes is

an unknown act of benevolence. Hungarian society prefers to support soccer teams and certain TV programs. Those who possess the financial means of supporting civic organizations usually consider the provision of a social safety net for the masses the sole responsibility of the state. These people do not acknowledge any public responsibilities, and some of them hold the view that people should be able to prosper at the expense of others or by cheating the state. Most members of Hungary's economic elite regard those who choose to participate in civic work either as benevolent idealists or aggressive eccentrics. These people see civic activists as people who lack the courage or the talent to utilize Hungary's chaotic state of legislation for their own purposes in order to become rich. In such circumstances civic groups are tolerated only as long as they do not interfere with the activities of the rich and powerful. The moment they voice their opinions about individual and collective responsibilities of citizens, they are attacked because they are seen as interfering with "private interests."

Civic Organizations — Women's Organizations

Civic organizations, especially women's organizations, face enormous difficulties in acting on their convictions. Despite the difficulties which followed the political turnaround of 1989, a great number of women's groups have emerged. Typically, their objectives are "special interest" oriented. These groups are rarely concerned with "universal" women's issues. Unlike women's movements in the West, the Hungarian women's organizations came into existence because of private/personal motives of their participants. These groups serve more as sheltered outlets for women's activities, than as forums for political actions. Their existence in part compensates for the fact that, after the political transformation of 1989, women (and also men) suddenly lost the protection of the "social umbrella" which guaranteed the welfare services of the state. It should be kept in mind, however, that in 1989 women had lost more then men: they lost the ideological support that state socialism had extended to them.

One might suppose that the newly formed women's groups would achieve some influence in post-1989 Hungary's political decision-making processes. However, most of the women's groups have failed to realize that they must insist that women's issues remain prominent in political,

social and cultural discussions, otherwise the general public will deem their activities ineffective and therefore of little value.

The Odds Against a Women's Movement

Political instability in post-1989 Hungary and the paucity of strong civic organizations are significant discouraging factors. It is difficult for groups of concerned citizens to develop a course of action when the rules of the game are constantly changing. Movements with a social agenda, furthermore, are viewed unfavourably by the general public. Such movements, and their associated ideologies, are deemed as posing a threat to those individuals who are struggling to define their own personal identities. These persons regard the function of any socio-political movement, as yet another instance of socio-political "brainwashing." In addition to this general hostility to movements with a social purpose, there are the other factors, already mentioned, such as the shortage of finances and the lack of communication and leadership skills on the part of the leadership of such movements.

Despite these countervailing odds, the uncertainty factors can also be interpreted as positive. When the government's social policies are unstable and unpredictable, clearly described and articulated demands may attract a large number of supporters. Moreover, the uncertainties about work opportunities and welfare support affect men and women alike. Both men and women are going through the crisis of defining their self-identity within the altered political and social environment. There is a strong likelihood that, should the women's groups be able to improve their civic skills, many men would identify with their viewpoints. Under the given circumstances, assertive activism and the articulate communication needs and demands can appear as genuine social power. Finally and perhaps more importantly, the post-1989 Hungary's women's movement should be able to build upon the legacy of Hungarian women's movements of the past.

In conclusion, it might be assumed that modern Hungarian feminism and the women's movement will not repeat the developmental path of Western feminism because of the obviously different historical, sociological and geographical backgrounds. The discussion of gender identity should parallel the discussion of national and cultural identities of Hungarian citizens. Both men and women should join this discussion.

Identity and Public Roles

A Negative Collective Identity

Most members of the general public in Hungary view the subjects of women's identities, especially women's public identities, as problematic. They tend to reject expressions of women's self-esteem and self-definition. Furthermore, the promoters of a Magyar national-cultural, collective identity often criticize what they call "feminists" for being unpatriotic, and they regard instances of conscious self-expression by women as attempts to undermine a collective national identity. Not surprisingly under these circumstances, women's identities and self-images in contemporary Hungary are usually negative.

Sociologist György Csepeli has argued that this negative identity has been shaped by East European and Hungarian social and historical circumstances. According to Csepeli, state socialism destroyed the possibility of forging a positive identity and, instead, created the framework for a strictly defined collective identity which was then filled with negative content: "Nobody could define who they were, but everybody could say who they were not." The post-1989 public discourses on identity seem to perpetuate this negative identity:

> The iron curtain had to be lifted so that people could face the question who they are, where they come from, where they are heading. It was revealed, however, that the new ideals in the name of which the "velvet," "quiet," etc. revolutions took place come from the old times — mostly they were the products of Enlightenment. The issues of individual rights/human rights and national freedom or the issues of social justice have been placed in the focus of political discourses again.[6]

The new collective identity which emerged in post-1989 Hungary has not been formed through debate and public discussion. The supporters of this collective identity regard public issues as issues of faith and cultural traditions. When confronted with different views, they often

respond not only with intellectual arguments, but also with emotional outbursts and sometimes even physical violence.

The Post-communist "Carnival"

The definition of private and public are problematic in the Hungarian social atmosphere. There is a strong tendency to perpetuate the belief that the only public issues are: government politics, economy and foreign affairs — in particular, NATO and EU issues. Certain aspects of popular culture, such as journalism, TV, and sports, may also be considered public issues. However, issues such as health care, education, the environment and social security are often relegated to the realm of the private sphere.

At the same time there is a tendency on the part of the public to interpret public roles as artificial and compulsory routines of a theatrical nature. The actors keep repeating the same ideals, which they say are desirable and valuable, but they never justify them with authentic arguments. As a consequence, they play "phantom roles" prescribed by imagined public expectations, instead of relying on justifiable and reliable social and cultural experiences. Hungarians, it seems, live in the public world of clowns and tragic heroes — a phenomenon which has a long history in Hungary. The role of the trustworthy citizen does not convey positive values. The citizen who respects laws and other individual rights is considered to be unfit to survive the harshness of unrestrained capitalism. He/she is an "idealist" and a "fool", regardless of gender.

Lack of Analyses in Social and Cultural Studies

The speedy transformations in the economy and in political structures give rise to constant shifts in society's value systems. Another problem is the fact that there is hardly any analysis available in social and cultural studies that discusses the constantly changing situation, and would follow up on unfolding events. The reasons for this scarcity of analysis and reflection are manifold, the discussion of which would stretch beyond the limits of this paper. It might be noted though, that this phenomenon appears to be contributing to difficulties in the analysis of the possibilities of Hungarian feminism as well.

Erzsébet Szalai comments on the present state of social research when she compares the roles of social studies in the past and in the present:

> It is a most striking phenomenon that communication among the actors of social sciences has shrunk and almost died away. The environment for meaningful discussions has also disappeared, and even the specific language of social sciences has lost its meaning.
>
> In the 1970's and 1980's sociology created and fostered the language and the discourse of social sciences and was a powerful force in creating cultural discussions (if only an elitist one). Since the end of the 1980's however, it is the political discourse that has become the instrumental mode of cultural production as well.
>
> Cultural and social discourses limit themselves to the discussion of unexpected events. By now the repetition of speech patterns and slogans has become the accepted modes of interaction. The only space left for meaningful communication is in literature, the arts and cultural life.[7]

Szalai concludes that Hungarian culture and society have quickly reached the state of post-modernity and even gone beyond it by interpreting freedom and human rights as unlimited freedom with no countervailing collective or individual responsibilities.

Because of the political/ideological confusion and lack of stable and common ethical standards, it is very difficult to interpret the notions of 'the public' and 'the private' in the Hungarian social context. The public and private are intertwined in ways that are distinctly different from Western cultural traditions. The difficulty of interpretation lies partly in the complexity of the inherited political and cultural ideologies and practices. The layers of a variety of historically mainstream discourses have quickly accumulated on top of each other leaving no time and space for discussion and reflection.

Popular Culture

In post-1989 Hungarian society women's identities and images are shaped, to a large extent, by the popular media. Since there is no criticism

available from the civic sphere, the social sciences, or individuals, the impact of advertising and the values of consumerism — which are introduced through the channels of public culture — are intense and overwhelming. The popular media promote images of women as sexy, young and attractive beings, one might say "things." The popular hegemonic view which considers women and women's bodies as sex objects is not questioned at all. This portrayal is simply regarded as natural.

These images of women are promoted by many women's magazines, TV advertisements and soap operas. The images suggest that women should create their identities by using the appropriate consumer products. Popular culture sends the message to women that they should restrict their interests to clothing, keeping fit, looking after their households and their sexual activities. Ildikó Kulcsár has illustrated this trend in an apocryphal story she published in Hungary's best-known women's periodical, the *Nők Lapja* [Women's Magazine]:

> I would like to share with you a nightmare I have had. A man arrived from another planet and wanted to find a wife from among the women on Earth. He was watching TV for a few days and then went shopping. He bought one or two tons of sanitary pads, three tons of facial cream, body lotion, hair dye, a huge amount of women's razors (as according to the TV programs women spend a lot of time with getting rid of their body hair), a huge quantity of washing powder, a few kilos of baby nappies and herbal teas for a slimming diet, five litres of deodorant (as women get enchanted by the scent of men's deodorants).
>
> Then he locked the woman inside the house. And he thought he was an excellent husband, as he had learned from TV that only these things could make women happy.[8]

The more ambitious print media present women's issues in the form of disconnected incidents or events and not as matters that are embedded in the current social order. Cases of violence against women are typically presented as sensational "news" items and reported as interesting stories, not as symptoms of social problems.

Anti-Feminism

Among the few cultural representations of the recent socio-cultural transformations of the post-communist period, Hungarian cinema has produced the most telling portrayals. In contrast to many of their male colleagues, a number of women film directors have raised issues of class relations, gender, love, sexuality, deception and honesty in unsentimental and, at times, even a ruthless fashion. Ildikó Szabó's *Csajok* [Chicks, slang for adolescent girls] offers a kaleidoscopic series of images describing and expressing the tensions and conflicts that arise as the individuals — in this case women — learn how to live without the ruling hegemonic ideology and ethics. The women portrayed are confronted with issues and conflicts that stem from the deeply set traditional expectations concerning the behaviour of men and women. The director places three women in the centre of a series of scenes. The three women are extremely different from the glamorous images of women created by Western media. They are depicted from the perspective of genuine women's experiences in East Central European cultures and are in complete contrast to the dominant expectations of what is beautiful, interesting and important.

Each of these three strong women resists the secondary status and "possession" identity that is imposed on them by both the domineering husbands or lovers, and also by the society "at large." The audience is guided through the private events of their lives, through the conflicts that follow from their not doing what they are supposed to do: housework, bearing children, accepting lifestyle patterns, religions or ethnic stereotyping, etc. These life-events are presented in intricate metaphors, which on the surface may seem humorous at times, but when placed in the context of the "struggle for personal survival," the grotesque and eccentric quality of the women's actions are shown. In their complex conflicts there is expressed the strong desire for connectedness and loving.

The carnivalesque nature of the events and social environment is further illuminated by the fact that the husbands and men in the film also struggle with their own possession identities — imposed on them by political ideologies — though, on the outside they insist on wearing the mask of a traditionally inscribed strong and domineering masculine man. While the men submerge in the grotesqueness and the hopelessness of the situation, women, with enormous effort and pain — both physical and mental — stay on the surface and manage to keep the remnants of their identity together. The imagery lends itself to suggestive interpretations.

Bathing and swimming together may be viewed as the visual representations of the solidarity and unity of women. It is in water and in swimming where they find each other, express and share their feelings freely, and where they find calmness and warmth. Of course, one may interpret this metaphoric expression differently. In this case, swimming may be viewed as giving up, walking away from the conflicts. However, on a positive note, one can argue that this is the way they collect energy and strength as they prepare to fight the next battle.

Szabó's cinematic language is an encouraging indication that there are ways and tools with the help of which the reflection and the theorization of subjectivity is possible in the Eastern European post-communist, non-reflective culture. The American student of East European cinema, Catherine Portuges, cogently describes the efforts of Hungarian women directors (Szabó, as well as Márta Mészáros, Judit Elek, Lyvia Gyarmathy, etc.) when she writes:

> They speak of the legacy of ideological and internal exile, that is, isolation, alienation, deprivation of the means of production and communication, and exclusion from public life... of human trauma that has also given rise to ethical, political, and artistic resistance. But they speak equally persuasively of strong national and historical traditions, of literary and artistic accomplishments, and of a new generation psychologically and intellectually prepared to make the next move. Most importantly, they attest to the centrality of women filmmakers' role as intellectuals, as critics of existing systems; and as savvy entrepreneurs already making movies that give voice to the fears, anxieties, and desires of their compatriots, to the suffering and triumph of national selves as well as of an emergent transnational identity.[9]

Conclusions: Toward a Feminist Theory

The socio-cultural space in which women in East Central Europe live may make it possible to create the intellectual distance needed to reflect on the "validity" of Western feminist trends. The Eastern European critique might be accused of being essentialist in nature, but this can be overcome

if we problematize the individual-oriented nature of those theories. The discussions offered by the deconstructionist of post-structuralist thinkers chose to compartmentalize and isolate the issues, which does not alter the patterns of thinking. The issues and ideas raised by Hungarian — and, also, Czech and Russian — writers suggest that by making individual experience the central focus, mainstream feminist theory appears to have become fossilized and does not offer any theory or practical method for understanding common or communal identity. Somehow in the course of worrying about the individual and the individual's rights, we have forgotten about the factors which have formed our cultural and public identities. Jirina Siklova discusses the relevance of social cohesion as a historical background to the interpretation of feminism:

> There are a number of reasons why feminism has not met with success in the Czech Republic. [Feminism] has its roots in the history of our nation and its specific Czech traditions, and the recent past of the communist regime. Not even the present period of transition to a market economy is ripe for feminism, and the influence of feminist ideology is causing more harm than good.
>
> The relative absence of tension between men and women in the Czech Republic stems from the fact that for a long period our country had a common enemy, which had the effect of strengthening the cohesion of all who identified themselves as Czech.
>
> Women's movements were already vigorously spreading in the Czech lands in the 19th century, with patriotic and democratic roots. Men supported the education of women and their fight for the right to vote, and Czech women were partners with Czech men in opposition to the Habsburg Monarchy. Even following the First World War, when women were fighting for civil rights across Europe, it was unnecessary for Czech women to gain their position through confrontation with men.[10]

On the basis of their historically, culturally and geopolitically defined experiences, Hungarian feminists will have to formulate and theorize their own issues and approaches. Western feminisms grew out of liberal social traditions. Such traditions have never existed in Hungarian

social history. Western feminist vantage points in discussion of issues of oppression and male hegemonic discourse should also be reconsidered, since in Eastern Europe's social history both genders experienced the same oppressed positions. The theory of social deconstruction cannot be applied in a society where no defined construct of society exists. Personal identity issues seem to be more gender-blended in the Eastern European context, because of the specific historico-cultural construct of the Hungarian socio-cultural discourses.

An alternative approach to the hegemony of texts and semiotic models should also be considered. The slower and more contemplative and less agent-oriented "evolution" of cultures and cultural myths might be just as "productive" ultimately. Estella Lauter's comments should attract the attention of those who are interested in the analysis of the evolving feminisms of post-communist East Central Europe:

> In the midst of a culture that still wants desperately to define once and for all time "what-is," it is difficult to establish an alternative mind-set that will allow us to move behind our cultural stage into the wings of female experience without claiming that we have found the essential nature of woman. I believe, however, that a feminist archetypal theory could help us to accomplish this task. If we redefine the archetype as a tendency to form images in relation to recurrent experiences and acknowledge that women as well as men must have the capacity, we need only uncover enough images created by women to discover the patterns in our experiences. If we think of myth as a structure for dealing with shared crises of self-definition in the face of the unknown, we need only locate mythic stories created by women in order to know which of our experiences have been most critical or enduring.
>
> The efficacy of this strategy depends on our willingness to redefine the unconscious... as the unknown within us instead of being simply a storehouse of repressed materials. It also depends on our willingness to challenge the prevailing idea that everything can be explained in terms of a semiotic model.[11]

The Hungarian Feminist Past

Modern Hungarian feminism has inherited abundant ammunition from the past to revive neglected cultural feminist thought. Cultural feminism may prove to be an authentic contribution to an organically European-style socio-cultural development in the East Central European region.

The Hungarian contemporaries of Mary Wollstonecraft drafted their versions of the *Vindication...* in 1790. Historical Hungarian feminism evolved as a consequence of social changes that placed women's education and women's culture in the mainstream of national social progress. In the 17th and 18th centuries, Hungarian women were not only worthy contributors to the contemporary religious debates, but they were also commemorated in several art forms. The 18th century was a period of lively literary debates concerning the role of women. In 1790, three pioneering pamphlets were published discussing the position of women in Hungary: (1) *Hungarian Women's Petition to the Hungarian Parliament;* (2) *In Defense of Hungarian Women;* (3) *The Phoenix of Pannonia.*

In the 19th century, women's education became a crucial issue in discussions of national identity. In response to the increasingly strong Austrian influence on the economy and culture of Hungary, politicians started to consider ways in which they could ensure the survival of Hungarian values. Many of the decision makers were far from radical in their opinion of women's roles in society inasmuch as they insisted on the traditional roles of women as mothers and caretakers of the household. However, they considered women's education to be the vehicle for developing the nation. Educated women would pass on their knowledge and values to their sons, thereby raising a new generation of Hungarian patriots.

Towards the end of the 19th century, several trends in feminist thinking (radical, socialist, religious, cultural) emerged. Hungarian culture produced such thinkers as Róza Bédy-Schwimmer, Vilma Glücklich, Béláné (Mrs.) Gonda, in the cultural and literary/journalist scene. Their contribution to theorizing about women has been a valuable inheritance to modern Hungarian feminism. They were also joined by several male authors; Pál Ignotus, Frigyes Karinthy and Miklós Bittenbinder who, in spite of their sex, enthusiastically advocated female values and the unconditional emancipation of women. They envisaged cultural equality as the only possible future development.

We should note another social and cultural phenomenon in turn-of-the-century Hungary. Women's position and education were topical cultural issues within socio-political feminist discussion. As in 18th century Hungary, women became the topic of literary life and journalism in the first decades of the 20th century. The cultural players in society seemed to be more sensitive to and distinctly supportive of women's issues. The summary of the various disputes about women's identity and status is provided in Margit Kaffka's *Az asszony ügye* [The Woman Question]:

> She must become a person, in whose character values such as honesty, reliability, responsibility, discretion, and generosity must equal the womanly charm she possesses.... She must be able to develop, to stand tall, and to place her point of balance and her values in herself, and not in the opinions of men.... And above all, she must find herself, she must dig out and bring to the surface those long-hidden life energies and values which she owes the world and without which the world would be emptier and uglier.[12]

NOTES

[1] Mária Nemény, *Férfiak köztársasága* [Men's Republic], *Magyar Hírlap*, 20 Sept., 1997.

[2] Election campaign leaflet, spring, 1998.

[3] Katalin Lévai and Róbert Kiss, "Nők a közéletben" [Women in Public Life], in *Szerepváltozások. Jelentés a nők helyzetéről* [The Changing of Roles: Report on the Situation of Women], Katalin Lévai and István György Tóth, eds. (Budapest: Munkaügyi Minisztérium, 1997), pp. 52-70.

[4] Munkaügyi Minisztérium, Egyenlő Esélyek Titkársága Hivatalos Programja [Mission Statement, Office of Euqal Opportunity, Ministry of Employment] (Budapest, 1996) (a brochure).

[5] Andrea M. Rimay, "Próbaper a nőkért" [Lawsuit for the Women], *Népszabadság*, 9 Dec. 1997.

[6] György Csepeli, "Kultúra és identitás" [Culture and Identity], in *Nyelv, nyelvész, társadalom* [Language, Linguist and Society], István Terts, ed. (Pécs, Hungary: Janus Pannonius University, 1996), pp. 33-37. This author's re-

searches have been published in English: György Csepeli, *National Identity in Contemporary Hungary* (Highland Lakes, N.J.: Atlantic Research and Publications, 1997; Columbia University Press, distributor), transl. M.D. Fenyo.

[7] Erzsébet Szalai, *Az elitek átváltozása* [The Transformation of Elites] (Budapest: Cserépfalvi Kiadó, 1996), pp. 107-137.

[8] Ildikó V. Kulcsár, "A nők és a reklám" [Women and Advertisements], *Nők Lapja*, October, 1997.

[9] Catherine Portuges, "Gendering Cinema in Postcommunist Hungary," in *Postcommunism and Body Politics*, Ellen E. Berry ed. (New York and London: New York University Press, 1995), pp. 296-313.

[10] Jirina Siklova, "Different Region, Different Women: Why Feminism Isn't Successful in the Czech Republic," in *Colonisation or Partnership? Eastern Europe and Western Social Sciences*, Miklós Hadas and Miklós Vörös, eds., a special volume of *Replika: Hungarian Social Science Quarterly* (1996), pp. 91-95.

[11] Estella Lauter, *Women as Mythmakers: Poetry and Visual Art by Twentieth-Century Women* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press: 1994), p. 8.

[12] Margit Kaffka, "Az asszony ügye" [The Woman Question], in Margit Kaffka, *Az élet utján. Versek, cikkek, naplójegyzetek* [On the Path of Life: Poems, Essays, Diary Entries], György Bodnár, ed. (Budapest: Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1972). Margit Kaffka's "Az asszony ügye" was originally published in *Világ*, 20 April, 1913.

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Remarks on the History of Hungarian Feminism

Judit Acsády

In Hungary, the opinion prevails that "our country" never had a feminist movement because feminism runs contrary to "our" traditions. Hungarian men behave like gentlemen toward their honoured ladies whereas Hungarian women enjoy this noble treatment while being satisfied with centering their life around the family. This essentialist view of gender roles which is based on their natural distribution still prevails in Hungary. It also claims that social inequalities between the sexes are not to be considered as such since they are the result of biological differences. Feminism as a social movement is therefore considered as a brutal attack on respected traditions and nature. Emancipation, on the other hand, is also regarded as a remnant from the deeply hated communist past. Even though women were officially granted equality under communism, in reality they had to live with the double burden of a paid job and care for the family.

My research interest in Hungarian feminism goes back to the early 1990s. I was trying to find out why there were no feminist movements in Hungary. The reply I kept receiving was that "feminism ran contrary to our traditions" and that our country had more important problems to solve. Even though in my university courses we were not told much about women's movements, a vague knowledge about the turn of the century suffrage movements was transmitted. Unfortunately, historians whom I approached for more information on this subject told me that there was no such movement in Hungary or that there was a small group too insignificant to be mentioned. I came across publications which support the same idea: if there was an insignificant feminist movement at the turn of the century in Hungary it should certainly not be considered part of mainstream Hungarian history.[1]

My subsequent research of archival materials revealed quite the opposite as I came across a rich and unpublished collection of documents about turn of the century Hungarian feminism. At least two of the largest public libraries in Budapest have the full collection of the monthly periodical *A nő és a társadalom* [Woman and Society], later called *A nő* [The Woman], which was published for over a decade starting in 1907. The largest archives in Budapest have the legal documents about the formation, budget and goals of the *Feministák egyesülete* [Association of Feminists] founded in 1904. The correspondence of feminists is also available many of whom enjoyed an international reputation. Rózsika Schwimmer's name is very well known at the International Women's Archives in Amsterdam. A few photos show her visiting conferences in different countries. Her letters, diaries and other personal archive materials are kept at the New York Public Library.

In order to understand better the historical roots of turn-of-the-century Hungary's women's movement, I went further in my research of a Hungarian feminist past. As far back as 1790, a petition was handed to the National Gathering of Hungarian noblemen, an equivalent of today's Parliament. (It is important to remember here that Mary Wollstonecraft published her often cited *Vindication of the Rights of Women* in England two years later.) The petition was written "in the name of Hungarian mothers" by a man, Péter Bárány.[2] It contained more modest demands than Wollstonecraft's text: it was addressed to the most respected noblemen with the request to allow noble women's participation in the sessions of the Gathering as spectators. Like Wollstonecraft, Bárány argued that if women were better educated in politics, they would be better patriots and hence better educators of their sons. This will also be one of the key arguments in women's emancipatory endeavours regarding their education or inclusion in public, political, and cultural life in the 19th century.

As far as women's legal status is concerned, another common belief prevails: Hungarian law favoured women in the past. Women of nobility had indeed been given the responsibility to run estates. Some historians interpret this fact as if women had enjoyed equal rights since in certain cases women who inherited land did become feudal landowners. Yet they forget to mention that it was only possible if the given family had no male members who could own the estate; it was of crucial importance that the family fortune not get divided.[3]

Hungarian history also mentions a few famous women from the past who were known and respected for their patriotic deeds or as mothers of famous kings and/or war heroes, such as Ilona Zrinyi. These women are regarded as symbolic figures of women's glory yet again only in the service of the fatherland.

By contrast, women writers who emerged in the 1820s because they wanted to have their voice heard in public were not at all respected the same way but became the focus of a huge public debate instead. Whereas the mid-19th century saw the emergence of a relatively respected women's literature in Western Europe (Jane Austen, Mary Godwin or Mme de Stael), the first article ever published by a woman in a Hungarian "scholarly" journal in 1822 resulted in huge disapproval.[4] The debate whether women could take part in cultural and scientific life went on for decades. Questions were raised whether it was not against nature and God's will that women write, engage in any type of intellectual work or should be educated at all.[5]

Education was the next important milestone in women's history. When the idea to open secondary schools for women was finally accepted in the second half of the 19th century, there was still no consensus regarding the curriculum. Defenders of the traditional values wanted to limit the range of subjects taught to girls to household skills, child-rearing, and possibly languages and art. A very important year in the fight for women's emancipation in the field of education was 1895 when a bill was passed allowing women access to the faculties of philosophy, medicine and pharmacy. Very soon, however, in a span of less than ten years, the pressure coming from conservative deans and professors resulted in limiting the number of female students.[6] These restrictions were among the main reasons why feminists thought that time had come to get organized.

By the time the feminists formed as a group in Hungary, they could already build upon an almost century long tradition of women's organizing. The earliest reported women's organization, the *Pesti Jótékony Nőegylet* [Pester Women's Charitable Society] was founded in 1817 in Pest. It was followed by a large number of similar groups and by the end of the 19th century the estimated number of women's organizations was around 800.[7] Very few among these groups had any political claims; when they did, it was either around the question of women's education or women's access to occupational fields from which they had been previously excluded. The largest organization which was to defend working

women's interests was the *Nőtisztviselők Országos Egyesülete* [National Federation of Women Clerical Workers]. Women members of the Social Democratic movement also tended to be activist in the 1910s.

The first feminist organization in Budapest was the above-mentioned *Feministák egyesülete* which was part of the International Women's Suffrage Alliance. The Association had local groups in 28 towns all over the country. The Association's members came from different backgrounds, even though their leaders were from the middle-classes. Their professional backgrounds were diverse: teachers, intellectuals, white-collar workers, upper middle-class housewives, but also factory workers. Their most active period were the years before World War I; later they joined the pacifist movement. This became the reason why the post-war conservative government associated their activities with leftist organizations (e.g. the social-democratic women's movement) and made their work impossible to carry on. The leaders of the Association left the country. These included Rózsika Bédy-Schwimmer who continued to work as a peace activist and died in New York. After World War II, the Association was founded again in 1946 and existed for three years until Hungary's communist authorities banned it, together with hundreds of other civic organizations.[8]

The Association's primary aim during the decade before World War I was to campaign for women's suffrage. In the Hungary of the times the citizenry's voting rights were governed by legislation that had been passed in 1848. These laws were rather out-of-date by the beginning of the twentieth century. Not surprisingly, in 1905, 1908 and 1912, partly due to the Association's lobbying efforts, new legislation was drafted and placed before Parliament where it was debated. Because of prevailing conservative sentiments, however, these reform bills were not passed, despite the fact that the feminists had supporters outside the feminist community, including (after 1910) the organization known as the *Férfiliga a nők választójogáért* [Men's League for Women's Suffrage] formed in that year. The decade before 1914 constituted the zenith of the women's suffrage movement in Hungary.

In spite of their political aims, the feminists claimed to be independent from party politics and emphasized their tolerance of different values and trends within their ranks, such as religion vs. atheism, for instance.[9] According to the contemporary press, feminism was a widely discussed issue. Feminists were well known in public life, not only for their activism and street demonstrations but even more so for the large

number of public events they organized: discussions, meetings, lectures by foreign celebrities, concerts, exhibitions. The significance of the organization can also be illustrated by the fact that in 1913, the 7th Congress of the International Women's Suffrage Alliance was held in Budapest.

To help women with their everyday problems, the Association of Feminists set up an office where several thousand women were reported to have sought help in occupational, educational, legal or personal matters. According to contemporary correspondence and applications by feminists to the City Council of Budapest, the city administration supported feminist activism not only morally but also financially. The fact that the City Council maintained a good, constructive relationship with the feminists contradicts those interpretations which claim feminism has always been met with hostility and had no support or understanding. This co-operation with the City Council was very significant for the realization of feminist initiatives. One good example is the foundation of the first day care centres for children which were set up thanks to the feminists' active contribution with their expertise.[10]

Publications by feminist authors, other than the monthly periodical, contributed to the rise of public awareness and understanding about women's demands in the changing social framework. Feminists had some important books by western feminist writers translated.[11] At the same time, they published works in which they offered an analysis of society, of the individual's socialization, a critique of marriage or women's work from a feminist point of view (e.g. Szidónia Willhelm, Sarolta Geöcze, or their male colleagues, Andor Máday and Géza Kenedi). These early feminist publications did formulate an alternative point of view to the essentialism of their age. In their texts we find arguments that can be interpreted as early versions of the definition of the difference between sex and gender.[12] The feminists refused the idea that the characteristics which were attributed to women of their time were of biological origin. They also refused to take traditional roles for granted. The significance of these writings was that they challenged contemporary images of what a woman could be. In this way their achievement was the creation of an image of the "modern woman," the woman of the 20th century.[13] It is important for us feminist activists today to connect to this vibrant feminist tradition that existed in our country a century ago and to build upon its ideas as a foundation for social change and gender equality in the present.

NOTES

This article is a revised and expanded version of a paper that had been presented at a conference on "Feminist Practice and Theory: East, West" in St. Petersburg, Russia, sponsored by the St. Petersburg Centre for Gender Studies in May of 1995. Since that time Hungarian interest in the subject has increased as evidenced by the writings on feminist topics of such authors as Anna Borgos, Ágnes Horváth, Mária M. Kovács, Andrea Pető and Susan Zimmermann. The most prominent among these writings is probably the latter's *Die bessere Hälfte? Frauenbewegung und Frauenbestrebungen im Ungarn der Habsburgermonarchie 1848-1918* (Budapest: Promedia and Napvilág, 1999). **Editors' note:** The editors wish to thank Lee Davis Creal for editorial comments on a draft of this paper.

[1] F. Tibor Zsuppán, "Reception of the Hungarian Feminist Movement 1904-1914," in *Decadence and Innovation*, R. Pysent, ed. (London, 1989), p. 6.

[2] Péter Bárány. "A magyar anyáknak... " [A Request in the Name of Hungarian Mothers], 1790.

[3] Andor Máday, *A magyar nő jogai a múltban és a jelenben* [The Hungarian Woman's Rights in the Past and the Present] (Budapest, 1913).

[4] Éva Takáts, "Egy két szó..." [A Few Words on Women in Marriage] Tudományos Gyűjtemény, 1822.

[5] Anna Fábri, "Az első magyar újságírónő" [The First Hungarian Woman Joumalist], in *Az irodalom magánélete* [The Private Life of Literature], Anna Fábri, ed. (Budapest, 1987).

[6] Katalin N. Szegvári, "Az antifeminizmus történelmi gyökerei. A nők egyetemi felvételének ügye az első világháború előtt" [The Historical Roots of Anti-feminism: The Issue of the Admission of Women to Universities before the First World War] in *Numerus clausus intézkedések az ellenforradalmi Magyarországon* [Numerus Clausus Regulations in Counter-revolutionary Hungary] (Budapest: Akadémiai kiadó, 1988), pp. 52-85.

[7] Cf. Zsuppán, 62.

[8] Janka Gergely, *A feminizmus története* [A History of Feminism], unpublished manuscript. Országos Levéltár (National Archives of Hungary). P999. 19cs 33.

[9] Cf. Perczelné Flóra Kozma's argument at an open debate about feminism in Budapest in 1909. *A nő és a társadalom* 1909: 36.

[10] "Letters to the City Council." Budapest Archives IV. 1 704b.

[11] Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *A nő gazdasági helyzete* [Woman's Economic Situation], Rózsa Schwimmer, transl. (Budapest, 1908); originally published in English under the title *Women and Economics: a Study of the Economic relations Between Men and Women as a Factor in Social Evolution* (1898).

[12] Geöcze Sarolta, *A nő a modern társadalomban* [Woman in Modem Society] (Budapest, 1899).

[13] Mársits Rozina, *A XX. század asszonya* [The Woman of the 20th Century] (Budapest, 1901).

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Ilona Duczynska (1897-1978) From "Early Morning": Memories of a Hungarian Childhood

Edited and introduced by
Kenneth McRobbie

I

Ilona Ducyznska was born near Vienna of a Polish-Austrian father whose noble name (Alfred Justus Ritter von Duczynski) could not however disguise his modest means; her mother, Helén Békássy, came from a landed gentry family with estates in Hungary. The world into which she was born, one that had seemed so unchangeable, came to an unregretted end (as far as she was concerned) when she came of age. What follows below is but a brief introduction to a remarkable career, by way of introducing an extract from Duczynska's contribution to a genre of current interest, the autobiographical writing of women involved in radical politics.

It may be appropriate, in a journal published in Canada, to begin with the new phase of her long life that commenced when she came from England to Canada in 1950 and settled in Rosebank, Pickering (near Toronto), Ontario, in order to be near her recently married daughter[1] and her husband Karl Polanyi the distinguished economic historian who then was teaching at Columbia University. The first few years constituted a distinct break with the intensely committed political activism of the previous decades: principally the brief but significant period in Hungary, and the somewhat longer one culminating in 1936 in Austria. This was followed by scientific war work in Great Britain. She came to Canada

because she was banned "for all time" under the McCarran Act from joining her husband in the United States.[2]

Duczynska utilized her technical skills[3] in renovating her tiny cottage ("Skunks Hollow" to correspondents around the world) perched high amid trees on the edge of the steep bank of the Rouge River just before it entered Lake Ontario. She occasionally wrote for a Toronto Hungarian newspaper,[4] but mainly assisted her husband in matters connected with his research;[5] previous such assistance was acknowledged in the moving dedication to Polanyi's 1944 master work.[6]

However, she soon responded characteristically to the challenge of events, once again in her homeland. She would embark upon the first of several ambitious literary projects, all with a political component which related them to her life-long undiminished radical political commitment. Together with her husband she set about compiling a pioneering volume of English versions of selected Hungarian writings by the most prominent Hungarian poets and prose writers. It would be published in London and Toronto as *The Plough and the Pen: Writings from Hungary, 1930-1956*, with a Foreword by the leading English poet W.H. Auden.[7] The volume was significant for the particular importance attached by the editors to the populist roots of the reforming initiatives of 1955 and 1956 prior to the Soviet invasion. The project also widened their circle of Canadian contacts. It involved the cooperation of several Canadian poets[8] for whom this was the first major collaborative translation project — for some, indeed, their first encounter with political and social poetry — for which credit is due to Ilona Duczynska's highly developed literary sense and persuasive talent for organization. Later, Duczynska carried on Polanyi's last ambitious initiative, the scholarly periodical *Co-existence* which had an editorial board of leading scholars from several countries, before entrusting it to a major publisher in England.[9]

The Polanyis had not come to Canada as refugees. That phase of their lives was long behind them, after leaving first Hungary in 1919, then Vienna (he in 1934, she in 1936) ahead of encroaching fascism in which Karl Polanyi's youngest sister and some of her family would perish in a concentration camp. By now the Polanyi name has become known worldwide.[10] But it is only comparatively recently that Duczynska's activities — principally in 1917-18 in Hungary, and in 1934-36 in Vienna — have begun to be more widely noted.[11]

Although in 1917 she was briefly a member of the famous Budapest student Galilei Circle, Duczynska did not at that time encounter

its founder Karl Polanyi. While he moved in cultural circles, being acquainted with the poet Endre Ady and the philosopher György Lukács, she was closer to political figures, particularly Ervin Szabó.[12] It was some three years later that they met in Vienna, and married in 1923. In London, during the latter part of World War Two, the Polanyis participated with Count Mihály Károlyi, the former President of the short-lived first Republic of Hungary, in planning for a future democratic government for their country. Duczynska resumed the association in the late-1960s, with the by then widowed Countess Katalin ("Katus") Károlyi who returned from Vence for part of each year to occupy one wing of the Károlyi Palace where the Budapest Literary Museum is accommodated. Together with Júlia Rajk, widow of László Rajk, Duczynska and Mrs. Károlyi were the trio of widows of three famous men who conspicuously occupied the front row at the trial of the dissident poet and philosopher Miklós Haraszti. Their presence was probably responsible for his receiving a suspended sentence.

By this time Duczynska was associated with, and gave a measure of support to, many leading writers. She undertook to translate most of the novels and short stories of the distinguished author József Lengyel whom English critics named "the Hungarian Solzhenitsyn."[13] In addition she was personally acquainted with leading poets including Ferenc Juhász,[14] Gyula Illyés, and János Pilinszky, and novelists such as László Németh and György Konrád.

This was the period when Duczynska wrote her major work of history, a unique study of the Austrian workers militia (*Schutzbund)*, and its brave resistance to authoritarian rule in 1934-36, a movement in which she played a significant role.[15] *Workers in Arms* has been recognized as a work of great originality, on two counts. First, it is based upon interviews with former participants, and a study of the Vienna archives. Second, it provides an assessment of General Theodor Körner's reading of the German military theorist Carl von Clausewitz's writings on the role of politics in war, and discusses the tactics of guerilla warfare against conventional military forces.[16] Duczynska's work appeared in English and German with lengthy laudatory introductions by distinguished scholars, respectively the English historian Eric J. Hobsbawm and the Catholic Austrian historian Friedrich Heer.[17]

It was also at this time that Duczynska began to compose her autobiography, of which unfortunately she completed only fragments — chief among them a substantial first chapter, "Early Morning," which

deals with her childhood and youth.[18] This unique work concludes in April 1917 when, at the age of twenty, she broke off her engineering studies at the Zurich Polytechnical University to smuggle into Hungary the March Manifesto of the Zimmerwald group (the increasingly revolutionary organization of the international anti-war movement). In Budapest she organized an anti-war student group, printed and distributed leaflets, forged links with factory shop stewards, and helped plan the first mass street protest. In early January 1918 these activities led to the arrest, lengthy detention, trial, and sentencing to imprisonment of Duczynska — referred to in one newspaper headline as "The Nihilist Gentry Girl."[19]

There have been numerous publications on radical and revolutionary European women of the period 1850 to 1920, particularly of such well-known figures as Rosa Luxemburg, Alexandra Kollontai, and Angelica Balabanoff.[20] But it has been recognized that research needs to be widened in scope, to take in countries where women's activities have so far not been adequately assimilated to the wider historical record, at least in English. In terms of Hungarian history, a study of Ilona Duczynska's career would seem likely to fill a gap, for she was the only Hungarian woman to play a leading radical role early in the century, a role which continued well into its third quarter.

Within the limited space available, the present article may serve to introduce Ilona Duczynska to readers while conveying something of the unique flavour of her writing. In doing so, we touch on a profoundly important aspect of human motivation. Leading historians of political women have recognized that for them, perhaps more than for men, political attitudes are to a significant degree shaped within the family during childhood. It is safe to say that Duczynska did not consider herself to be "a political woman," yet she did look back to her childhood as the time when her attitudes were formed and her feet set upon what she frequently referred to as "the path." Thus her memoir "Early Morning," as the title suggests, is concerned with the dawning of consciousness.

In his Foreword to Duczynska's memoir, József Lengyel declares that "it will become apparent that in their authenticity, purity, their truth to what was, as well as being downright interesting, the reader has before him a text without parallel." To this it might be added that, unlike most writing about childhood, there is not the slightest trace of sentimentality. Duczynska's memoir opens by invoking "grandchildren," which we may surmise refers to those young people who, she hoped, would follow her political example. But she also in the early sections describes what a

child's eyes had registered, from as young as the age of four. She portrays the sometimes inexplicable behaviour of adults, seeks to understand them, even judge them. In doing so, she rescues from oblivion elements of family history to which she provides precious social, cultural, and spiritual dimensions.

II

When Ilona Duczynska was but seven years of age, her father left his wife and daughter to support themselves on his modest Vienna *k. und. k. Nordbahn* railway pension, in order to fulfil his dream as an inventor, by marketing his plans in the United States. Three years later, news came from Chicago that he had died from anthrax poisoning. From 1904 on, his wife Helén was largely dependent on her extended Hungarian family, and Duczynska spent the next three years educating herself in one or other of the country houses where they were never more than guests. The experience of being between two countries, two families, two social classes, two intellectual climates, was represented in Duczynska's memoir "Early Morning" by the title of the opening section, "The Pendulum."

The young girl observed her surroundings and above all the members of her two families with a keen eye. In comparison with her father's family in Vienna, whose later influence on her education was considerable, her mother's relatives represented a way of life which from the very first she looked upon with ironic curiosity. She had an opportunity to meet or hear stories about members of her maternal grandfather's family. Tales of their military and political exploits at the time of and following the War of Liberation (1848-49) seem to have planted within her a sense of a Hungary to which one must dedicate one's service. Lajos Kossuth, Ferenc Deák, Count István Széchenyi... great names with whom her ancestors came into contact, appear briefly in these pages. All had an impulse to liberation, it is implied, but they tragically squandered it through a mistaken allegiance to the traditional, privileged social order.

The passage that follows, from the early section of the memoir, indicates something of what Duczynska would choose to value — and much that she would discard — of her mother's ancestors' legacy.

It contains sharply observed vignettes of a world that must now seem not merely "the world of yesterday," but of the day before yesterday. They constitute a mordant but totally sympathetic introduction to her writing. However, it must be emphasized that Duczynska was primarily

forward-looking. As she makes plain in all her writings, she believed in the ability of the individual, together with others equally committed, to reject and overcome imposed structures of power and authority, to bring about, no matter how long it may take, the reign of freedom and social responsibility envisioned by herself and many of her contemporaries.[21]

An Extract from
Ilona Duczynska's "Early Morning"

Translated by
Kenneth and Zita McRobbie

When grandfather was not in Pápa, he was to be found not far away in Öregtima-puszta, where, on the edge of the manorial estate, there stood a gentleman's residence consisting of just one room. The veranda running all the way round proclaimed its nobility. In front, at an angle, stood a fine large storage bin.

Later, when I pieced together the family chronicle, I discovered that this was all that remained of the Jobaházi-Dőry dowry brought to my grandfather. The rest he partly frittered away, partly spent on building projects. For he was a passionate builder, brooking no objection. No sooner had he built a so-called castle, than he sold it — for less than it cost — and thereupon built another, always smaller. These were, in order, the Békássy's, the Hogyéz's, the Magyargencs's and who knows what others, until he was reduced to the single room in Öregtima. All because he would never concern himself with money. Perhaps it made him feel better to own it and then give it away, than to add to it.

His wife, sons, daughter, estate servants, domestics and all manner of others went in fear of him. Yet this man, who was so feared, himself suffered torments of apprehension ever since attaining manhood. There were shutters at all the windows, lest someone look in and shoot him. The turn-of-the-century Magyargencs castle was rounded at all four corners in the shape of a tower, its ground floor and upper level plentifully provided with loopholes. In the castle's cellar he'd had a well dug,

in case of siege. He only struck water at a depth of sixty meters. He personally always locked the house-door with a key, the same key that was kept under his pillow at night. He was afraid in a way that only a monster might fear, presumably not without reason. Although when he was a young man he'd cut quite a figure, playing truant from school, then fighting to the end in the 1848-49 War of Liberation. As a fugitive in nothing but shirt and knee-breeches he was familiar to the landowners of Transdanubia. For a long time he was in hiding in Jobaháza, where Irén Dőry in her early teens secretly fell in love with the freedom fighter.

I can't recall the part of the chronicle that recorded how grandfather took as wife the strikingly beautiful Ilona Nedeczky, Ferenc Deák's niece, she who died in childbirth — after whom four generations of Ilonas are named.

Meanwhile, Irén Jobaházi Dőry had grown up, and it was she who became his second wife, bearing him six sons and a daughter; afterwards, her mind incurably clouded, she dragged out her life over long decades.

* * *

Kistima-puszta, where I lived with my mother in the guest room, belonged to my grandfather's sister, my mother's Aunt Tóni, lady of the manor, widow of Ernő Hollán. Perfect order reigned over everything there. The tiny white-washed castle was centrally located. Its upper storey had five barred windows, its lower four. In the middle of the ground floor, in place of a window, there was a door to the kitchen. Beyond the gravelled expanse were flowerbeds of large-leaved decorative red plants — in what was then called a *grupp* — a thicket, tall poplars. There was a pulling-well too, and a lane cut through the thicket. Beyond, in a large square clearing stood the farm, a pit for lime and mortar, a draw-well, drinking trough, farm children — we floated tiny walnut-shell boats in the cattle trough — cluckies (namely hens), dogs, and speckled beans spread on canvas.

The entrance to the castle was actually at the rear of the building, on both sides of which a hornbeam hedge extended alongside the carriage track, four white-washed columns supporting a little roof above the door where a conveyance might stop or a visitor alight. But this was just for show. Hardly anyone at all came. Behind the driveway stretched the garden.

The window of the guest room looked out upon it. Once — when I was still very little — I awoke at dawn. The gardener was raking beneath the window, the birds were singing loudly; through the bars I saw the dewy bloom of the lawn, the long unaccustomed shadows. "Sh... sh... sh..., it's early still; go back to sleep, Ilona," mother said. But now — now I must run, must run out... I wept hot staining tears, and went back to sleep. When I awoke, the morning was already far gone, and just like at other times. There are some things for which children can never forgive wretched parents who do not understand.

* * *

Wearing perpetual mourning, Aunt Tóni in her mind followed Uncle Ernő around, in her black dress with a long train. This she held high in her left hand, lest it stir up dust; with her right, she waved goodnight at sunset from the alley of acacias to Uncle Ernő who slept in the Békássy chapel crypt. For a few minutes she stood at the entrance to the alley, while the sun was going down at the other end. Then she made a sign, and said a prayer. That was the time I dared not approach her...

Morning was when the flowers were picked. Watching was allowed, but from a little way off. Under the tall pine trees, at the edge of the shadow, Aunt Tóni with garden-shears is cutting begonias, pale yellow, white, and red. Without speaking, except once in a while to my mother. "Take hold here, Helén dear." Mother holds a large tin tray onto which the cut flowers fall. Among twigs of evergreen arbor vitae and thin florist's wire. Then they go towards the house. The dew has not yet quite dried on the lawn beneath Aunt Tóni's dragging train; it's as if some gigantic snail passed that way. Next, they go among the rose-bushes in front of the house, cutting tea roses; also verbena and petunias blossoming between them.

It was almost noon when they bound the flowers into bouquets, in the main room beside the kitchen, always in the same way, always the same number of bouquets. Always putting in some arbor vitae, symbol of mourning.

After lunch Aunt Tóni rested on the *chaise longue* which stood in the dining-room, her back straight, in prayer. Then no one might go through the dining-room lest she be disturbed.

At three in the afternoon the carriage came round and took Aunt Tóni and the bouquets to the Békássy chapel. There the coachman —

father of my playmate Kari — locked the door of the chapel as ordered, then walked the horses or drove to some shadowed spot; after an hour had passed, he re-opened the chapel door with a key. They returned home at five. Every blessed day.

In vain was Aunt Tóni nice to me. In vain each day did she say: "Come then, little girl"; in vain did she slowly, solemnly, open the *secrétaire* from which she gave me little brick-shaped chocolates in shiny white-paper wrappers with tiny dabs of red sealing-wax at each end. I was afraid of her.

Aunt Tóni was not only my mother's aunt but also her motherly friend, confidante, *garde-dame*. In former days, she'd taken her to balls in Fehérvár, Sopron and Kőszeg. Her portrait in its *biedermeier* frame hung in my mother's bedroom until the end of her days. It showed her as a beautiful mature woman attired in a low-cut ball-gown with a long train which the photographer had tinted with sky-blue water-colour. Of Uncle Ernő, who died in 1900, there remained a full-bearded photograph; also there survived, from his general's uniform, "gold buttons" with five-sided ornamentation in relief like the five-petalled wild rose. Mother sewed them onto my little coat; later, they were handed down for other purposes, when not mislaid in the button-box. Even now, I know, one of them is there.

At the beginning of the century, during their days at Tima, Uncle Ernő was lord of the manor, a highly respected ghost. At one time — according to what I heard — he had fought for his country at the defence of Petersburg. As to the bouquets of vitae, roses and begonias, this cult of the dead in family legend was never made known. Nor later, not even by accident. It could only have been *comme il faut.*

* * *

When I began to note down these recollections, seventy years after the summers in Tima, a friend's hand wrote in the margin: "Who was this Ernő Hollán? Wasn't he Széchenyi's best man?" I got hold of a copy of the *Döblingi hagyaték* [The Döbling Legacy]: there, in the first volume (Budapest 1923), in place of the stereotypical lord of the manor, stood before me a young engineer from Szombathely. After 1849 he was imprisoned. In 1859 he became one of István Széchenyi's inner council, his "small headquarters staff of publicists," together with Miksa Falk and Aurél Kecskeméthy the *k. und k.* Police Commissioner. According to

Vienna informers' reports, he was one of "the most dangerous agitators of Vas County"; "... from the town of Szombathely where he was born, he maintained active connections, through his engineering projects and social position, not only with the whole of Transdanubia but also with the counties to the North West." There Ernő Hollán wrote his little memorandum on the mood of Hungary, which "greatly pleased István Széchenyi, who was all the more interested on account of its having come from one who belonged to the europeanized cultured middle class, and above all because it laid emphasis upon the mood of the Hungarian middle class and the Hungarian people, their wishes and world of feeling, and besides scarcely mentioned the aristocracy at all," as the historian Árpád Károlyi wrote in his study on Széchenyi's *Diary*.

This "Offenes Promemoria" [Public Memorandum] was the high point. Széchenyi wrote in his diary, on October 2, 1859: "Holláns Meisterstück nicht einmal abschreiben lassen. *Also gleich in Druck!"* [No need to copy out Hollán's masterpiece. It must be printed without delay!] The manuscript was smuggled out to a printer in Leipzig; the proof sheets in columns were smuggled back in for correcting. He'd already given prior notice to the Vienna correspondent of the London *Times*.

Not long after came police superintendent Thierry's large-scale raid on Széchenyi, his doctor, sons and secretaries, on all of them at precisely the same hour. Not one of "the small headquarters staff of publicists" could escape. The timing — March 3, 1860 — was perfect. It was known that Ernő Hollán had arrived, or would be arriving: "Thus nothing prevented them from making enquiries about Hollán, Aurél Kecskeméthy and Miksa Falk *at the very same time* during the house-search of the above-named." A notebook was found connected with Hollán, with certain jottings which neither the policeman nor later the historian was able to decipher. He was as much an expert in conspiracy as in military engineering.

Uncle Ernő lived for another forty years, and became under--secretary of state, lieutenant-general, then member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. But in all his long and active career, I do not think there was a single moment to equal that when István Széchenyi wrote in his diary "Schrieb demnach gleich nach Sabaria: Gyere, fiam" [I wrote immediately afterwards to Szombathely: Come, my son] — the message with which he summoned him from Szombathely.

But that, which won for the writer of the "Offenes Promemoria" a place in his country's history, was sufficient to initiate him into life —

a man of whom, however, there would remain no whisper of remembrance in the little castle of Tima's world of eternal mourning. Here, the shifting sands of forgetting had quite covered over — and effectively so — the dangerous instigator, the pamphleteer, the conspirator, he who was pursued by the police informer -- but mainly, and above all else, the son of the middle class. Even the years spent in prison after 1849 were unmentionable in polite society. My mother's loyalty extended in many directions; in the matter of family convention, it knew no limits. Thus it was that neither when I was young, nor when I was fully grown, did I hear from her anything of her uncle's historical dimensions.

NOTES

[1] Professor Kari Polanyi Levitt, Department of Economics, McGill University, and the University of the West Indies, Jamaica. (The information provided below will correct and supplement the entry under "Ilona Duczynska" in the recent bibliographical issue of this Review.)

[2] This was the case, despite her having been expelled from both the Hungarian Communist Party and the Austrian Communist Party. Her first publication was a sweeping critique of authoritarian practices in the underground Hungarian party in emigration in Vienna: "Zum Zerfall der K.P.U." (Notes on the Disintegration of the Communist Party of Hungary), *Unser Weg* [Our Way], edited by Paul Levi, 4, 1, Heft 5. March 1922. Berlin.

[3] She studied Engineering at the Zurich Polytechnical University, and at Vienna. However, she did not complete her degree, interrupting her studies in order to devote herself to opposing first the war and subsequently encroaching fascism.

[4] For example, "A prérik szabadságharca" (The Prairies' Fight for Freedom 1870-85: A Sketch of the lives of Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont, *Kanadai magyar naptár* (Canadian Hungarian Almanach). Toronto, 1954.

[5] The first of Karl Polanyi's works published at this time was *Trade and Market in the Early Empires* (with C.M. Arensberg and H. W. Pearson) (New York: Free Press, 1957). Duczynska's assistance extended to subsequent volumes. After Polanyi's death, she supervised the editing and publication of posthumous works, and the translation of much of his *oeuvre* into Hungarian and several other languages.

[6] Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: the Political and Economic Origins of our Time* (New York: Rinehart, 1944). Polanyi's dedication reads: "To

my beloved wife Ilona Duczynska I dedicate this book which owes all to her help and criticism."

[7] Toronto: McClelland & Stewart; London: Peter Owen. 1963. 231 pp.

[8] The principal translators of the verse were Margaret Avison, Earle Birney, Louis Dudek, Kenneth McRobbie, A.J.M. Smith and Raymond Souster.

[9] Funds for the first issue were raised in Winnipeg by the present writer and in Toronto by Harry C. Campbell, Director of the Toronto Public Libraries. The editor was Rudolph Schlesinger of the University of Glasgow. Initial issues of the journal were published in "Pickering." Thereafter, following lengthy and frequent correspondence on the part of Duczynska and Kari Polanyi Levitt, the journal was taken over — not without (fully justified) misgivings on their part — by Pergamon Press, Oxford.

[10] In Canada, John Polanyi (University of Toronto) received the Nobel Prize for Chemistry; his father Michael (younger brother of Karl) established a reputation chiefly in the USA and England, where he ended his career at Oxford, as a philosopher. Karl Polanyi's most widely praised work, *The Great Transformation* (1944) was named among the hundred most significant books published since the last war by both *Time Magazine* and more recently *The Times Literary Supplement* (October 6, 1995) and has been translated into numerous languages including Japanese. His achievement now has continuing institutional existence in the Karl Polanyi Institute, Concordia University, Montreal, where the bulk of his papers are placed, which sponsors biennial international conferences that have resulted in the publication of several volumes of selected papers.

[11] This is not the place to supply a full bibliography. But mention may be made of a short biography (not based upon archival sources) which appeared in Hungary, by a former "dissident": György Dalos, *A cselekvés szerelmese* [The Lover of Action] (Budapest: Kossuth, 1984). For more recent interpretations, see *Karl Polanyi in Vienna*, edited by Kenneth McRobbie and Kari Polanyi Levitt (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 2000), 346pp.; ch. 19 Kenneth McRobbie, "Ilona Duczynska: Sovereign Revolutionary"; ch. 20 Alfred Pfabigan, "Ilona Duczynska and Austro-Marxism"; ch. 21 Barbara Striker, "This is the Voice of *Radio Schutzbund*"; ch. 22 György Konrád, "From Girl Revolutionary to Old Dissident"; ch. 23 From Central Europe: Three Friends Remember: Eva Czjzek, "Memories of a Fellow Translator," Erzsébet Vezér, "An Anniversary Tribute," György Litván, "A Wanderer among Revolutions"; ch. 24 The Polanyis Discover a poet: György Bodnár, "The Polanyis and the New Hungarian Poetry of Ferenc Juhasz," Ferenc Juhasz, "Blue Twin-Star" (poem); ch. 26 Ilona Duczynska, "I first met Karl Polanyi in 1920" (a memoir). See also a study that examines an aspect of Duczynska's Canadian achievements: Marlene Kadar, "Earle Birney's 'Translations' of Attila József: The Idea of the Midwife-Translator," *Hungarian Studies Review*, XV, 2 (Fall 1988), 3-11.

[12] The first of her two articles on Ervin Szabó is "Mesterünk: Szabó Ervin. Halála 50. évfordulóján" [Our Master Ervin Szabó. On the 50th Anniversary of his Death), *Kortárs*, 1968, 1619-1662.

[13] The following are the translations by Duczynska of the works of Lengyel with whom she later shared, together with his wife, a cottage in the village of Monoszló. József Lengyel, *Prenn Drifting*, a novel (London: Peter Owen, 1966); *From Beginning to End*, two novellas (London: Peter Owen, 1966 and New York: Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall. 1966); *The Judge's Chair*, a novel (London: Peter Owen, 1968); *Acta Santorum, and other Tales*, short stories (London: Peter Owen, 1970); *Confrontation*, a novel (London: Peter Owen, 1973). In *Confrontation*, instead of the names of Duczynska and the present writer as co-translators, there appears the alias "Anna Novotny," Duczynska's underground name in Vienna, in view of the politically sensitive nature of the manuscript that was smuggled out of Hungary.

[14] Ferenc Juhász, *The Boy Changed into a Stag. Selected Poems 1949-1962*. Edited and translated by Kenneth McRobbie and Ilona Duczynska (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1970).

[15] After the February 1934 rising of the Schutzbund, Duczynska organized a group of students to make clandestine radio broadcasts of propaganda and information (on the state radio's own wavelength!). From November 1931 to January 1936 she was editor of *Der Sprecher*, bulletin of the political section of the Schutzbund's Vienna Command, in which capacity she was a member or the Command's five-person Executive Bureau.

[16] General Theodor Körner was advisor to the Schutzbund until 1930. In April 1945 he became mayor of Vienna, and in 1952 President of the Republic. Duczynska was convinced of the relevance of Körner's writings during the coming century, and beyond.

[17] *Der demokratische Bolschewik* (Munich: Peter List Verlag, 1975). An abbreviated edition appeared, with no introduction, in Hungary as *Bécs — 1934 — Schutzbund* (Budapest: Magvető, 1976). The English edition is slightly shorter than the German: *Workers in Arms. The Austrian Schutzbund and the Civil War of 1934* (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1978).

[18] "Korán reggel," *Új Irás*, March 1973, 6-25 (with a Foreword by József Lengyel).

[19] Két évi börtönre itelték a nihilista dzsentri-leányt" (The Nihilist Gentry Girl is Sentenced to Two Years in Prison), *A Nap*, 1 October 1918, p. 5.

[20] Rosa Luxemburg (1871-1919) born in Poland, was a leading theorist and political leader in the German Communist movement of 1919. Alexandra Kollontai (1872-1952), born in Russia, was Lenin's commissar for social welfare, but is best known for her activity and writing on women's problems and needs. Angelica Balabanoff (1878-1965), born in Ukraine, played a leading role in the Zimmerwald anti-war movement.

[21] Thus, in her Preface to *Workers in Arms* (published in the last year of her life) she recorded (p. 12) her expectations of opposition both "within the worldwide framework of American imperialism" and "within the wide political and intellectual reaches of Soviet imperialism."

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Part II

LITERATURE

Essays by:

AGATHA SCHWARTZ

MARLENE KADAR

ÉVA KISS-NOVÁK

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MARLENE KADAR is an Associate Professor in Humanities and Women's Studies at York University, and the former director of the Graduate Programme in Interdisciplinary Studies. She is the Literary Editor of *Canadian Woman Studies* and the Editor of the Life Writing Series at Wilfrid Laurier University Press. She has published two books on Life Writing, one of which, *Essays on Life Writing: From Genre to Critical Practice*, won the Gabrielle Roy Prize for scholarship in 1993. In 1996

CONTRIBUTORS (countinued from p. 79)

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The Image of the "New Woman" in Hungarian Women's Literature at the Turn of the Century

Agatha Schwartz

In Hungarian literary history, the assumption has been widely accepted that the turn of the century[1] had no significant women prose writers, with the exception of Margit Kaffka. This ignorance can be easily witnessed by opening any book of Hungarian literary history currently in use (Szabolcsy, Czigány, Klaniczay). Except for Margit Kaffka, the authors do not deem it necessary to mention the names of any other women prose writers. It seems as if the opinion regarding women writers formulated by István Boross in his study *Regényirodalmunk nőírói* [Our Women Novelists] as far back as the 1930s, has barely changed:

> Not even the most outstanding among them [the women writers] reach the level of value of the really talented male writer. Our judgment so far has also been a merely relative assessment since it will take them a long time before they reach the prominent strength, depth and value of the male writer.[2]

We can see here a typical example of how literary value based on a literary corpus written by male authors is declared universal with no tolerance for anything different. But Boross at least went beyond his post-World War II colleagues in one aspect: he dedicated an entire book to women writers and even offered a few rather interesting and useful analyses of their texts. It is, nevertheless, regrettable that he evaluates Margit Kaffka's prose with the following words: "We cannot attribute to her advantage all those superfluous adjectives, her often forceful word-

creations and sentence structure."[3] What would he have said about the sentence structure of Virginia Woolf not to mention Gertrude Stein? But no one is a prophet in his own country, and even less so if one is a woman writer.

In view of this rather sad background we can attribute a revolutionary importance to Anna Fábri's 1996 monograph, *"A szép tiltott táj felé": A magyar írónők története két századforduló között* ["To the Beautiful and Forbidden Land:" The History of Hungarian Women Writers Between Two *Fin-de-Siècle*s (1795-1905)]. Fábri not only (un)covers the neglected works of several Hungarian women writers, but she also analyses Emma Ritóok's and Terka Lux' texts from a new, feminist point of view; as a result, their importance and particular literary value become evident. Feminist literary theory, which is still relatively unknown and even less respected in Hungary, has succeeded in bringing to light the consciousness that women writers could be labelled as trivial, dilettantish, etc., as long as their texts were measured with norms set by a male literary establishment. But many turn-of-the-century women writers withstand such a traditional approach to literary evaluation. More than one — such as Kaffka and Wanda Tóth — published on a regular basis in the avant-garde magazine *Nyugat* [West], or received literary awards. An example of the latter is Emma Ritóok whose novel *Egyenes úton, egyedül* [On a Straight Path, Alone] won the 1905 award of the literary magazine *Új idők* [New Times]. Some of the writers were also active in the women's movement, like Szikra alias Countess Blanka Teleki. Kaffka was not a feminist; however, with her literary work she made an important contribution to defining the "new woman" and her struggles. Anna Szederkényi, on the other hand, is a good example of the achieved goals the "new woman" was fighting for: she became the first female member of the Association of Budapest Journalists.

Mothers and Daughters

Young girls growing up at the turn of the century did not have it easy. True, the first high-schools for girls had opened (an initiative of Hermin Beniczky, better known as Mrs. Pál Veres) already in the 1870s and in 1895 some faculties (philosophy, medicine, and pharmacy) had started registering their first female students.[4] Nevertheless, these first paltry steps toward an improvement in women's education amounted to little. Furthermore, the educated woman of this generation still had to fight

against many prejudices — both in her social environment and inside of herself. Ágnes, a young doctor, the heroine of Ritóok's novel *Egyenes úton, egyedül*, formulates this very appropriately:

> I believe that in this women's revolution of ours the most difficult part is the period of transition. Not only aren't we understood but we don't quite understand ourselves either. The woman of the future, of a happy future will be born with a clear understanding of those endeavours which are still hazy in front of our eyes [...] Don't you see how bound we are by thousand threads of the past? By family life's thousand years old habits? They took us out of the walker, we are free, but they could not take away what we have inherited nor our upbringing.[5]

Ritóok knew what she was talking about because she herself was one of the few women among her contemporaries to have acquired a higher education. She had studied at French and German universities, obtained a doctorate, and was also the author of several very interesting and complex novels.

Another woman character of this generation, from Kaffka's novel *Színek és évek* [Colours and Years], Magda Pórtelky, still resigns herself to choosing marriage — an institution that provided women with material security. She looks for meaning in her existence only within marriage. Her whole world, in which she assumed a secondary role as the organizer of her husband's life and his supporter, necessarily collapses after his death. She is unable to get on with her life as an independent human being within the limited social framework that had been available for the women of her generation.[6] To escape from this predicament, she chooses another, this time very bad, marriage, merely to have a husband who can provide for her. But she sends her three daughters to high-schools and inculcates into them the hope of the "new woman"'s generation they already belong to. Therefore it is rather interesting that other woman heroes, such as Ritóok's Ágnes, who are already part of this new generation of women, continue talking about the women of the future who will be able to realize these hopes. In Wanda Tóth's novella, "Első szerelem" [First Love], Ilona reflects this view when she says: "Oh well, our mothers were maybe still looking for their individuality; and we, who have it, don't know what to do with it... even less do we know how to live for ourselves."[7]

Mária, the heroine of another Kaffka novel, *Mária évei* [Maria's Years], is another example of the "new woman." She is a high-school teacher, and lives an independent life. Nevertheless, she chooses to end her young life with suicide by jumping into the Danube from the Margit-bridge. Miklós Szabolcsy has interpreted Mária's tragedy from the point of view that society was still not ready to welcome the new woman.[8] Others held Mária's escape into a world of fantasy responsible for her inability to accept an imperfect reality in which she was looking in vain for her ideal.[9] Is Mária a hopelessly romantic character? One thing does not fit into this picture: the fact that she was a "new woman" from whom one may expect to step out of the world of fantasies and start drawing the contours of a new world. In an essayistic text Kaffka published in 1913 in *Világ* [The World], entitled "Az asszony ügye" ["In Woman's Matters"], she creates the picture of a higher female being whose life should move in the direction of "professions, work, love, creation, battle, action, and learning;" who should be able "to place her centre of gravity and her value system inside of herself, not merely into how to please a man. And above everything, she should try to get closer to herself and to dig out from her depths those big, buried, slumbering values she owes to the world and without which this world would certainly be emptier and uglier."[10] Mária does not find this synthesis — neither do numerous other women characters of this period. I will try to find here a possible answer to this failure.

Secrets and Lies or Sexuality and Marriage

Fin-de-siècle sexual morality can be easily deduced to the following formula which summarizes the moral double-standard: young, inexperienced virgin girl with some education and older, materially secured man who "naturally" possesses a sexual past. We can find the type of such a young, innocent girl in Judit from Anna Szederkényi's novel *Amíg egy asszony eljut odáig* [Until a Woman Gets That Far]. She represents, however, the "new woman" in one aspect: she is a teacher, and therefore able to make her own living. Her husband, Zalárd Borongós, is not that much older than her and he is not wealthy either; he is merely an idler twho thinks of himself as a poet. Judit leaves her parents' home secretly in order to marry him, without their consent. But her marriage does correspond to the above formula in one aspect: as it was appropriate for a young man of his age, Zalárd had a sexual past. With an unusual

modernity, Szederkényi discloses the gap which opens up from the lies of the moral double-standard since such morality necessarily carries very different expectations for the spouses. How could a deep, sincere spiritual connection develop between two beings if one of them has been exposed only to the reading of sentimental novels and to the whisperings between girlfriends? If she expects her knight in a citadel of dreams to cast upon her a flower-shower? What happens if, under the wedding night's green light, this very same knight suddenly discloses his expectations of a very different "love" as it had been practiced in brothels? It is hardly surprising if the knight starts claiming his spousal "rights" without taking into consideration the fact of his wife's sexual inexperience; and if the wife, after such a wedding night and many more similar nights to follow turns into a so-called frigid woman. Szederkényi describes this as follows:

> At night, after darkness has fallen, my husband approaches me like night itself. He starts besieging me and I feel that it is not even me whom he wants to conquer but rather that unknown power which separates us... What is it? I have thought — oh, I know now many things I didn't even suspect before my marriage — that those women may be between us who came before me, who gave him some secret joys and knew the art of loving much better than I ... Maybe it is them who he thinks about, maybe in a way he is not even aware of ... I begin to believe that those things I haven't deemed important, that I belittled and thought of as secondary since I thought I stood above them and out of their reach, are indeed the base of marital life. Everything turns around them... How strange that nobody talks about these things, not even husband and wife.[11]

It is interesting to note that Judit is writing this letter to her mother in a moment when her marriage starts going downhill; but she never sends the letter. The lies start right there, in the relationship between mother and daughter, and perpetuate themselves through the very same. It is the mother who thinks that she has prepared her daughter for marriage but is unable to actually break through certain taboos of which she herself is a victim. Judit's story ends, however, on a note of hope thanks to the fact that she is able to live a financially independent life as a teacher. She

does not depend on her husband's income (that he does not have anyway) and manages to finally leave this man, her "first one." After several years of marriage, he feels like a stranger to her, just like any of her other suitors. Szederkényi portrays the "new woman" as the stronger sex: It is Judit who gives up everything for her lover, she breaks ties with her family and is in the end, after she has been totally disappointed by her husband and his character (or rather the lack of it), again the one who brings up the strength to leave a bad marriage.

We are presented with a different type of the "new woman" in the character of Magda. Magda is the younger sister of Ágnes, the doctor from Ritóok's novel *Egyenes úton, egyedül.* Unlike her sister, Magda has no higher education. She gives the purity and beauty of her 18 years exclusively to the man she loves and with whom she accepts to live without the conventional marriage-bond. Up to the moment when her partner sends her away before a visit from his family since he himself is not mature enough to stand up for such an unconventional relationship in front of them. It becomes clear that the man is portrayed as the weaker one who is the prisoner of conventions. After a few years Magda suddenly shows up at her sister's doorstep only to leave her little daughter behind. Shortly afterwards, Magda ends her life by jumping into the Danube and Ágnes sees her on the dissecting table at her clinic. Again, it is the man who is portrayed as the weaker sex. Ágnes can only feel pity for Magda's ex-lover who married a rich girl in the meantime and who "when he is supposed to carry the weight of responsibility [...] is weaker and more helpless than a woman."[12] Ritóok deconstructs the ideal of marriage based on the moral double-standard not only through Magda who chooses free love and fails in her choice but also through Ágnes who revolts against the idea of marriage as an institution for the maintenance of the human race which is supposed to give meaning only to a woman's life:

> — And I'm saying that marriage is woman's natural goal in life, shouted out Tilda in excitement. [...]
> — Yes, but it is the same for man as well — replied Ágnes, now herself agitated.
> — Nature wants to maintain the family, the race, it doesn't need any artists, writers, politicians and great men. But society has developed other goals for men, it created one-sided benefits for them in order to help them to achieve those goals, and it doesn't remind them of their

> natural goals as it does with women. Society invented the means to harmonize individual and family life for men only.[13]

Ritóok takes on the position of a critic of essentialism which explains differences between the sexes with "nature," i.e. some inborn and therefore forever unchangeable qualities. These arguments, often misogynistic in tone, were used particularly to keep women in their "natural" place and role.[14] Ritóok interprets gender differences as a result of rules and norms invented by society and the pressure to obey them, to be moulded by them.[15] The "new woman" who, like Magda, does not bend in front of the norms set by society fails since the man with whom together she would like to break those very same norms remains their prisoner and seeks refuge in a marriage of convenience.

Baba in Terka Lux' novel *Leányok* [Girls] is another character with a fate similar to Magda's. Baba attends high-school in Budapest but, unlike her colleague Juli who wants to become a doctor, has not set a higher professional goal for herself. Baba's life also ends in a tragedy: the man with whom she was in love abandons her in pregnancy. Baba sees but one exit from this situation, which at the turn of the century, still carried a lot of social stigma for a young woman: she undergoes an abortion. Since it is performed illegally and without the appropriate expertise — her doctor friend Juli refusing to perform it herself and trying to convince Baba to keep the baby instead — Baba dies of the consequences. Thus this female character, who also opted for free love beyond social conventions, fails due to their contradictions.

The "New Woman" Beyond Love

Kaffka's Mária, Szederkényi's Judit, Ritóok's Ágnes, and Lux' Juli are all female characters who have taken advantage of the new professional opportunities which had opened up in *fin-de-siècle* Hungary for the "new woman." The young doctors Ágnes and Juli, especially, take their profession very seriously. They live for it. A shared common denominator of all four young women is that they have either been disappointed in love or that love is absent from their lives. Mária keeps on dreaming about love while at the same time her fiancé's kisses leave her cold. Ágnes and Juli, the two doctor characters, also carry the image of a complete love which is not given to them in the present moment. Ágnes'

interest in her colleague Lénárd remains unrequited since he prefers her sister, Magda; the results of this love affair have been discussed above. Another suitor, Derzsi, the journalist, only seeks Ágnes' company because he needs to be listened to by a sensitive and intelligent woman. Free love proves to be a failure for Magda; Ágnes' other younger sister, Zsuzsa, who lives the conventional life of a wife and mother, after a few years of marital life comes to the conclusion: "I am a machine who gives birth to children, who cooks and does the laundry!"[16] Faced with all these unhappy love-scenarios in women's lives of her generation, Ágnes carries on the hope to the generation of Magda's little daughter, to the future "in which you women will be strong and happy."[17]

Juli, the other doctor character, is a self-reliant, self-conscious, strong, professionally oriented woman. Her independence and strength are difficult for a young man of her time to accept. Her roommate's brother, who is in love with her, describes her as follows: "You are the kind of a wise, calm, superior, and beautiful girl who doesn't marry when she is asked but when she can tell the happy man: I love you and want to be yours!"[18] What Juli is looking for in a man is intellectual partnership and a soulmate; she does not find these characteristics in her roommate's brother who is of a weak nature. Only once does she give in to his kisses but only for being dazed by spring, by the music that he produces for her on the piano. Realizing this fact, the young man commits suicide the next day. Juli, however, does not find fulfilment by living exclusively for her work. When a couple of years later she is about to leave Budapest and move to the country, she has tears in her eyes as her friend's mother who helps her pack talks to her: "But you not only have a brain like the men around here but also a heart, the angelic heart of a woman. And this heart needs to be loved and to love, to have children."[19] The synthesis that Kaffka dreamt about for the "new woman," a synthesis toward "professions, work, love, creation, battle, action, and learning" ("In Woman's Matters") was somehow left out. The women characters discussed seemingly placed their "centre of gravity and value system" that Kaffka talks about inside of themselves, but only seemingly since none of them are capable of finding happiness in their private lives. And the choice they face is only seemingly one between profession or love since all of the women characters fail in their choice, be it in favour of love or profession. One could say that those opting for the path of independence (Judit, Ágnes, and Juli) are somewhat better off since their lives at least do not end in a tragedy. Kaffka's Mária, who tries out both paths and does not find herself in either one, seems to act the most consequentially:

she is not ready for any compromise but rather chooses death. Maybe times were not ready yet to fully accept the "new woman;" and maybe the "new woman," despite all her efforts and willingness, was not able to awaken the "new man" in her contemporaries if they by themselves were not ready for a modification of the existing gender patterns. On the other hand, the past with all its interiorized texts was still echoing in the "new woman's" mind regardless of how much she was trying to erase or overwrite them with new texts. The result was most likely an uneven palimpsest with an underlying hidden layer which still propagated the old ideal of love: it is man who has to be strong and courageous in order to deserve the love of a "new woman" who is not willing to let an incomplete male being enter her life. Will the daughters' daughters be capable of achieving the desired synthesis, will they find the happiness Ágnes wished for her niece?

Look-out

Complete synthesis is still not about to occur in Kaffka's next novel, *Állomások* [Stations] either. Éva Rosztoky, the new heroine, a successful artist, surpasses her predecessors in one aspect: she has managed to place the centre of gravity inside of herself, her happiness does not hinge upon the love of a man. One fact contributes to this situation: Éva's accomplishment in motherhood. She cares for herself and her little son from her first marriage through her work as an industrial designer. In a letter to Éva, a girlfriend characterizes her as follows:

> Éva, if you only knew how often I think of you with jealousy; of your deep calm, your harmony, your independence, and your proud, beautiful solitude that you have chosen! How did you acquire it, how do you manage, and ... how can you still remain an artist, a real artist in all of this?[20]

Éva has succeeded in combining an independent lifestyle with motherhood and in self-consciously accepting loneliness in regard to men.

Another author, Renée Erdős, wrote a play in 1923 entitled *Az alkotók* [The Creators]. In this play, Anna, a celebrated sculptor, finds the balance between her career as an artist, motherhood, and a happy marriage. She finds herself at a crossroad when, after many years, she

meets again her old love, a fellow sculptor. She feels the old passion awaken again, a passion much stronger than what she feels for her husband who is a writer of average talent, but with whom she lives a quiet life and does not have to exhaust her creative energy in constant battles. In Erdős' text it is the woman who chooses and she chooses the man whom she considers to be the best partner for her to balance out all aspects of life:

> It may be that he is not an extraordinary human being, he is no genius but he has a pleasant face and a slenderness of the kind that I like. This is why you consider me unworthy of your esteem? But you, worthy men sometimes lie at the feet of the most despicable woman all your life! Why shouldn't I also be allowed to arrange my life as I please? Because I am a woman?[21]

We are witnessing here a reversal of the traditional gender roles. The woman neither supports her man's creativity to the point of self-sacrifice (as it was expected of the generation of her grandmothers) nor does she devote herself exclusively to her career with no male presence in her life (as many among the first generation of the "new woman" did). Instead, Anna manages to balance out the diverse elements that are to bring about her happiness and is thus the only character in the discussed texts who is able to achieve the desired synthesis in the "new woman's" life Kaffka was talking about.

Through the analysis of some *fin-de-siècle* female characters, I have outlined the conflicts that women writers from that period had observed as paramount in the "new woman's" life. Through their female characters, these writers show us the resistances and paradoxes women of their times often had to face and fight against. Even though the ideal of the "new woman" had already matured in young women living at the turn of the century, they were not yet able to achieve the level of harmony that would encompass all aspects of their lives. Yet later in the first half of the century characters such as Kaffka's Éva Rosztoky or, even more so, Erdős' Anna Szalay — who achieve the desired balance and are capable of choosing their path independently, self-consciously, without tragedy or regrets — demonstrate that the struggle of the previous generations had not been in vain.

NOTES

[1] By the notion of the turn of the century or *fin-de-siècle* I understand the meeting point of the 19th and the 20th century, as it is usually acknowledged in literary history.

[2] István Boross, *Regényirodalmunk nőírói* [Our Women Novelists] (Budapest: Gyóni Géza Irodalmi Társaság, 1935), p. 134. All translations from the Hungarian originals are by Agatha Schwartz.

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

[4] Rosika Schwimmer, one of the most important founding members of the Association of Feminists (Feministák Egyesülete), talks about these facts in "Der Stand der Frauenbildung in Ungarn," in *Handbuch der Frauenbewegung,* Helene Lange and Gertrud Bäumer, eds., 2 volumes. (Berlin: W. Moeser, 1902).

[5] Emma Ritóok, *Egyenes úton egyedül* [On a Straight Path, Alone] (Budapest: Singer & Wolfner, 1905), p. 27-8.

[6] A middle-class woman of Magda's generation could choose between becoming a governess, a teacher for girls, or opening a fashion store, a salon.

[7] Wanda Tóth, "Első szerelem" [First Love], *Nyugat* 1911 (II): 339-51. p. 346.

[8] Miklós Szabolcsy, *A magyar irodalom története* [A History of Hungarian Literature] (Budapest: Akadémiai kiadó, 1966), p. 228-32.

[9] György Bodnár, "Látószög: Kaffka Margit, Mária évei," in Kaffka Margit, *Mária évei* [Mária's Years] (Sopron: Bethlen Gábor, 1994), p. 185-202.

[10] Margit Kaffka, "Az asszony ügye" [The Woman Question], *Világ*, April 20, 1913.

[11] Ritóok, p. 152.

[12] *Ibid.*

[13] *Ibid.*, 61.

[14] The turn of the century was a time replete with such theories; one major representative was the Austrian Otto Weininger whose book *Sex and Character,* first published in 1903, became an absolute bestseller and had a tremendous impact on many contemporary writers yet was heavily (and understandably) criticized by feminist writers.

[15] Rosa Mayreder, an Austrian writer and feminist of the same period, one of the founding figures of the Austrian women's movement, expresses similar views in her influential book of essays *Zur Kritik der Weiblichkeit,* 1905.

[16] Ritóok, p. 121.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 154.

[18] Terka Lux, *Leányok* [Girls] (Budapest: Légrády, 1906), p. 226.

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 269.

[20] Kaffka, *Állomások* [Stations] (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1957 [1917]), p. 489.

[21] Renée Erdős, *Az alkotók* [The Creators] (Budapest: Fővárosi könyv és lapkiadó részvénytársaság, 1921), p. 61.

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Ilona Duczynska Polanyi: The Midwife-Translator

Marlene Kadar

> Attila József was a contemporary Villon, whose life and poetry revolved around the two treacherous poles of this age, Marx and Freud, and who died a victim of both.
>
> Arthur Koestler, *The Invisible Writing*.

Comparatists are, in general, as interested in the so-called "minor" literatures as they are in the "major" ones — that is, the literatures written in the languages of international commerce. In their view, whether a literature is major or not has nothing to do with the integrity of its language, or the value of its culture. Comparative Literature, then, also considers part of its purview the issue of translation, or how the minor literatures get translated into the major ones. For comparatists, "translation" does not *mean* only the sense of words expressed into another language. It also refers to the *means* by which the expression takes place.

Since the act of rendering a Hungarian poem into English in Canada, for example, is a cultural act, it is also an invitation to consider influences, and compare two separate though, we anticipate, complementary poems: the poem written in the original language, and the poem written in the language of the translator.[1] Consider the influence on Earle Birney, Canada's poet-laureate, author of the poem, "David" (1941),

and the political novel, *Down the Long Table* (1955), of the Hungarian poet, Attila József, whose intense life ended when Birney was only 33 years old (Birney was born one year before Attila József). Consider also that Birney's interpretation of Attila József would not have come to pass were it not for the work and influence of what I will call a "midwife-translator,"[2] usually a very specialized intellectual with particular skills — some studied, and some acquired as a birth right, a language — and specific literary and political interests. The midwife-translator in this case is Hungarian-speaking, multilingual by training, living in Canada, but of international repute, and with broad literary tastes and knowledge of both Canadian men and women of letters, and of the free-thinking European intelligentsia. She is also someone who identified with the ethos of the thirties, and whose work reflects the original socialist spirit of 1919. Moreover, she and Birney could work together; he, too, was a socialist, having joined the International Left Opposition when he was a Ph.D. student in English at the University of Toronto in the early thirties. Such a tall order, requiring a unique confluence of circumstances, minds and pocketbooks: the only person who could fill the bill was Ilona Duczynska Polanyi.

Here we have a triangle of minds which somehow worked together to produce a new text, a new poem in 1960s Canadian English, though all of its soul rests in the Hungarian language and culture of the 1930s. The source head is the translated poet, Attila József, born in 1905, died in 1937. The midwife-translator, coincidentally living in Pickering, Ontario in the 1950s and 60s, was Ilona Duczynska Polanyi (1897-1978),[3] author of *Der Demokratische Bolshevik* (1975) and other books; and editor, with her husband, Karl Polanyi, of *The Plough and the Pen: Writings from Hungary: 1930-1956* (1963), one of the best anthologies of modern Hungarian literature in the English language. Finally the Canadian poet-member of the triangle, Earle Birney, born in 1904, told me in 1988 that he was still interested in his soul-mate, the great Attila József. (Birney died in September 1995 at the age of 91.) It was Duczynska who first brought them together — largely through personal correspondence, one of the important subgenres of what has come to be known as life writing. That is, letters are valuable forms of writing because they are personal and revealing compositions, but also because they are historical documents.[4]

Duczynska had lived all over the world — Budapest, Vienna, London, Montreal, Pickering — and had circulated with distinguished

literati everywhere she went. Among her friends were W. H. Auden, Britain's poet-laureate of the 1930s, the distinguished poet who wrote the Foreword to *The Plough and the Pen*, a fact which we learn from the 1963 correspondence, "cheered" Earle Birney.

Auden postulates an intimate relation between ideology and translation. He writes that the act of translation is not only a practical or an artistic act; it is, finally, political. He says

> the only political duty — by duty I mean an activity which [the author] might prefer to devote to his [her] own writing — which I can see as falling on a writer, in all countries and at all times, [a] duty, not as a citizen but as a person with literary talent, is a duty to translate the fiction and poetry of other countries so as to make them available to readers in his [her] own.[5]

Auden continues, and here lies the important criteria for establishing a sophisticated translation,

> I consider translation a political act because the relations between any two countries are not determined by economic and political interests alone, but also by the degree to which the inhabitants of each are able to understand what the inhabitants of the other are thinking and feeling, and the novelists and poets of this country are the only people who can give one this understanding.[6]

Although such a commitment on the part of Auden was important to Birney as a contributor to *The Plough and the Pen*, he had a few comments to make about Auden's Foreword in a letter sent to "Mrs. Polanyi" on 28 January 1963 from London. To him the intrinsic value of the poet as poet was also important.

> I was most interested and cheered to learn that Auden is writing so forthrightly about the importance of translation. I think his phrase "political act" is too meagre, however; it is part of the motive, as I wouldn't be interested in Attila [József] if his poetry were fascist; but I'd still not be interested in him even if he happened to express my

> personal shade [of] politics unless he were writing fine poetry. One must believe in the poem as a work of art or there isn't enough incentive to drive through with a translation in the face of all the difficulties, the economic unprofitableness of the expenditure of time, *vis-à-vis* one's own work, etc....[7]

Birney was not the only Canadian poet (or scholar) Duczynska recruited into various Hungarian translation projects. She also recruited Louis Dudek, A. J. M. Smith, Margaret Avison, Raymond Souster, John Robert Colombo and Kenneth McRobbie, all of whom translated texts for *The Plough and the Pen*. Duczynska's letters to Birney reveal the processes through which Duczynska meticulously led these Canadian poets in order to get a suitable "English version" (the "new poem," not always called a "translation"). These letters, about 28 of them (not to mention drafts of revisions of translations) were exchanged between Earle Birney and Ilona Duczynska from May 1958 to September 1965, during which time they visited each other at least once.

In what may be called a complex "communication situation"[7] Earle Birney rendered into English more of Attila József than he had bargained for. For *The Plough and the Pen* he translated — using the term loosely now — "*Aki szegény az a legszegényebb*" (1924) and "*Áradat*" (c. 1931).[9] The first of his English versions, however, was presented to Canadian readers four years earlier in the September 1959 edition of The *Canadian Forum* (p. 130). There, he titled the latter poem "Five Poor Men Speak Up," and he added the line, always uncertain or, at least, respectfully tentative of how to describe this complex communication situation, "adapted from the Hungarian by Earle Birney." In 1962 the poem was published in *Ice Cod Bell or Stone* as "The Travelling Workers' Curse"[10] to which Birney added "From the Hungarian of Attila József." The 1963 version of the poem was titled "Five Poor Men Speak," and is more confidently called "the English Version by Earle Birney." It is, too, more sober than the 1959 poem, and less punctuated. (It is interesting to note that Birney used a surfeit of exclamation marks in 1959.)

It is a matter of common knowledge that there are at least two poles of translation: the literal and the creative, or imaginative. Most scholars now believe that the poetic reconstruction (as opposed to "translation" as such) has been vindicated by the contemporary notion that

all acts of communication are also acts of translation. Moreover, there are numerous phases of revision in the creative reconstruction in English of a poem written in another language, and each of these phases is represented in the correspondence we are fortunate to have between Birney and Duczynska. An examination of the revision of one poem will illustrate how the poem is reconstructed through correspondence.

The target of our scrutiny is "A város peremén," a poem written in 1932-1933, at least 28 years before the poet-translator began to revise the midwife-translator's literal version of the poem. Duczynska prepared what she called "red-and-black" sheets of "A város peremén." The poem was typed out in Hungarian (probably in black ink), and then she wrote in a literal translation of each line in red ink. Then Duczynska sent these sheets to Birney. About "A város peremén" she wrote that it "was prepared for *The Plough and the Pen* but, like many others (about half of the red-and-black) remained untranslated, though several attempts [she does not say by whom] were made."[11]

An investigation of both the correspondence and the revisions of "A város peremén," enables one to reconstruct the translation of the poem in 2 distinct phases.

Phase 1: a literal translation is accomplished by the midwife-translator as a primary working text for the poet-translator. Duczynska prepared the red-and-black of "A város peremén," she translated it into English word for word, line for line, in parallel texts, identifying the number of Hungarian syllables and the rhyme scheme in the margins.

Phase 2: the poet-translator mulls over the red-and-black and begins the process of revision, of draft-making, until a publishable version is achieved. Birney revised the literal translation in at least 4 drafts over a period of two years. The final version is published in *Near False Creek Mouth*,[11] a book of poems which Frank Davey says marks the continuation of a new perspective which treats the poem less as "an aesthetic object" and more as "an avenue toward truth."[13] In spite of this trend in Birney's poetry, Birney understands "A város peremén" as both avenue toward truth and aesthetic object. It is useful to take a closer look at what the Canadian poet thinks is important in the Hungarian poem.

"A város peremén" is a poem in which "the workers are regarded both as the heirs to all civilizations before them and as a unique class

born with the machine and alone able to 'civilize' it and so to rescue mankind from the chaos of its uncontrolled use by capitalism."[14] Quoting Ilona Duczynska, Birney writes, the poem is "a cry from the depths of Attila's sufferings. It was written not only under the terror of fascism and the shadow of personal isolation from the revolutionary movement, from which the doctrinaire communists had hounded him, but also in circumstances of poverty, ill-health, and a depression which was, within two years, to drive him to suicide."[15] Birney rightly says these complexities of feeling in the poem alone make translation difficult.[16] He adds that "there are also the difficulties in form," identifying them thusly: translation of "A város peremén" is made difficult by

1. a "rigorously precisioned verse," that is

i. lines in alternate rhyme (lát and harmóniát) or, more commonly, half-rhyme (világ and lát);

ii. careful patterning and variation in syllable count within the lines; this is revealed, for example, in the descending pattern of variation in stanza 16 [10, 7, 8, 7, 9, 7]. This pattern is much more complex than it is in Attila József's earlier poems, especially Birney's English version, "Nobody's as Poor as a Poor Man," where all the lines are ten syllables;

iii. and a regular 6-line stanzaic form.

2. "a rhythm marvellously rolling", aided by the above wave-like syllable pattern, and, furthermore, by

i. "a terse and half-colloquial diction... subtly unified by that 'built-in' grammatical employment of assonance which is one of the untransferable gifts of the Hungarian language."[17] Technically, assonance is the resemblance in sound between vowels followed by different consonants in two or more stressed syllables (e.g., line one of stanza 16 is full of natural /philological assonance). As Duczynska has written to Birney on 20 July 1962, "Hungarian is a very vowelly language, so Attila [József], while using always very few words [the archival copy is underscored by Birney] has a large number of syllables." Duczynska understood assonance well. In the same letter she wrote: "your version may suffer from having to work in an overdose of words to get the syllables right," and she advises cutting down on "any redundant words" to "bring you nearer to the desired rhythm." (It is at this point in the communication that Duczynska tapes herself reading the original Hungarian poem aloud for Birney, who is living temporarily in San Miguel Allende, Mexico where tape recorders

are, he writes, scarce.) This would be impossible to reproduce in English, without abandoning theme or content;

ii. therefore, Birney writes "I have made no attempt to reproduce the original assonantal values."

As far as content goes, although Earle Birney is a conservative translator, he does not subscribe to the now dated view that poetry is essentially untranslatable (i.e. that cultures cannot communicate and poetic thought is circumscribed by political and linguistic borders). He says, "I have not consciously distorted or added to basic meaning, so far as I understand it." At the same time, however, he writes, "I am all too aware how much of the strangeness and power of Attila's poem has proved beyond my reach to reproduce."

As recommended by translation theorist and literary critic, Rainer Schulte, "In practical terms, the concern about the reconstruction of the translation process will require the collection of the various drafts that a translator has prepared in the course of reaching a final, publishable draft."[18]

It is revealing to examine the changes in one unit of "A város peremén," and most appropriately, the final and powerful stanza #16. First, the verse will be presented in the original Hungarian version; then in the literal translation; then in drafts A to D; and, then, in the final published version, all of which can be called "Primary Texts." Birney and Duczynska think that "A város peremén" is one of Attila József's greatest poems and in one letter to Birney, Duczynska writes "its theme is the natural history of the modern working-class, in Hesiodic terms, as a new race of men."[19] This poem is too long to treat in its totality, so stanza 16 is being used here as symbolic of the entire poem, the entire communication situation, the entire reconstruction of the translation process:

PHASE ONE:

Poem published by poet, Attila József, in Budapest in 1933, and recorded, with marginalia, by Duczynska.

Literal translation by midwife-translator, Ilona Duczynska, Pickering, Ontario, c. 1960:[20]

The poet — words clatter on his lips,
yet he (engineer of the given world's
magics and enchantments)
looks into a conscious future
and constructs within himself, as you
once shall outside, harmony.

PHASE TWO:

Poetic "translation" reconstruction by Earle Birney in Toronto, Canada, c. 1960.

DRAFT A: Birney is tinkering with different words here, especially in the last couplet.

Though words merely clatter on the poet's lips
it is he who animates
this world's magics and enchantments;
he perceives our conscious fates,

[typescript version]:
shapes within — as you may yet beyond
the self — and harmony creates.

[manuscript version]:
and, within himself — as you may yet
beyond the self — a harmony creates.

DRAFT B: Poetic "translation" reconstruction by Earle Birney, in which he experiments with various arrangements of syllables.

Typescript version unless otherwise marked [ms.].

Left Column: original number of syllables per line according to Duczynska's marginalia.

Right Column: number of syllables per line in Birney's draft.

10 Words are a clatter on the poet's lips; [10]

7 it's he who animates engineers [6]
8 this world's magics and enchantments; [8]
7 he perceives our conscious fates [7]
9 and within himself — as you may yet [ms.] beyond the self [8/9]
7 beyond the self... a harmony creates [10]
[ms.] Your world — the hopes of a harmony here [10]

DRAFT C: Birney accomplishes the desired rhyme scheme.

10 Words on the poet's lips are a clatter,
7 yet it's he who engineers [from Duczynska's original literal translation: see PHASE ONE]
8 this world's magics and enchantments;
7 he foresees mankind's career;
9 within, as all shall beyond the self,
7 he creates a harmony.

DRAFT D: In his correspondence with Duczynska, Birney calls this the "final" version, but we see that he still tinkers with the comma in the last line of the poem. He crosses out the comma on the typescript copy, and then removes it for publication in *Near False Creek Mouth*, 1964, and for *Selected Poems*, 1966.

Words on the poet's lips are a clatter,
yet it's he who engineers
this world's magics and enchantments;
he foresees mankind's career,
constructs a harmony within himself
as you shall, in the world's sphere.

Once the comma is removed, this version of the last stanza is printed in *Near False Creek Mouth*. The title of the poem is "On the City's Rim," and is described as "(translated from József Attila, with the collaboration of Ilona Duczynska...)."

Truly, Duczynska acted as the midwife here and elsewhere, bringing new life to Hungarian poems both she and Birney loved, and also new life to *Near False Creek Mouth*. As Dalos and others have remarked, Duczynska was an internationalist in her heart and in her

practice, and the translations of Attila József are just one example of her commitment to internationalism and its representation in a major Canadian collaborative translation project like *The Plough and the Pen.*

NOTES

The author wishes to thank Richard Teleky for instructive comments made on an early draft of this paper. A later version of it was delivered at the Fourth Annual Conference of the Hungarian Studies Association of Canada at the University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, on 3 June 1988. It was dedicated to Earle Birney and Wailan Low, and was published in *Hungarian Studies Review* in the fall of 1988. The present version is a revised and slightly expanded rendering of the 1988 article.

[1] For more on current translation theory see Joseph F. Graham's *Introduction to Difference in Translation* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1985), and Barbara Godard, Translator's Preface to Nicole Brossard, *Lovhers* (Montreal: Guernica, 1986), pp. 7-12. Some Montreal feminist writers, such as Gail Scott, make a political point of not translating all French words into English in their fiction. See for example, Gail Scott, *Heroine* (Toronto: Coach House, 1987).

[2] The actual term "midwife-translator" was suggested to me by Wendy Waring in April 1988. We were discussing the balance between theoretical and raw, practical concerns in translation.

[3] Ilona Duczynska was born in Eastern Austria of a Polish-Austrian father and a Hungarian mother. Her father was a nobleman of modest means; her mother's family owned estates in Hungary. (For details on Duczynska's youth see Kenneth McRobbie's essay in this volume.) When she married Károly Polányi (known outside Hungary as Karl Polanyi), Duczynska married into one of turn-of-the-century Hungary's illustrious families. Karl's father, Mihály Pollacsek, was a contractor and entrepreneur, and his mother, Russian-born Cecile Whol, was "a high-spirited, energetic woman with a great interest in Hungary's intellectual life" (Lee Congdon, "Polanyi and the Treason of the Intellectuals," in the fall, 1975 issue of our journal, p. 80.). For more information about the family and about Michael Polanyi in particular, please refer to Congdon's article. Duczynska, her husband, their daughter Kari Levitt (formerly of McGill University), and Michael Polanyi's son, the Nobel-laureate chemist John Polanyi of the University of Toronto, all emigrated to Canada.

[4] Life writing encompasses diverse genres, from diaries and letters to autobiography and certain kinds of metafiction. For more information see the collective volume DATA and ACTA: *Aspects of Life-Writing*, ed. Evelyn Hinz

(Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1987), or *Essays on Life Writing*, edited by Marlene Kadar (Toronto: UTP, 1992). For more information about Duczynska, see *A század nagy tanúi* (Budapest: Minerva, 1978), 57-81 and György Dalos, *A cselekvés szerelmese: Duczynska Ilona élete* (Budapest: Kossuth, 1984).

[5] *The Plough and the Pen*, Foreword by W. H. Auden, p. 10.

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] From the Ilona Duczynska Polanyi manuscript folder, Earle Birney Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Books Library, University of Toronto, by permission of Wailan Low and Earle Birney, and Kari Levitt, George Beckford Professor in Caribbean Economy, University of the West Indies.

[8] This term is borrowed from J. L. Austin, *How To Do Things With Words* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1962) and Wolfgang Iser, *The Implied Reader* (London: John Hopkins University Press, 1974).

[9] Under the titles "Nobody's As Poor As A Poor Man" and "Five Poor Men Speak," respectively.

[10] Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1955, pp. 26-7.

[11] Earle Birney Papers, c. May 1962 (the date in not clear from the manuscript itself, but it must have been written in this period of the their communications).

[12] Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1964, n.p., poem no. 30.

[13] Earle Birney (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1971), p. 56.

[14] Cf. Birney's published endnote in *Near False Creek Mouth*, poem no. 30 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1964).

[15] *Ibid.*

[16] "Rendering Attila József's Poems in Italian," *New Hungarian Quarterly* 3, 6 (April-June 1962): 183.

[17] *Near False Creek Mouth*, poem no. 30.

[18] "Translation Theory: A Challenge for the Future," *Translation Review* 23 (1987): 1.

[19] Earle Birney Papers, October 3, 1962, p. 2.

[20] It might be noted here that Duczynska's syllable count (in the left margin) appears to be incorrect here. But this is because of an error in transcription: "varázslatainak" should be "varázsainak," thereby making the line 8 syllables long. Credit for this correction goes to János Szanyi of Radio Canada International in Montreal.

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The Changing Role of Women in Contemporary Hungarian Literature

Éva Kiss-Novák

In modern societies, the arts, the humanities, and the social sciences serve the needs of society in peculiar ways. This is especially true of literature and such disciplines as political science, sociology, psychology. In countries where the latter developed late, or where they exercised belated and/or limited influence on the evolution of national life, literature assumed a more important role and performed some of the functions that the social sciences have fulfilled elsewhere. This is true of Russian literature, and it is certainly characteristic of Hungarian literature. Moreover, as it will be argued in this essay, literature in Hungary from the early-1970s to the late-1980s was more sensitive to the country's social problems than the social sciences, controlled as these were in the post-Stalinist yet still highly regimented Hungary of the Kádár era.[1] To illustrate the truth of this thesis, this essay will examine the evolving images of women's roles and their lives as depicted in the literature of this period.

It is a well-known fact that in post-World War II Hungary — in fact, in most of postwar Eastern Europe — the two income family became the accepted norm.[2] The peculiar economic conditions of the times necessitated the mass entry of women into the labour force.[3] This development came about in a relatively short time in the Hungarian nation's historical evolution. Hungary's communist rulers tried to mask the difficulties that accompanied this transformation by proclaiming the process to be a part of the socialist emancipation of women.[4] It should not be forgotten that the authorities did establish — or, at least, tried to establish — the infrastructure needed to put this transformation into

effect: they created public nurseries, kindergartens, etc.[5] Despite their shortcomings, these institutions assured mobility to a great many women. Improvement can be seen in the statistics documenting the educational attainments of women. The proportion of women in managerial positions also improved somewhat, and in certain professions, such as among teachers and pharmacists, women began to predominate. In spite of these largely positive developments, the traditional roles of women did remain, and certain tasks traditionally performed by women, continued to be women's chores.[6] The peculiar economic conditions prevailing did not allow the mechanization of domestic chores in the manner that was typical of contemporary Western European and North American households. Family incomes simply did not warrant the equipping of households with modern conveniences. The fact that for example some canned goods were available, did not change the expectation that women bake, cook the daily meals, produce the preserves for the family — and in the countryside, also grow the vegetables. The meagre advances in providing women with conveniences did not make their household tasks substantially easier.

In most cases, the tasks of raising and taking care of the children also devolved upon women. Only among members of the younger generation was there a tendency for the men, the fathers, to share household chores.[7] The end of communist rule in 1989 brought little noticeable change. In fact, the slow evolution of societal attitudes that had started before this political transformation, was halted by the economic crises of the early and mid-1990s. These economic recessions forced families to exert greater efforts to maintain their usual standard of living. Since in most cases men had a better chance to earn higher incomes, women tended once again to assume a greater share of the tasks of child-rearing and taking care of the home.

The physical and spiritual burdens brought about by such situations are not shouldered in a uniform manner by women. There are those for whom, because of upbringing or the influence of the immediate social environment, emancipation is only a theoretical possibility. There are some who try, and some who even succeed in taking advantage of the greater opportunities available to women during the last few decades. There are many who are more constrained by their cultural legacies than by the changed circumstances of the times. Many among these feel that they are only full-fledged human beings — women — when there is a man standing beside them. Many see fulfilment only in being mothers.

It might sound banal, but it is true: there are as many fates as women. This fact can be described with the greatest empathy by women authors. For this reason in this essay I shall illustrate the various types of female characters that exist in recent Hungarian literature through examining the works of women authors, except in one case. I shall try to answer the question of how the women portrayed strove to play the roles assigned to them. I will also endeavour to describe not only a Hungarian but a general phenomenon as far as lessons about women's roles and lives are concerned.

I shall be describing a number of types of women who are depicted in recent Hungarian fiction. Categorizing individuals as belonging to one or another variety is a risky undertaking. Nevertheless, it may be the best way to proceed. In this process I shall try to look for the common elements in the characters of the women portrayed by the authors, especially those elements that can be observed in these women's reactions to situations, and in their interpretations of their own roles. The order in which I discuss these types does not imply that one type is more prevalent than another.

The first "type" I find is what I call the *deprived one*. The most typical and focused representation of this type of women can be found in Árpád Göncz's monodrama *Magyar Médea* [Hungarian Médea].[8] (Göncz is the only male author whose work I discuss in this study.) Médea Deák was brought up in the spirit of the idea that woman's fate is man. As far as her education and professional qualifications are concerned, she is the equal of her husband. Nevertheless, two things confine her to inescapable bondage: her obsessive love and her cultural surroundings. The combination of these two determining factors motivate her to further her husband's career. She had met her husband during the 1950s, during the time of deportations when Hungary's communist regime persecuted those whom it suspected of opposing the country's socialist transformation. The Deáks themselves were deportees. Médea lived the difficult life assigned to her, along with her father the ex-general, and mother who valued keeping up appearances above everything. Under such demeaning conditions Médea makes friends with András Jászó, a good-natured and bright country lad, a tractor driver. The relationship builds from a feeling of indebtedness — not surprisingly, as the young man steals food to feed Médea and her family — but this feeling gradually blossoms into love. The young lovers set out on life's journey and, though trying to forget the past, they strive

for greater and greater educational achievement, supporting each other in the process. In this process Médea does most of the helping and encouraging, while she also shoulders the burdens of family life. Her fate becomes the fate of many women when her husband — now a highly qualified managerial type — having reached the height of his career, dumps her in favour of the young daughter of a highly-placed communist party official. What we have here is a situation often caused by social mobility. Many women of various social backgrounds have faced this. The man, whom his wife had helped to climb the ladder of the social mobility, on attaining success finds his loyal wife unworthy, and exchanges her for another, a younger woman. Médea finds her husband's betrayal all the more disheartening, as he complains about precisely those of her characteristics which had benefitted him in his quest for a career: her cultured nature, brilliance, perseverance, self-confidence and generosity. The tragedy is made complete when Médea's parents, who had disagreed on what their tormented only child should do under the circumstances, become victims of a traffic accident. This event proves the final stage in Médea's becoming a deprived individual. She sees no reason to live on, and finds solace in suicide. This final solution is of course an individual choice. Women who had met fates similar to Médea's — who were abandoned by a husband, a child or children, and who as a result have lost their faith in God and themselves — are many. Such fates are described in the novels of Anna Jókai, Sarolta Raffai, Boris Palotai for example, and the author's message is often confirmed by sociological studies.[9]

The next type of woman I find I call the *sacrificial lamb*. She is the sacrificial animal on the altar of the family, the children, the daily struggle — and, especially, the comfort, pride and vanity of her man. The women who belong to this type usually come from lower-class social backgrounds and usually do not reach a societal position higher than that of a blue collar worker. They don't even aspire to higher things, as we find the female characters of the novel *Csábító* [The Seducer] by Klára Bihari.[10] For them, the most a woman can aspire to is a decent family life lived with a good husband. For this goal every sacrifice is worthy and must be made. This view derives from ancient values cherished by Hungary's peasants. This fact explains that this particular type of woman is frequently found among country people. These views predominate among village folk who believe that the basic unit of society is the family. Here, no man lives outside the family. The essence of child-

rearing is to prepare children for their role within the families. These roles are defined in a precise manner by village society. Leadership, decision-making, along with hard physical work are the tasks of the man. The woman's task is to obey, perform the myriad household chores, put up with her husband's idiosyncracies, and of course, never complain. If all this is reinforced by a romantic bond, as it is in the above-mentioned novel, then the woman becomes a perfect sacrificial lamb. It is surprising that at the end of the second millennium this role playing is still a widely accepted phenomenon. Both fictional and sociological studies uniformly speak to the fact that this concept of women's role in life has changed very little during the last decades — despite the great transformations that have taken place during this period.

The fate of women belonging to this category is work in the workplace — which in itself is drab and boring — work around the home, and the routine of supplying the needs of the family. The monotony of such lives is only rarely interrupted by some unexpected event, such as an excursion to an amusement park with a child (see Zsuzsa Vathy's novel *Angolpark* [English Park, i.e. an amusement park in Budapest]. These seemingly insignificant events become the cherished and most memorable events of these women's lives. Others are those fleeting moments when, at the whim of their husbands, they receive a word of apparent praise, a superficial compliment, all which confirms in them the worthiness of their role. These women are ready for any sacrifice, as if confirming their *raison d'être* so that when in walking down their village's main street alongside their man, upon being introduced to someone, they can flout a married name.[11] It is for precisely this reason that this type often becomes the victim of unscrupulous individuals who prey upon them, as the promise of marriage opens not only the heart but also the doors and the purses. These patterns make these women easy prey. Nevertheless, they feel that they must accept life's blows without complaining — this is their motto. The characters of Klára Bihari's novel do not spurn the seducers even after their having been unmasked, but hope that, after they divorce their wives, they will marry them. The sole aim of the lonely lives of these women is a man, from whom on some rare occasions they can receive friendliness or even love.

The next type of woman resembles the former in a few qualities. I call this type *the one who acts as if dreaming*. In my view this type of woman is portrayed in the novel of Anna Jókai, *Jákob Lajtorjája* [Jacob's

Ladder]. Hajnal Kantár is a university-educated young woman from a good family. Her mother lives her own life and considers her daughter a stranger. The cause of this poor mother-daughter relationship has been Hajnal's unfortunate choice in mates. At first she had fallen in love with a selfish swindler, then almost out of spite she married another man whom she did not really love. This ill-conceived marriage ends in divorce, and Hajnal is left, with her one-year-old daughter, in terrible economic circumstances. She manages to complete her training as a lawyer and soon she meets her life's first true love, an actor by the name of Kornél. He marries her partly out of pity, partly out of expectations of improved family finances. But life with Kornél's diabetic daughter is not easy. Kornél

> bears with some dignity the tragedy that had befallen him, like a heroic soldier who has hidden his bloodied shirt under his military overcoat, but the evidence of the wound is revealed sometime here and sometimes there. Did the wound squeal unintentionally? Or did Kornél make sure that the truth was revealed through a careless movement so as the tip of the bandage could become visible? Who can know for sure? And now arrives this sparingly lively, radiantly brilliant woman. She tears open the overcoat. She caresses. But through this she wipes smooth all the creases.[12]

The circumstances of the situation are extremely complex. Nevertheless Hajnal reaches for the last straw and tries to save this love; with heroic efforts she tries to redeem — as though through a dream — a life gone wrong. She carries on with her life as a lawyer, she takes care of her ailing step-daughter, and tries to make every occasion unforgettable for her husband. She does this not from cynical calculation but from her belief in perfection. In her views about the roles of men and women in life, in addition to the discharging of duties as professionals, there is an important role for the ties between men and women that are based on feelings, on sexuality, and on the equal sharing of delights and worries. Circumstances, however, do not allow for these natural desires to be fulfilled, but Hajnal does not give up. With undaunted persistence she tries to provide the material needs of starting a new life. She takes a second job and she persists in keeping her husband's spirits up, all in

order to improve the chances of a happier life. In the meantime they have to struggle with life's little irritations, such as their miserable living quarters.[13] Hajnal dreams of a prefect life. She hopes to gain the love of her husband's little daughter, and that the two girls will make friends. Her belief in fairness does not permit her to see a family that had been abandoned, possibly on account of her, to endure privations. For this reason she tries — beyond what her own situation warrants — to alleviate the material needs of her husband's former family. Her desperate efforts fail to bring about perfect happiness. In part because of events beyond their control (the little girl with the diabetes dies), partly because in the heroic struggle for perfection and happiness nerves get frayed, and the couple loses what was most important in their relationship: love and mutual respect.

Can the character represented by Hajnal Kantár be classified as a particular type of woman? I am convinced that it can. Dreaming about a young woman's fulfilled and happy life happens not only in the bedrooms of girls. Even women who have had setbacks in life hope that, in possession of some useful experiences, they will be wiser in re-building their lives. They also dream that in doing so they can reach the goal of combining the roles of a happy mother/wife and successful career woman. In my view this type of mentality, this type of acting as if dreaming, can only be induced by social conditioning which compels people to persevere and never give up the struggle.

It is worth emphasizing that this type of woman not only dreams but acts to attain her dreams. Hajnal and women like her live in awe of the complete emancipation of women, and some of them even succeed in reaching what they long for. They may not attain perfection — we may ask: is there perfect happiness? — but a balanced life which conjures up the image of perfection. The hero of our novel does not succeed even in this. We also have to keep in mind that, often, the family life of a professionally successful wife is rarely similarly successful. In discussing this problem, however, we come upon another type of woman.

With a pinch of irony, we can call this type the *emancipated woman*. The irony applies not to the woman so designated but to the concept. What is this concept? In the *Book of Genesis* we can read the following: "And God said: Let us make man in our similitude and after our likeness: that he may have rule over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the air, and over cattle, and over the earth and over all worms

that creep on the earth. And God created man after his likeness, after the likeness of God created he him: male and female created he them...."[14] At the time of creation, God had not differentiated between man and woman. Nevertheless history shows that men have avenged the age of matriarchy by the strict subordination of women.[15] In fact, words are hardly enough to describe the sad situation of women in many parts of the world. How women become truly emancipated to be equal to men? After all, we are different from men physically, in our ability to perform physical tasks, as well as in our spiritual make-up. We can attain the same level of education, fill the same type of jobs, we can drive cars, we smoke, and even in the matter of alcohol consumption we can do a commendable job — as recent statistics reveal. And among the young, the dating game is often initiated by girls. Is this enough? Does this represent emancipation?

Let us respond to this question with the help of fiction. I would like to etch this type of woman on the basis of the lead character of Klára Bihari's novel the *Elvált asszony* [The Divorced Woman].[16] The woman in question is Réka Galló, the ambitious daughter of a working-class couple. Réka, without any substantial support from her parents, manages to attain higher and higher levels of education and thereby to reach higher and higher positions in the workplace. She is an independent, self-motivated, positive individual. She climbs the stepping stones of her profession with determination, while she makes sure that her education does not remain one-sided. She is restricted in her independence only by parental love. Réka bears this burden with understanding, love and politeness. Her self-confidence is reinforced by the fact that her parents, friends, and co-workers all respect her. Her inner peace is disturbed only by her first love. This emancipated, smart woman makes some compromises out of love and womanly tactfulness. Yet this first venture into love turns to diaster when it is revealed that her boyfriend has had a child out of wedlock. Réka's sense of fair play and her pride cannot accept the idea. After this incident, she stays away from romantic involvement for a considerable time. Although her studies occupy her time, she is still increasingly perturbed by her loneliness.

A chance encounter tosses Réka besides the man who would later become her husband, about whom the reader from the first moment gets the impression that he is not worthy of her. Réka too, has some unanswered questions about the relationship and has, as a result, premonitions of misfortune, but her desire for a partner is more powerful. Under these

circumstances she lowers her expectations. After starting life with her husband — and his mother, as economic circumstances force the three of them to live together — she gives up her independence and her emancipated ways, and she makes more and more compromises. She is put into an awkward situation by the simple fact that her married life is lived out in her mother-in-law's flat. Faced by a strong-willed mother-in-law and her pampered child, Réka is left to her own devices. Her preference for family peace and her love for her husband prevents her from trying to assert herself. Neither the husband nor her mother-in-law appreciates Réka's self-sacrificing efforts in serving the family and at the same time discharging her professional duties. She is, nevertheless, offended not only by the uneven distribution of the family work-load but also by the disparity between her and her husband's entitlements within the household. Yet it is not what prompts her to end the relationship, but the fact that for all her efforts she gets less and less emotional compensation from her husband. That is, if we analyze the situation we find that women are willing to give up part of that hard-earned equality they had attained, if in exchange they get true love, understanding and appreciation. Since the lead character of this novel gets none of these, she opts for a divorce and through this process she benefits her emancipated self at the expense of that part of her that values family life above all. The story's continuation offers some lessons. After her divorce, Réka has a number of relationships with men, but none of these proves lasting. One man sees in her only the easy prey of a recently divorced woman. Another proves incapable of getting out of his miserable marriage and thus does not want to make his new relationship with Réka official. A third man sees in her only a woman who makes lots of money. In this way this woman, despite her many fine qualities, remains alone.

Can we consider this ending of Klára Bihari's novel one with an important message? Is the fate of emancipated women, who are not capable of compromising over the long run, loneliness? It is not only the novel that hints at this. Numerous sociological studies point out that women who consider themselves independent and behave independently, often remain without a partner. A considerable number of men prefer a wife who accepts the husband's leadership, who look up to them, and who apparently feels good about the asymmetrical power arrangements within the family. Hungarian society has not learned as yet how to deal with an emancipated woman. Very few such women enjoy public acceptance and

sympathy. Rather, a person such as Réka can expect more suspicion mixed with malicious joy than sincere empathy. Public opinion — if we can be permitted such a generalization — is more in sympathy with men. An acquaintance of mine who is a distinguished researcher and who has been married twice, has been often advised: it is all right if you're smart, but don't show it!

The next type of women I find I call the *great woman.* This womanly role reaches back to the times of our mothers and grandmothers. It represents that woman who is first and foremost a housewife — more precisely, the manager of the household — who is a mother and wife. She has never heard of women's emancipation, but like a man, she manages the household, the family, as well as the servants. Hungarian literature is full of these wonderful characters.[17] Let me bring before you examples of this type of women as they have been portrayed by the writer Magda Szabó.[18]

These are strong-willed self-motivated women. Presumably their character has been shaped by the social environment. Women have been forced to assume the tasks and roles of men when wars, military service, or some tragedy had taken the men away from their families. These circumstances moulded these women's character gradually, yet they could not or would not want to return to their traditional roles even if circumstances later permitted it — for example through the eventual return of the men from military service or exile. Of course it was not only historic events that produced situations where women had to stand in for men. The lead character of Magda Szabó's novel *Régimódi történet* [Old-fashioned Story], a grandmother, replaces an irresponsible husband in order to save the family from becoming impoverished and to assure her children life as respectable middle-class citizens. Mária Rickl tries to climb the ladder of social respectability from ground level. There is a great deal of determination and strength in her. Though she never forgets about social propriety and dressing in the manner of women, her character transforms her into a man. She "was a strong woman, so strong in fact that she repelled those that lived with her, and who beat into the heads of all her daughters that they should never trust a man: they are not partners, they not helpers, they are good-for-nothing brigands."[19] Magda Szabó's portrayal also helps us to explain why we can find this type of women in different historical periods and in diverse social groups. It is partly because the pattern of thinking and acting of these women is transmitted from one generation to the next, and partly because there are always men

who feel comfortable in the convenient role of leaving important decisions to others. Thus we can often encounter this type of woman.

One might as well meditate over the question whether these women can be happy in the prison of their self-established role model. Probably not. Instead of happiness, they probably achieve some kind of contentment: the satisfaction of a job well done, the pride of being more accomplished than the men. In their sons they desperately want to see the men that can live up to their expectations. And if this dream does not materialize — as it doesn't for the heroine of the novel we're discussing — she disowns such a son, rather than forgives him. Her strict beliefs become her life, and they become companions in her lonely existence. She forces her standards upon members of her family with iron discipline. Her prudence benefits her family materially, but she has little tact to handle other things. For her, feelings and passions belong in the realm of unaffordable luxuries. She does not permit herself to be overtaken by feelings, and not even the delightfulness or the suffering of her grandchild moves her. She is convinced that life's struggle must be waged with grinding teeth and relentless determination. Her own love for others is concealed in this process of caring, which she never reveals in her life. But she is absolutely determined to assure a secure future for her loved ones. This type of woman talks little and tries to prove herself through deeds. Her efforts are often understood and appreciated by her family only after her passing.[20]

The last type that I want to discuss I call *the woman who is on her way*. One of the pre-eminent features of Hungarian life after the Second World War was increased occupational and social mobility for both men and women. The most frequent forms of this mobility were the transmutation of peasants or workers into intellectuals or professionals, and the change of peasants into workers. In most circumstances this transformation brought a more secure economic existence, or at least a higher social status. At the same time, this transformation brought with it the abandonment of the traditional community, and a departure from a long-experienced world of values. Those who underwent the change not only had to learn new skills and new knowledge, but had to formulate a new system of ethical values suitable to the changed circumstances. This was not a simple task. For those who tackled it, a kind of a double value system prevailed. In the workplace or in their profession people quickly learned what was expected of them, but in their private lives they more or

less retained their former value system. This double standard applied to the way women envisaged their roles in society. In the workplace they functioned as emancipated women, at home they behaved in a manner learned from their parents. This resulted in the coming about of a dual type of living, interrupted by occasional attempts to abandon it. Women living under the double burden of work outside the home and work within the home at times tried to transfer their emancipated workplace conditions into their private lives. These attempts usually led to serious conflicts. Women waged this struggle with varying determination, since their own unclearly-formulated value system filled them with uncertainties. Most stories describing such situations come from the pen of Erzsébet Galgóczy. She certainly knows the heroic struggles of such women since she herself had travelled this path. The muddling of these women's value systems can be greatly, even tragically exacerbated by their spiritual ambivalence. This process is illustrated by just about every character in Galgóczy's short story *Törvényen belül* [Within the Law].[21]

The identifying of different types of human beings is invariably a difficult task. Life always possesses more hues and tones than can fit into a few pre-cast moulds. Nevertheless I hope that I had been successful in etching the most important types of women existing in recent Hungarian literature and, in fact, in Hungarian life. Naturally, I know that the list of women's roles as perceived by them is longer than has been described in this study. After all, it seems that there are as many life-patterns, as many models of behaviour, as there are women. Nevertheless, those illustrated above give us cause for the formulation of a few conclusions.

It seems to be a valid generalization that the image of women's roles held by today's Hungarian women — and perhaps not only Hungarian women — is patterned on models, and is determined by those factors that they had seen in their families and in their inner social circles. These models perpetuate themselves more or less consciously, and as it were, subconsciously formulate an image of their role as wives and mothers. It is not by chance that the children of divorced parents themselves become divorced, as they have not acquired the skills to handle family conflicts and to tolerate the resultant stress, or they have not learned the right methods. These models better serve the purposes of sustaining social conventions than those of developing a more modern pattern of life.

The other important determinant in the formation of women's conceptions of their roles is society itself. Even if very slowly, modern models become accepted by the general public. The concept of the

emancipated woman in today's Hungary suggests a glass half empty, but a glass that is being filled. Women are increasingly accepted as equals not only in the workplace, but also in their private lives. There are many examples suggesting that women are learning to function independently and increasingly successfully in business life, in politics, in the arts, as well as in everyday life.[22]

Social scientists cannot offer exact answers to the questions raised by novelists and authors of other fictional literature. Nevertheless, sociological data do point to a declining willingness to get married, to the increase in the number of divorces, and to the growing proportion of people living alone in Hungary, not unlike in the majority of developed nations. These trends have many causes. Women's quest for emancipation is only one of these and it is certainly not more important than the spread of a post-modern value system with its overemphasis on personal autonomy and freedom.

NOTES

This essay is based on a paper that was delivered at the annual meeting of the Hungarian Studies Association of Canada, at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario, in May of 1996. An early draft translation of it into English was produced by Agatha Schwartz and was edited by George Bisztray. The final version of the translation was the work of N.F. Dreisziger in consultation with Marlene Kadar, Agatha Schwartz, and the author.

[1] It is beyond the scope of this essay to analyze the nature and extent of state control over the humanities and social sciences in the Hungary of the period. The fact is that, for whatever reason, the communist regime of the time exercised stricter control over what was written by social scientists than by authors of literary works.

[2] Pál Lőcsei, ed., *Család és házasság a mai magyar társadalomban* [Family and Marriage in Contemporary Hungarian Society] (Budapest: Közgazdasági és Jogi Kiadó, 1971).

[3] Pál Lőcsei, "A női munkavállalás és hagyományos magyar család" [The Employment of Women and the Traditional Hungarian Family], *Kortárs*, Oct. 1985.

[4] Miklósné Balog [Mrs. M. Balog], "A nők helyzetének és szerepének alakulása a családban" [The Evolution of the Situation and Role of Women in the Family], *Demográfia*, 1979. 2-3.

[5] See for example *INFO Társadalomtudomány*, 30 (Oct. 1994).

[6] László Cseh-Szombathy, "Változások a család működéseben" [Changes in the Functioning of the Family], *Társadalmi Szemle*, 1980, no. 6; as well as Pál Lőcsei, "A tradicionális magyar család sorsa századunk második felében" [The Fate of the Traditional Family in the Second Half of Our Century] *Mozgó Világ*, 1983, 3.

[7] László Cseh-Szombathy, "A mai magyar család tipusai és ezek működése" [The Varieties of Today's Hungarian Families and Their Functioning] *Jogtudományi Közlöny*, 1981, 7.

[8] Árpád Göncz, "Magyar Médea," in *Mérleg* (Göncz Árpád hat drámája [The Six Dramas of Árpád Göncz]) (Budapest: Magvető K., 1990), pp. 5-51.

[9] See for emample Boris Palotai, *Keserű mandula* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi Kiadó, 1977), his *Pokróc az ablakon* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi Kiadó, 1970), and his *A férfi* [The Man] (Budapest: Szépirodalmi Kiadó, 1968); also, Anna Jókai, *Az ifjú halász és a tó* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi Kiadó, 1992), as well as Klára Bihari, *A bünvalló* [The Confessor to Sin] (Budapest: Kossuth Kiadó, 1987).

[10] Klára Bihari, *Csábító* [The Seducer] (Budapest: Szépirodalmi Kiadó, 1968).

[11] Traditionally, upon marriage, Hungarian women assume their husband's complete name; that is, Anna Szabó, on marrying János Kovács, becomes Mrs. János Kovács (i.e. Kovács Jánosné).

[12] Anna Jókai, *Jákob Lajtorjája* [Jacob's Ladder] (Budapest: Szépirodalmi kiadó, 1978), p. 11.

[13] In communist Hungary, newlyweds often spent years trying to overcome the red tape involved in finding of suitable accomodation.

[14] *Old Testament*, translated by William Tyndale (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 16.

[15] On this subject see for example: Heide Göttner-Abendroth, *Die Göttin und ihr Heros* (Munnich, 1993); Johann Jakab Bachofen, *A mitosz és az ősi társadalom* [Myths and Ancient Society] (Budapest: Gondolat, 1978); Klaus Rainer Rohl, *Az amazonok lazadása* [The Revolt of the Amazons] (Budapest: Kossuth 1986); Hans Jurgen Hildebrandt, *Die Primar- und Secundarliteratur. Mit einem Anhang zurn gegenwartigen Stand der Matriarchatsfrage* (Aachen: Herodot IX., 1988).

[16] Klára Bihari, *Elvált asszony* [Divorced Woman] (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1983).

[17] See for example Nándor Pálfalvi, *Varázslatos Hargita: Sász Endre ifjúsága* [Enchanting Hargita: Endre Szász's Youth] (Budapest: Hálózat, 1990).

[18] Magda Szabó, *Régimódi történet* [Old-fashioned Story] (Budapest: Szépirodalmi kiadó, 1978).

[19] *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 354.

[21] Erzsébet Galgóczy, *Törvényen belül* [Within the Law], in *Ez a hét még nehéz lesz...* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1981), pp. 437-574.

[22] I did not discuss the problems of women who are single. This theme could serve as the subject of a separate study, as loneliness presents many different faces. In the end perhaps everything depends on whether a man and woman can form a partnership based on equality. Can loneliness be redeemed through wise compromises? Can we find our true partner in the great game of life?

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Part III

THE ARTS

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Her *Twentieth Century*: The Postmodern Cinema of Ildikó Enyedi[1]

Katherine Gyékényesi Gatto

Like a New Age novel, the Hungarian director Ildikó Enyedi's debut film, *My Twentieth Century (Az én XX. századom)*, takes the viewer on a serendipitous journey through time and space, into a multiplicity of settings, seemingly unrelated. Yet this mélange of science, art, feminism, and history, like the New Age philosophy of synchronicity,[2] does possess a basic idea which is expressed at the end of the film, through the message that Thomas Edison sends around the world in his first experiment with the telegraph: the world is magnificent, and mankind who has learned how to shape it, is also magnificent. Filmed in documentary black and white, and framed in the manner of the silent movies, the picture is a rich, dramatic canvas of *chiaroscuro*, illuminating in exaggerated fashion the duality of creation through images such as a contrasting pair of black and white horses, a pair of ducks swimming, a set of twins, pointing subconsciously or consciously to the director's affinity to portray the yin and yang of the cosmos from a masculine perspective, i.e., through binary oppositions,[3] a limited and limiting view of reality which Enyedi actually seeks to subvert.

The multifarious elements of life and existence are conveyed through the geographic shifts from New Jersey to Budapest, to Paris, to Burma, to Hamburg, to New York, to Austria, to Tokyo and through the passage of the years 1880 to 1900. Even God has an unusually feminine /feminist role in the film as a group of twinkling, chattering, female stars

who address mortals from their celestial abode, commenting, sighing, encouraging, laughing in their tinkling bell-like voiceovers.

Enyedi's wonderment at the endless mysteries of the universe and the human soul is expressed through concrete characters and a quirkily original story line. The film deals with the adventures of identical twin girls, Dora and Lili, born in 1880 in Budapest, to a poverty stricken young mother in a chilly hovel, reminiscent of the kind of setting into which D.W. Griffith might have placed Dorothy and Lillian Gish.[4] The birth vignette contrasts dramatically with the truly momentous occasion of the age shown in the previous scene-that of Thomas Edison switching on the world's first string of outdoor Christmas lights in Menlo Park, New Jersey. Both events represent new beginnings, one a product of man-controlled science, the other, a product of female nature-both miracles. We behold the awe and amazement in the faces of the crowd staring at the display of lights, and the expression of utter joy and marvel on the face of the new mother. It is these two threads, the miracle of female produced life, and the miracle of male produced science that form the warp and woof of Enyedi's turn of the century film tapestry.

On one level, Enyedi and her versatile and talented cameraman, Tibor Mathe, "create a tantalizing gossamer fable in the gorgeously lit style of the early black-and-white silents while lamenting how we failed to fulfil the liberating promise of late nineteenth century technology."[5] On the other, they address the dilemma of twentieth century woman's schizophrenia. Together, the twin sisters, Dora and Lili, both played by the same actress Dorotha Segda, come to embody "the duality of the modern woman faced with trying to remain a figure of sexual allure yet sharing equal status with men in running the world" (Thomas 16). Enyedi poses this latter question in one of the final scenes in a whispery voiceover: "Which woman would make you happier?" and the inferred answer from a man's point of view is "both." In other words, men ideally would demand a sexual and cultural duality from women: they want both their virgins and whores. In reality, Enyedi says, women are either one or the other, as a result of socialization and fate.

This fate, or the absolutely surprising nature of life is underscored in the film's third scene. It is a snowy, blustery, cold Christmas Eve in Budapest, circa 1888, and the twins seated at the foot of a monument to the Lamb Triumphant are selling matches to the passersby. Falling asleep, they dream of the donkey of Jean Renoir's "Little Match Girl" coming to take them to safety, while in actuality, each is carried off in a

different direction by two mysterious men in opera hats.[6] Thus, separated in childhood, each girl grows up taking a completely different path in life.

After an interlude of scenes shot in Paris, Burma, Hamburg, and New York, in which Enyedi interweaves her views on science, nature, and even the marginalization of Hungary from the rest of the world, she rejoins us with Dora in the year 1900, as Dora is riding the Orient Express on New Year's Eve. We are privy to Dora's thoughts on men through voiceovers which reveal how Dora empowered by her sexuality, like the goddess Diana, appraises and hunts men in order to exploit them. Dora is a picaresque figure, frivolous, deceitful, sexually attractive, characterized by her kitten-like mewings, and coquettish, flirtatious glances and laughter. Her bare shoulders and billowing breasts, and later her curvaceous buttocks speak of her exhibitionism which she cunningly uses to entice and control men, truly a case of the body erotic merging with the body politic.

Coincidentally, Lili, carrying a cage of messenger pigeons and documents, also boards the train the same evening. She is, as we later learn, on a secret mission with revolutionary undercurrents. The contrast between the two sisters, the virgin and the whore, is emphasized by the setting and ambience. Dora is riding in a luxurious dining car, drinking champagne, while Lili rides in a crowded car with peasants and their grunting animals. Dora is driven by her greed and hedonism, while Lili is impelled by her idealism, innocence, and passion for righteousness.

The narrative moves forward after a break in which a dog is shown undergoing a Pavlovian experiment in the laboratory. Enyedi, through this seemingly unrelated episode, attempts to drive home the point once again, that twentieth-century science like the dog with electrodes on his head, can be tied up in the confines of the laboratory and yet know nothing about the world. Thus it can be used for any purpose, good or bad. Once, on an earlier occasion, in an interview with a *New York Times* reporter, Enyedi had spoken about the dangers of our over-technical and soulless age, and stated explicitly that science has lost its moral basis.[7]

Finally, both girls arrive in Budapest, unbeknownst to one another, and several incidents occur which strengthen their archetypal portrayals as virgins and whores. Dora dressed to kill in her furs and elegant hat in a moment of leisure plays with her elevator boy toy while an Argentine tango sung by Carlos Gardel plays in the background. Lili, on the other hand, pursues her plans to carry out her covert mission.

Again, it is a fateful coincidence that a book, planted in the bottom of her pigeon cage on the train by an equally zealous young revolutionary, falls out of the cage into a snowdrift, and is recovered by a handsome, bearded professor type, known only as Z. This last episode serves to introduce the foil, a man, portrayed as an investigative student of life, who will sharply delineate the virginal and the whorish characteristics of Dora and Lili. The book he finds, entitled, *The Law of Mutual Assistance in Nature*, also functions as a symbol of Enyedi's ongoing dialectic with the theories of science.

Z, the archetypal male of a patriarchal society, meets Lili, where else, but in a library where he ironically admires not her brains but her buttocks (the male gaze), as she descends from a ladder leaning against the bookstacks. In the next take, they are chatting in the street and he invites her out that evening but she refuses. Subsequently, we learn that Lili had planned to and did bomb the movie theatre where Z had wanted to take her that evening, and that Z does not know that Lili was the perpetrator.

Meanwhile, Dora is pursuing her own pleasures by executing a jewellery heist through clever trickery and true to her nature does bear out the sayings that "diamonds are a girl's best friend," and that "there is a sucker (especially male) born every minute." In another scene, Dora finally catches a glimpse of Z at an exhibit, and we are led to believe that they will soon meet.

The central episode of the film, and where the twins' archetypal identities are examined on a pseudo-scientific level, is a lecture on "Sex and Character" by the renowned Viennese philosopher, Otto Weininger, which is sponsored by the Union of Hungarian Feminists. Essentially, the professor's lecture reflects the prevailing attitude towards women in a patriarchal society. Lili is present in the audience and hears Weininger declaim that there are two types of woman, the virgin-mother and the whore, and that both find their root or basis in their sexuality. Both are dominated by the phallus and in and of by herself the woman is simply zero. This pseudo scientific lecture which posits the notion that women are not equal to men morally nor intellectually is cleverly subverted by Enyedi's having Weininger deliver the lecture with more than a usual dose of histrionics. In fact, Weininger becomes downright "hysterical" in defense of his thesis.

Once again there is irony in the fact that it is Lili, the sexually unawakened one who hears the misogynist lecture and is strangely

paralyzed with fear and uncertainty. Her actions in the following scene with Z are a last ditch effort to maintain her political ideals and independence in the face of the encroaching power of her own and Z's desire. In self defense she carries out part of her mission by hurling illegal revolutionary fliers from the top of a factory chimney and starts preaching the tenets of feminism to herself: "a woman has a life aside from man," and "women, instead of coffee, will brew dynamite."

Her alter ego, Dora, does consummate the sexual relationship with Z on a cruise ship near the port of Fiume. Z, believing it is Lili, whom he sees flirting and cavorting with the men on board, is pleasantly surprised to find out that she is indeed what he thought she was underneath the innocent and passionately idealistic facade- a whore after all. Dora, plays her erotic role to the hilt, by seducing the sleeping Z in his cabin, taking his money, and then returning to her cabin next door where she carries on with another man while Z is forced to listen to their passionate moans. Dora is the ultimate, promiscuous woman, who leaves Z moonstruck and baffled.

The parallel seduction of Lili takes place once Z has returned to Budapest, and accidentally bumps into her on the street. This is truly Lili, but Z believes she will behave like Dora. As she undresses in his apartment a while later, he comments that she is coy and almost like a genuinely innocent girl. And as the viewer knows, Lili is a virgin and does say to Z that she is embarrassed, but Z blinded by his lust and arrogance is neither clever nor perspicacious enough to perceive the truth. Two scenes later, after an aborted attempt to bomb the Minister of the Interior at a public building, Lili, paralyzed and frantic, rushes to escape from the pursuing guards and enters a mirrored lit maze.

The *ménage à trois* comes to a head when the three meet in this funhouse of mirrors sequence, reminding us of Orson Welles' *Lady from Shanghai* (Thomas 16). The existence of both Lili **and** Dora is finally revealed to Z, and the twins themselves are finally reunited. Z had been led to the hall of mirrors by the same magical donkey from earlier in the film, and probably symbolizes the strange twists of destiny, while the mirrors represent the moment of truth for all three characters. Z closes his eyes in disbelief as the twins' identities merge into one. In the final scenes of the film, Lili sets free one of her carrier pigeons with a message tied to its foot, while in contrast, Edison is shown sending his telegraphic message about the magnificence of the world and man around the globe, alluding to the miraculous scientific advances of the new century.

My Twentieth Century with its constant use of iris shots and film references, besides being a tribute to the birth of moving pictures, clearly one of the great scientific discoveries, also points to the utilization of film for soul searching and philosophizing. The ending sequence first shows Lili with her carrier pigeons in her role as an idealistic revolutionary, then Dora as a sultry temptress eating grapes, and finally both of them as babies with their mother. As Enyedi explained in the aforementioned interview: "I am trying to say something about the many faces of every person and the many possibilities a person has at the beginning of life and how sad the pre-made roles are when they are accepted later" (Stone 23).

The multiplicity of meanings and settings and the limitless potentiality of the final scene in *My Twentieth Century* intimate what I believe is the film's postmodern feminist subtext — to subvert the patriarchal, logocentric order. In the words of Ann Rosalind Jones, man (white, European, and ruling class) has claimed "I am the unified self — that controlled centre of the universe. The rest of the world which I define as the Other, has meaning only in relation to me, as man, father, possessor of the phallus."[8] First and foremost, the film's style rejects the patriarchal notion of linear narrative- an epic story leading to a discovery of a great truth or myth. In its place Enyedi has followed the exhortations of Cixous to produce a visual and audio text that "is open and multiple, varied and rhythmic, full of pleasures and, perhaps more importantly of possibilities."[9]

This style of writing and film-making which embodies the plurality of woman's sexuality allows Enyedi to illuminate and deconstruct the masculine and singular, libidinal economy of writing and thinking in binary oppositions. *My Twentieth Century* exaggerates the notion of dichotomous pairs, through the use of black/white, Dora/Lili, reason/emotion, body/soul, beautiful/ugly, self/other, whore/virgin, light/dark, rich/poor, science/nature, physicality/spirituality, love/sex, activity/passivity, and so on.

Again, in Cixous's view, and as embodied in the film, all these dichotomies find their inspiration in the fundamental dichotomous couple, man/woman, in which man (in this case Z) is associated with all that is (active, cultural, light, high) generally positive and woman (in this case the twins) with all that is (passive, natural, dark, low) generally negative. Man is the self; woman is his Other. Thus, woman exists in man's world on his terms. As is illustrated in Weininger's lecture in the movie, she is

either the Other for man, or she is unthought. After man is done thinking about woman, "what's left of her is unthinkable, unthought" (Cixous and Clement 65).

Thus, as another French feminist, Luce Irigaray, states, and Enyedi so well embodies in her twins, the only woman we know is the "masculine feminine," the phallic feminine, woman as man sees her.[10] She further clarifies this notion with the use of the word *speculum* to capture the nature and function of the idea of Sameness in Western philosophy and psychoanalysis. "Specularization," commented Toril Moi, "suggests the necessity of postulating a subject that is capable of reflecting on its own being."[11] Because of narcissistic specularization, masculine discourse has never been able to understand woman, or the feminine, as anything other than a reflection of man, or the masculine. Witness Z's behaviour and confusion within the film, as well as Weininger's lecture. At the same time, within this context of Irigaray's specularization, the scene in the hall of mirrors takes on a whole new meaning, i.e., the twins, Dora and Lili (two feminine selves of a whole), mirror the nameless masculine Z.

Furthermore, Irigaray's strategy aimed at enabling woman to experience herself as something other than the "Other," the marginalized, the "waste" or "excess" of a dominant ideology provides the foundation for Enyedi's use of the word "her/my" twentieth century and the film's content.[12] Firstly, Irigaray urged women to speak in the active voice and avoid the ultimate inauthenticity of the passive voice, thus, "my" twentieth century instead of the usual authoritative, masculine, "the" twentieth century.

Irigaray, as well as Enyedi, is perturbed by the unwillingness of science (the strategy and discourse of the patriarchy, and remember Weininger's reference to the stringent scientific method used in all his research) to take responsibility for its own words and deeds. Enyedi, on the other hand, through her choice of language emphasizes the subjective and takes full responsibility for her representation of the scientific (shots of inhumane treatment of a dog and a gorilla), political and sexual revolutions of her century.

Another strategy to subvert the patriarchal order and what I believe is the philosophical subtext of the film is Irigaray's suggestion to mime the mimes men have imposed on women. "If women exist only in men's eyes, as images, women should take those images and reflect them back to men in magnified proportions... Miming the miming imposed on

woman... intends to undo the effects of phallocentric discourse simply by overdoing them."[13] Film, in Enyedi's hands, becomes the perfect "tool" to grandly mimic the patriarchal definition of woman, virgin/whore, in all its duality and to subvert it in its entirety.

And for those film critics who found fault with Enyedi's baroque style of film-making, I purport that it was not a lack of a "unifying logic-ravishing fragments without coherence or meaning,"[14] but rather a conscious attempt to subvert the logical consistency required by phallocentrism.

To reiterate, *My Twentieth Century* then is an exploration of the feminine history of the last one hundred years according to "her" way:

> "She" is indefinitely **other** in herself. This is doubtless why she is said to be whimsical, incomprehensible, agitated, capricious... not to mention her language, in which "she" sets off in all directions leaving "him" unable to discern the coherence of any meaning. Hers are contradictory words, somewhat mad from the standpoint of reason, inaudible for whoever listens to them with ready-made grids, with a fully elaborated code in hand (Irigaray, *This Sex*, 29).

The twentieth century in Enyedi's hands does not become a linear or sequential time pointed toward a goal. Rather, it is cyclical (repetitive) and monumental (eternal).

In the closing, travelling camera shot we are moving swiftly down a river (river of time?) to the openness of a vast and never-ending sea. This sea, the future that is present, and the river, the present that is past, seems to offer limitless possibilities. Life's stream of coincidences do carry us inexorably to a higher plane. Buoyant, brilliant, witty, dream-like, and beautifully captivating, Ildikó Enyedi's film — which won the *Camera d'Or* prize at Cannes in 1990 — is a luminescent fairy tale, told from the princess's vantage point, and far removed from the tenets of socialist realism, the Hungarian tradition of film-making of the last fifty years.

NOTES

[1] Ildikó Enyedi was born in Budapest in 1955. She received a B.A. in economics, following which she pursued film studies at the Academy of Film and Theatre in Budapest in 1980-84. She made her directorial debut with an experimental film in 1981. Her filmography includes *Rózsalovag* [dokumentär] (1981), *Az én XX. századom* (1989), *Bűvös vadász* (1994).

[2] Synchronicity within this context reflects the idea that life is a stream of coincidences that, once we tune into them, carry us inexorably to a higher plane.

[3] In the French feminist, Hélène Cixous's view, masculine writing and thinking are cast in binary oppositions, e.g., man/woman, activity/passivity, sun/moon, culture/nature, day/night, speaking/writing, high/low. See Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clement, "Sorties," in *The Newly Born Woman*, Betsy Wing, trans. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 63, 65.

[4] See "Twins from Budapest, Singularly Independent," by Vincent Canby in *The New York Times, The Arts*, March 17, 1990, p.13.

[5] Consult Kevin Thomas's article,"*Twentieth Century*: Enyedi's Valentine," in the *Los Angeles Times,* November 23, 1990, p.16.

[6] Refer to "Twentieth Century traces march of time," a review article by Dave Kehr in the *Chicago Tribune*, February 1, 1991, p. 33.

[7] For the complete interview by Judy Stone, see "Twins on Different Tracks Through the Years," *The New York Times*, November 4, 1990, p.23.

[8] Ann Rosalind Jones, "Writing the Body: Toward an Understanding of L`écriture Feminine," *Feminist Studies* 7, no. 1 (Summer 1981): 248.

[9] Hélène Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa," in *New French Feminisms*, Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron, eds. (New York: Schocken Books, 1981), pp. 259-60.

[10] According to Claire Duchen, Irigaray believes "that before a `feminine feminine,' a non-phallic feminine, can even be thought, women need to examine the male philosophical and psychoanalytical texts which have contributed to the construction of the `masculine feminine,' the phallic feminine, in order to locate and identify it" (Duchen, *Feminism in France*, pp. 87-8.)

[11] See Moi's *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory* (New York: Methuen, 1985), p. 132.

[12] Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One*, Catherine Porter, trans. (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1985), p. 29.

[13] See Rosemary Tong's *Feminist Thought, A Comprehensive Introduction* (Boulder and San Francisco: Westview Press, 1989) p. 228.

[14] Consult Hal Hinson's review article, "Lost in `*My 20th Century*'," in *The Washington Post*, January 4, 1991, p. 6.

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Medals, Miniatures and More: The Art of Dora de Pédery-Hunt

Phileen Tattersall

> *In all great periods of art there seems to arrive a need for small, more individual pieces which can be fondled, handled lovingly in one's hand. When I make my sculpture or medal I first hold the clay in my palm: it nests in it comfortably. I always hope that one day it will nest in another palm and give the same joy that it gives me to create it.*[1]

The sculptor Dora de Pédery-Hunt has become a well-known and respected artist in the more than fifty years she has been a resident of Canada. In this article I aim to present an overview of her life and accomplishments, based mainly upon interviews with the artist and perusal of those of her papers now in the National Archives of Canada.[2] While she is best known for her medals, de Pédery-Hunt's oeuvre encompasses a much wider field and I hope to demonstrate here her versatility and achievements.

My first encounter with the artist occurred in 1994 when I went to the mid-town apartment she rented in Toronto, Ontario to discuss the possibility of this article. A good-looking, white-haired lady of imposing presence came to the door to meet me, standing tall and straight, obviously fit and strong. I knew a little about the artist, including her age, but saw no frail octogenarian, only a dynamic, energetic woman, somewhat loath to be distracted from her sculpture. Her living room was also

her studio, a spacious room overlooking the treetops of one of the city's small ravines. Beside the window stood her large desk/work table, positioned to take advantage of the north light. That morning a number of white plaster pieces lay on the desk, ready to be cast into medallions. I found very pleasing these exquisite miniature designs, perfectly composed for the small scale and for the more or less circular shape of the eventual bronzes. Two were depictions of her favourite flower, the dandelion, one showing the plant in bloom, the other its seed head. Another small plaque illustrated the Ying and Yang of Taoist philosophy, while the last was of a tiny mouse. During a later visit I saw her plaster model for the Shiatsu Academy Award medal, featuring an elegant Hokusai dragon between two hands, their thumbs emphasised to denote their importance in Shiatsu practice. These few designs gave me some indication of de Pédery-Hunt's personality: philosophical and reflective, nature-loving, appreciative of the simple and commonplace, interested in the unusual point of view.

The large workroom was lined from top to bottom with shelves, most of which held hundreds of examples of the artist's work, mainly medals, small figures and plaques in bronze, but also free-standing figures, both large and small, in a stone-like composite material of de Pédery-Hunt's invention, as well as in bronze, along with some jewellery and religious art. These testaments to a fruitful artistic life were also spread over central large tables and cabinets. Any space not occupied by sculpture was used to house an extensive library of books and journals.

Dora de Pédery was born in Budapest, Hungary, on November 16, 1913, into a close-knit family. She was the second of three daughters. Her father, Attila de Pédery, was a physicist; her mother, Emilie Festl, was Austrian, born of a French mother. De Pédery-Hunt received a traditional education, enriched by her family's warmth, encouragement and intellectual life; she graduated from the State Lyceum in 1932. She had such wide-ranging interests, that she found it difficult to make a choice of career between music, architecture and physics. By the time she was in her mid-twenties, however, she recognised that her vocation was to become an artist. She was accepted at the Royal Academy of Applied Art in Budapest, starting in the department of ceramics, but almost immediately transferring to the full fine arts programme, where she flourished in the milieu for which she felt destined. She graduated with an Honours Diploma, followed in 1943 by a Masters degree in Sculpture and Design.

Like most art graduates, she began her working career by doing anything artistic which would earn her a living. Budapest was then a city of elegant fashion and her first work there was mostly in dress and accessory design, supplemented with some private teaching. Eventually she acquired an agent and sold drawings to the international fashion magazines *Harper's* and *Vogue*. Meanwhile she was successful also with her sculpture: a portrait head and a life-sized plaster sculpture of a seated woman were exhibited by the National Gallery of Hungary, which also purchased from her a wooden *crèche* in turned wood.

Although the Second World War came late to Hungary, life in Budapest became intolerable, so the family fled the country heading westwards on a nightmarish train journey which lasted 23 days. They eventually arrived in Germany, where they first found refuge in Dresden and later moved to Helmstedt, Lower Saxony. During the journey de Pédery-Hunt kept a diary, but even in recent times, after more than fifty years, she and her sisters cannot bring themselves to re-read it, so distressing do they find those memories. The family group consisted of the artist and her parents, her two sisters, both married but whose husbands' whereabouts were then unknown, and the two children of the younger sister. At first they were sheltered by relatives of this sister, Emilia von Nikolits. The artist and her father obtained employment in nearby Hannover with the British Admiralty. They worked under Major S.C. Chutter whose wife was Canadian and whose children were then living in Ottawa. The de Pédery's employment lasted over four years until Major Chutter's assignment, classified as secret, came to an end.

At this juncture the family sought to emigrate, with Canada their preferred destination, but Canada was then only accepting unmarried persons and not families.[3] Sponsored by Major Chutter and helped by his son Donald in Ottawa, de Pédery-Hunt came alone to Canada in July 1948, as a single woman, despite the fact that she had already that year married Hungarian journalist Béla Hunt, whom she had met in Germany. In Toronto she was employed by an American family, and with their help applied herself to settling in Canada and learning English.

Like most immigrants who arrive with nothing but their talents, experience and willingness to work hard, de Pédery-Hunt's first years in Canada were a struggle. As she had earlier in Budapest, she resourcefully turned her hand to anything, endeavouring to earn a living as an artist. While still working for the American family, she used weekends for other jobs even remotely connected with art, such as making lampshades and

painting roses on baby bottles! She recalls her first art assignment in Canada with fondness. This was the restoration of an antique Quebec rooster in metal for Mrs. Elizabeth Gordon, which she repaired and then repainted in vivid colours. Early sketches dated 1948 in the Canadian Archives show designs for a fountain for the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects and Town Planners and a wall fountain for a Nassau client of Dunnington-Grubb, landscape architects. In 1949, for the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests, she sketched a heraldic shield incorporating Canadian symbols, to be used on their building at the Canadian National Exhibition, where she also painted the lettering for the booth for the Provincial Department of Highways.[4]

Within a short time of her arrival she met the renowned Canadian sculptors Frances Loring and Florence Wyle, and became a frequent visitor at their studio-church in Moore Park, "the salon of Canada's art world."[5] She joined the Canadian Federation of Artists and in 1953, five years after her arrival, was elected a member of the Sculptors' Society of Canada,[6] thus becoming eligible to compete in national contests. The following year she entered a National Gallery of Canada competition for a sculpture of Sir Robert Borden, Canada's eighth Prime Minister, which was eventually won by Frances Loring. With the help of Loring and Wyle de Pédery-Hunt succeeded in bringing her parents and her husband to Toronto, where a second marriage ceremony was performed. But Béla Hunt never adjusted to life in Canada, the marriage was not a success, and it ended in divorce in 1963. During the fifties, however, de Pédery--Hunt was for the most part the only bread-winner in this family of four adults.

In 1949 de Pédery-Hunt started a small business designing Christmas cards, tree ornaments and table decorations, which she sold privately, through the gift shops of the Art Gallery of Toronto (later Ontario), the Royal Ontario Museum, and through craft stores. This endeavour continued until at least the early 1960s. The cards sold well but earned only a pittance. In 1963 a ceramic crèche created by de Pédery-Hunt was featured in the "Magazine" section of the Toronto *Globe and Mail*.[7]

In 1950 she was commissioned to develop decorative schemes for the entrance, windows, interior walls and small items such as chair cushions, menus and placemats for the Csárda, a Hungarian restaurant in Toronto. De la Salle school asked her to create a mural for their kindergarten, and she produced a charming design, cut out in wood, of the

Madonna and Child in a landscape filled with children, flowers and animals. Also in 1950 de Pédery-Hunt was hired by the Toronto Board of Education to teach sculpture at evening classes held at Northern Secondary School, a position which she retained for a period of eleven years and which provided a steady, if small, income. She gave art classes for the Women's Art Association and earned a meagre sum as an assistant in the department of vocational training at the Ontario College of Education.

Sculptural work of the fifties included stone plaques in low relief for the Ontario School for the Blind at Brantford (shown at the Canadian National Exhibition in 1953), a large wooden multi-figured relief for the library of St. Peter's High School, Peterborough, Ontario in 1954 depicting the boy Jesus among the Doctors in the Temple, and the following year a mahogany memorial plaque for those members of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation who had been killed in the Second World War.

In an effort to find work, de Pédery-Hunt consulted the Yellow Pages and systematically telephoned a number of architects each month. She presented examples of her work to those who showed interest and was rewarded with commissions to create religious sculpture and church furnishings for many institutions. This work occupied an increasing portion of Mrs. Hunt's professional life from the early 1950s and throughout the 1960s when many new churches were being constructed. She designed and produced such Church requirements as altar tables, Stations of the Cross, statues, banners, crucifixes and candlesticks for churches, chapels and colleges in Aldershot, Ancaster, Aurora, Chatham, Guelph, Hamilton, London, Oakville, Pembroke, Richmond Hill, Sault Sainte Marie, Toronto, Waterdown, Winnipeg.[8] This work reflects the modernist aesthetic of the post-war period, being spare, simple and stark, a distillation of the traditions of religious art, in keeping with contemporary Church architecture. Examples may be seen in the Chapel for Loretto College on Wellesley Street in Toronto, where de Pédery-Hunt created statues, the main altar and the Stations of the Cross. For these Stations she used her composite material, the main component of which is pine sawdust, here given the appearance of coloured clay. The fourteen traditional episodes in the Passion of Christ are depicted in low relief, and positioned at intervals against the plain brick side walls of the chapel. In each scene there are few figures, never more than three, and a minimum of detail. The series is unified by the depiction of the Cross in black-

painted composite, a focal point in each station. With the exception of the blue used for the robe of the Mother of Jesus, the colours are those of the earth. In their simplicity these Stations are very forceful and moving.

Another set of Stations, this time made for the chapel of the General Hospital in Sault Sainte Marie, Ontario in 1965, is even more abbreviated. Here the medium is bronze. Each Station consists of a single figure, which represents all the personages normally included in that incident of the Passion story. These Stations are like tightly constructed poems, a simile de Pédery-Hunt has often used herself in speaking of her medals. A definitive example of Hunt Stations was produced for a private institution in Ontario devoted to the treatment of addicted nuns and priests. This Way of the Cross is also in bronze, and again the whole Passion story is distilled into fourteen figures, none more than eight inches tall, grouped together in a small area, against the brick wall of the modern chapel.

A major architectural commission came in 1961 with the construction of new buildings at Ryerson Institute of Technology in Toronto, originally the Upper Canada Normal School for teacher-training and now known as Ryerson Polytechnic University.[9] The Institute was to replace its 19th century home with two-storey buildings to be situated around a quadrangle. Canadian sculptors Thomas Bowie, Jacobine Jones, Elizabeth Wyn Wood, and Dora de Pédery-Hunt were commissioned to create designs to embellish the many façades of what was to be named Howard Kerr Hall. De Pédery-Hunt was assigned a series of Queenston limestone panels for both the north and south faces of the southern wing of the building which lies parallel to Gould Street. These depict subjects then on the Ryerson curriculum: Science is represented on the exterior wall by panels showing a microscope and a laboratory flask; Photography, Broadcasting, Television, and Surveying similarly by the instruments required in practising these disciplines. On the northern, courtyard side of the building, at the time the Household Science Department, the subjects taught within are represented by tools or products: a pair of scissors, a garment on a hanger, a bowl of fruit, an electric mixer, an electric iron, a clip board. Above them is a larger panel of a mother and child. Again the designs are very simple, as are those by the other sculptors.

Controversy greeted the work of all the sculptors; faculty members declared them "disgusting", "insultingly simple — suitable for a trade school, not a technological institute", "vapid", and proposed holding a removal meeting. De Pédery-Hunt, unruffled by the reception, replied

that the sculpture would, in the future, situate the building in the context of its times:

> In 30 or 40 years it will be quite interesting to see things the way they were. I used the very latest 1962 and 63 models. Emblems of this type have to blend into the building, which is not ultra-modern but contemporary neo-classical; anything more abstract would not fit in... I was given a commission to show the different emblems of mother's care and household science. It was the architect who thought that the different faculties should be shown.

Some students approved and the contractors, Perini Construction (Canada), welcomed the controversy saying "It's of little value if people don't notice them."[10] In another context de Pédery-Hunt herself said later that an artist's work "has to be true to the times the artist lives in."[11]

Other works created by de Pédery-Hunt for Ryerson include *Girl with Trillium* a free-standing figure of a young girl holding the provincial flower in one hand, a stark, smooth, larger-than-life sculpture which de Pédery-Hunt considers to be an important part of her oeuvre.[12] A more abstract work is the stylised bronze work *The Tree of Knowledge*, appearing at first glance like a cactus or flattened pine, with students sheltering in its branches.

Early in the seventies General Motors of Canada of Oshawa commissioned de Pédery-Hunt to create a gift for Colonel R.S. McLaughlin, Chairman and founder of the company, to mark his 100th birthday. She put in months of work to create a free-standing bronze plaque, mounted on a base of pink granite. On one side she sculpted in low-relief a head-and-shoulders portrait; on the other a scene representing the portico of his home, Parkwood, with its landmark tall spruces and a stream of people coming to deliver greetings.[13] In 1982 a sculptural plaque of Doctors Paul and John Rékai, founders of Central Hospital, was made for the hospital's lobby.

Dora de Pédery-Hunt is undoubtedly best known in Canada for her miniature sculpture, in particular for her medals but also for small figures and plaques. One very fine group of small sculptures is a set of twenty-four double-sided silver ingots, each picturing a different animal once native to the Holy Land, in its natural terrain. The reverse of each

features a pleasing representation of Noah's Ark. The commission came in 1974 from The Biblical Wildlife Society of New York with the object of raising money for protecting these animals and restoring their environment.[14] The Society recognised the artist's ability to create landscape settings suggesting great depth in bas relief on a small scale. A correspondent from Tel Aviv appreciated their beauty, finding them "filled with the freshness and vitality characteristic of the Land of the Bible."[15]

* * *

More important for Canada, however, is the group of sculptures, created in 1978, which she named *The Rocks of Canada*, sculptures of people who had played significant roles in the development of the country. By this time De Pédery-Hunt had become strongly attached to her adopted land, and had explored its history through wide reading. Her affection is clearly demonstrated in The Rocks. In the preface to the catalogue published on the occasion of the exhibition of these and other works at the Prince Arthur Gallery in Toronto the artist explains how she came to create these portraits of people who had had the vision, energy and perseverance to improve the quality of life in Canada. She calls her subjects the "visitors," whom she had encountered through her reading, and wrote that they

> were a human representation of the Precambrian Shield: unsinkable, solid, magnificent granites... Eventually I led them out of my library, out of the dusty pages of letters and books where they can easily be forgotten ... [so that they can be] living reminders that although their own dreams were fulfilled, there is still much to do.[16]

Before Dora de Pédery-Hunt settled and practised as an artist in Canada the production of medals was neither common nor highly esteemed. In Hungary, as in other European countries, medal-making is included in the basic training of an art student, and medals are both widely collected and constitute an important component of national art collections. Mark Jones, a noted scholar in the field, noted that interest in medal-making was particularly important in the artistic traditions of Poland and Hungary saying:

> The eastern European school has had a remarkable effect on medallic art in the rest of the world. Half a dozen medallists in Canada and the United States, including Dora de Pédery-Hunt and Imre Szébényi, have created a real interest in medallic art in an area without any native tradition.[17]

Although de Pédery-Hunt had created medals at college, it was only after several impoverished years in Canada, when she found the cost of materials for traditional sculpture prohibitive, that she decided to concentrate on medallic sculpture thenceforth. This decision was triggered during a six month period she spent in Europe in 1958, thanks to a Canada Council grant, and inspired by medals exhibited in the Hungarian Pavilion at the World Exposition in Brussels. A second Canada Council grant enabled her to study at Rome's Academy of Medallic Art for a short time.

* * *

De Pédery-Hunt loves the intimacy of a medal. Her remarks on the subject have been much quoted in articles and catalogues but bear repeating since her expertise and her strong feelings on her art enable her to explain its value better than anyone else:

> A medal contains a whole world in a small space, and has to be always very much up-to-the-point to say clearly what one wants to say. They (*sic*) are like small poems, where a few words have to say much — there is no time for explanation; it has to be understood immediately.[18]

On her return to Canada de Pédery-Hunt was commissioned to design the Canada Council Medal, Canada's first art-medal, and her first in Canada. On the strength of this, she was invited to apply to exhibit at the next meeting of the Fédération Internationale de la Médaille (F.I.D.E.M.)[19] Her proposal was accepted and for the first time Canadian medals were exhibited internationally. De Pédery-Hunt went to The Hague as Canada's representative, taking fourteen medals, six by herself, seven by Julius Marosán and one by Elizabeth Wyn-Wood.[20] She was appointed Canada's delegate to the organization and has attended and lectured on Canadian art

at all subsequent F.I.D.E.M. congresses but one, when finances and health made the journey impossible.[21]

* * *

During the more than thirty years since that time she has made hundreds of medals in gold, silver and bronze to celebrate, reward, honour, commemorate all kinds of people, institutions, events and anniversaries. They range from single head compositions to multifigured representations, from abstract idea to symbol and portrait, each one a considerable work of art. Particularly fine are the portrait medallions of celebrated people from all fields: scientists, philanthropists, writers, artists, politicians, subjects too numerous to list here but including Norman Bethune, John Drainie, Terry Fox, Northrop Frye, Pearl McCarthy, Pauline McGibbon, Rudolf Nureyev and Pierre Trudeau. In every instance she captures admirably both likeness and spirit of the subject, within the limited confines of the medal.[22] The National Medal Collection of Canada, housed in the National Archives in Ottawa, now owns nearly five hundred examples by de Pédery-Hunt, an indication of the number and variety of her medals. This is underlined by a visit to her Aladdin's cave of a studio where it is impossible to focus upon one medal, for the eye is constantly distracted by another, and another which demand to be fondled and admired.

De Pédery-Hunt has exhibited widely and frequently. The first recorded Canadian exhibition of her work is a poignant one. This was in 1948, the year of her arrival in Canada, at the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts. The piece shown was entitled *African Elephant*,[23] a beautiful bronze made in Hungary shortly after her graduation. The artist still owns this sculpture which was one of the very few possessions the de Péderys took with them when they fled Hungary in 1945, her frail father carrying this weighty load on his back. Since then she has participated in both joint and solo exhibitions, in public and commercial galleries, across Canada and internationally. In 1956 her Portrait of Frances Loring was exhibited at both the Canadian National Exhibition and the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts. It was subsequently acquired by Alan Jarvis for the National Gallery of Canada.[24] Most important of all to de Pédery-Hunt's career was the exhibition at the Dorothy Cameron Gallery in Toronto in 1965, her first solo display, which the artist regards as a "turning point."[25] The works shown included small bronze sculptures and medals, several of which were illustrated in the attractive small folder-

brochure designed by the artist, and the show was quickly sold out. Thenceforth Dora de Pédery-Hunt was a name to be recognised in the general press and in the world of Canadian art. Commissions, public and private, followed and resulted in such varied art works as the CBC "Reach for the Top" award, Canada's Centennial medals, the first $100 gold Olympic coin, a new portrait of the Queen on Canadian coins, the Roy Thomson Hall sculpture of Orpheus and its replicas which are awarded annually as prizes.

In recent years a commission for Toronto's newest museum building, the Bata Shoe Museum, designed by architect Raymond Moriyama and opened in 1995, echoes the artist's architectural work of the sixties and continues her medal-making. Her work greets the visitor, for the large bronze discs which serve as hand-plates on all the glass doors of the entrance are hers. De Pédery-Hunt looked to the Museum's collection of shoes of all ages and cultures for inspiration. She selected a spurred, thigh-length leather riding-boot as the motif for the door pushes, and a high-heeled boot, a French clog, an Innuit kamik and a 1920s-style shoe for small medallions attached to the outfacing side of the main staircase railings.

* * *

De Pédery-Hunt continues the busy schedule she has followed all her life, rising daily before six and working until six each evening, every day of the week but Sunday, never having enough hours in the day for her sculpture. She has become a personage of note in the world of Canadian art since her arrival in the country at mid-century. She has been recognised for her work on the boards of the Canada Council and of the Sculpture Society of Canada, and by many honours and awards.[26] In 1995 her work was included in an international touring exhibit of work by Canadian designers, assembled by the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts. The exhibit opened in Budapest and toured North America the following year.

The artist takes considerable satisfaction from the fact that it was she who introduced the fine art of miniature sculpture to Canada in the form of the art medal. But she is disappointed that medal-collecting has not become as popular in North America as in Europe, despite its relative low cost and availability to ordinary people. At the same time she also regrets that her art is less appreciated in Canada than in foreign count-

ries.[28] As the century ended, in the last weeks of 1999, fifty years after the artist's arrival in Canada, the Sculptors' Society of Canada honoured Dora de Pédery-Hunt by mounting a retrospective exhibition of her work at the Canadian Sculpture Centre in Toronto. A fitting tribute.

NOTES

[1] Quoted in the address to Dora de Pédery-Hunt on the occasion of the presentation of an honorary Doctor of Letters degree York University, November 5, 1983.

[2] Dora de Pédery-Hunt fonds (MG 30 D364), National Archives of Canada. A lively portrait of the artist may be found in a publication celebrating Ontario's bicentennial: Magda Zalan, "The Palm-Sized Universe," in *Stubborn People,* Magda Zalan ed. (Toronto: Canadian Stage and Arts Publications, 1985), pp. 82-89.

[3] Mrs. Hunt's sisters, reunited with their husbands thanks to her efforts, soon emigrated to South Africa and Argentina respectively.

[4] Sketches in the Dora de Pédery-Hunt fonds *loc. cit.*

[5] Rebecca Sisler, "Loring, Frances Norma", *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, p. 1035.

[6] Mrs. Hunt served as president of the Society from 1967 to 1970.

[7] The Toronto *Globe and Mail*, 21 Dec. 1963. "Magazine" p. 5.

[8] Information from the Dora de Pédery-Hunt fonds *loc. cit.*

[9] Information from the Archives of Ryerson Polytechnic University, courtesy of Claude W. Doucet, archivist.

[10] *The Ryersonian*, 3 October, 1962, p. 1.

[11] In a press release from the Douglas Gallery, Vancouver, December 1966.

[12] This sculpture is in the artist's composite material, here resembling limestone.

[13] *This Week*, Oshawa. 8 September, 1971, pp. 23-25, 45-46.

[14] Advertisement in *Performing Arts Maqazine* (Winter 1974), p. 6. Several ingots are illustrated and a complete list given. These reliefs measure 2.22 x 1.25 inches.

[15] Letter from Abraham Yoffe, 30 Sept. 1974. Dora de Pédery-Hunt fonds *loc. cit.*

[16] Dora De Pédery-Hunt, *Sculpture*, Toronto: Prince Arthur Galleries and Canadian Stage and Arts Publications, 1978. Preface. *The Rocks* include Nellie McClung, Alice Jamieson, Emily Murphy, E. Cora Hind, Ellen Osler, Edmund Walker, Charles Saunders and Douglas Duncan.

[17] Mark Jones, *The Art of the Medal* (London: British Museum, 1979), p. 162.

[18] Douglas Gallery, Vancouver, press release, December 1966. Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO), Artist Files.

[19] This was the tenth international congress of F.I.D.E.M., held in 1963. The organisation had been founded in Paris in 1937.

20. 33rd FIDEM. Catalogue, Haags Gemeentemuseum. 17/6-28/7 1963. nos. 64-77.

[21] The congresses are generally held biennially. Subsequent meetings have been held in Athens (1966), Paris (1967), Prague (1969), Cologne (1971), Helsinki (1973), Cracow (1975), Budapest (1977), Lisbon (1979), Florence (1983), Stockholm (1985), Colorado Springs (1987), Helsinki (1990), Budapest (1994) and Neuchâtel (1996). Mrs. Hunt has shown medals at all.

[22] De Pédery-Hunt was official guest of the British Art Medal Society in 1989. Terence Mullaly wrote an article of appreciation of her work in *The Medal* (Autumn 1989), 69-71, making special reference to her mastery of the art of the portrait medal.

[23] See Evelyn de R. McMann, *Royal Canadian Academy of Arts/ Académie des arts du Canada. Exhibitions and Members 1880-1979*, p. 198.

[24] *National Gallery of Canada Cataloque of Paintings and Sculpture*, Volume III, Canadian School (Toronto & Ottawa: University of Toronto Press, 1960), no. 6700 (p. 355).

[25] Conversation with the artist.

[26] 1967: Centennial Medal.
1974: Officer of the Order of Canada.
1977: Queen's Jubilee Medal.
1983: L.L.D. Litt., *honoris causa,* York University.
1990: L.L.D. Law, *honoris causa*, University of Waterloo.
1991: Order of Ontario.
1992: Confederation Medal.
1992: American Numismatic Association, Gold Medal for Excellence in Numismatic Sculpture.

[27] *Canadian Designers*, Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, 1995. pp. 36-37.

[28] De Pédery-Hunt's success abroad is demonstrated by the fact that her medals are in the permanent collections of: The Royal Cabinets of Medals, Brussels, The Hague and Stockholm; The National Museum, Münzkabinett, Berlin; The National Gallery, Budapest; The British Museum, London; The British Royal Mint; The American Numismatic Society, New York; and The Smithsonian Institute, Washington.

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Book Reviews

Steven Béla Várdy. *Historical Dictionary of Hungary. European Historical Dictionaries*, No. 18. Lanham, Md., and London: The Scarecrow Press, 1997. Pp. xx + 813. $70.00 (U.S.). ISBN 0-8108-3254-2

S. B. Várdy's *Historical Dictionary of Hungary* is one of the most comprehensive collection of facts, data, and basic information concerning the history of Hungary, published for nearly a generation. Its only predecessor worthy of mention is the *Magyar Tájékoztató Zsebkönyv* (Hungarian Information Almanac), published in 1943 under the aegis of the Magyar Nemzeti Szövetség (Hungarian National Association) and written and edited mostly by Foreign Ministry personnel. It focused heavily on the attitudes of the neighbouring states toward their Hungarian minorities. Because of this, the *Zsebkönyv* has been seen as a manifestation of Hungary's "Trianon syndrome." More than half a century later it seems that there has been hardly any substantive change in this regard. A great many historians, writers, political personalities, indeed even ordinary citizens in Hungary and the surrounding nations have had and still have an obsession with minority politics — including issues of language maintenance, minority education etc. However history is not politics and in spite of the persistence of nationalistic attitudes — especially among the Slovaks, Rumanians and Serbs — one can only hope for an eventual subsiding of such undue preoccupation with past problems.

For the time being, however, nationality problems in the contexts above noted, are still serious issues which are seemingly intractable. Within a hopefully less tension-filled world of the future, nationalism as an all-encompassing ideology should become less and less tenable. Nevertheless, the movement toward a less virulent nationalism, to civic patriotism coupled with cultural autonomy, is seemingly still a long way off. This is the case especially in those parts of the world where there is hostility toward those within local nation states who are different ethnically — such as the Hungarians of Slovakia and Romania — to take note of only the most prominent cases in East Central Europe.

Hence when a Hungarian historian writes about peoples who at one time or another lived within the Hungarian state, he easily becomes a target for the chauvinists of our times in the neighbouring states and elsewhere; and this

happens even if the Hungarian historian and/or historian of Hungary attempts to be as fair as possible. Numerous examples of this could be cited, but allow me to remain within the context of Béla Várdy's work.

One reviewer of his book took issue with Várdy's opening sentence of the entry on Slovakia, which reads as follows: "Slovakia had no separate identity, not even in the form of an autonomous province, until the twentieth century." Várdy continues by explaining briefly the development of Slovak national consciousness in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In spite of what Várdy wrote, the reviewer states that while the above is undoubtedly a true statement, a less politically-charged sentence could have been used to introduce the concept of Slovakia. It is precisely is kind of sensitivity which causes most of the misunderstandings among nations.

The above-noted reviewer also objected to the term "mutilation" used by Várdy to describe the treatment of Hungary by the peacemakers in the wake of World War I. However, if by "mutilation" one means the virtual destruction of a nation-state, the term may indeed have been used in the proper manner. One only wishes that the Hungarian viewpoint receive an understanding — and, perhaps, even sympathy — equal to that presently accorded to pre-1918 Hungary's nationalities who are now the dominant elements in their own nations.

Regarding Várdy's *Historical Dictionary*, there are a few additional perspectives worthy of being noted. One of these is the extensive use of comparative historical data, which allows one to see the contours of Hungarian history on a comparative basis. The volume also contains numerous entries devoted to Turkic and Balkan influences that played into the Hungarian past. Also useful are the many entries pertaining to the historical role of the Habsburgs and their impact on Hungary's evolution.

It should also be noted that in his work Várdy paid much attention to historians and the practice of historical scholarship. Concerning writers, generally only those were accorded separate entries who either have had or still have a broader political or cultural impact. Needless to say the decision to include or not was a difficult, indeed, often a subjective choice. Writers and scholars in other disciplines — such as philosophers, social thinkers, and natural scientists — did not fare as well.

Várdy's volume also deals with the theories about the pre- and early historical development of the Hungarian people. As we know, there is the Finno-Ugric theory of Hungarian origins. This hypothesis still commands the support of a large majority of the professional linguists and historians among Hungarian academics. However, many Hungarians are dissatisfied with this orientation and long for an interpretation which incorporates what they call the long-lost glories of the Magyar's alleged Sumerian and Hunnic-Turkic ancestors. Although professional historians such as Várdy refuse to associate themselves with such "pseudo-academic" writings, the extent and intensity of the dissatisfac-

tion with the so-called "official" Finno-Ugric orientation would merit more attention to these concerns. Perhaps an entry on this issue would not have been totally inappropriate, simply to register the widespread existence of such beliefs.

Historical terms which refer to different eras in the history of Europe, such as the medieval era, the Renaissance, the Reformation (perhaps even the Counter-Reformation), Baroque, Enlightenment, Romanticism, Populism, etc., is in my estimation one of the weaker aspects of this outstanding historical dictionary. More detailed essays within the dictionary itself could have provided a connecting link to elements of a common European civilization within the context of Hungarian history.

From the perspective of this reviewer, the fact that this historical dictionary was produced and edited by a single individual is the source of many of its virtues. A collective venture may have resulted in a greater sense of orientation and possibly coherence of the information presented, but it would have undermined the very necessary sense of individual responsibility for what has turned out to be a very good volume indeed.

The course of historical evolution points toward the coming of an age where the peoples of East Central Europe will live not within politically isolated nation states but in a united Europe where they will enjoy cultural and local autonomy. The achievement of these essentially lofty goals requires, indeed even mandates, an ongoing commitment to national traditions in a mutually tolerant spirit. The historical dictionary produced by Prof. Várdy is a proper and useful step in that direction as well as a necessary progression toward a new synthesis of Hungarian history.

Thomas Szendrey
Gannon University

Editors' note: Professor Szendrey will return to a more comprehensive analysis of S.B. Várdy's scholarship and writings in an essay slated for a future volume of our journal.

Richard S. Esbenshade. *Hungary.* New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1994. Cloth. ISBN 1 85435 588 0

The Marshall Cavendish Corporation, a group of mostly Chinese editors, and author Richard S. Esbenshade have managed to produce a lavishly illustrated handbook of Hungary intended for the general public of the English-speaking world. It appears in the publisher's *Cultures of the World* series as one of about seventy volumes at the date of its publication.

The appearance of such a book is always an exiting event as there are few such handbooks that one could recommend with confidence to non-Hungar-

ian members of the world's general public, or even to people of Hungarian ancestry who want a basic introduction to Hungary and Hungarian culture. My expectations were high when I took this volume in my hands but they were not fulfilled in every respect.

The book's organization is traditional. It begins with brief chapters devoted to geography, history, government and the economy. These are followed by chapters covering the subjects of "Hungarians," their religions, lifestyles, and language. The final chapters deal with the arts, leisure, festivals and food in Hungary. All this is followed by some useful data and a bibliography that could earn no more than a D for a first year college student.

Esbenshade's treatment of Hungarians is sympathetic. The photography was fine and the book's design is excellent. Nevertheless, I was disappointed with some aspects of this book. I was told one too many times that Hungarians are a "very proud" people. The book's portrayal of Hungary as a country in disarray was probably accurate for the times — after all Esbenshade's research for it must have been done during the early 1990s — but in 1999 the handbook is dated already. Not surprisingly, for a historian the most disappointing part of the book has been its treatment of Hungarian history. But, how can we expect the author to be accurate about the details of Hungary's evolution when he gives 1934 [*sic*! 1938] as the year of Austria's annexation by the Third *Reich* (27).

Professor Bisztray complained in an earlier volume of our journal that when his non-Hungarian son-in-law asked for a little volume that would introduce him to Hungary, he (Prof. Bisztray) had nothing to recommend. Alas, the appearance of Richard Esbenshade's *Hungary* has not changed that situation.

N.F. Dreisziger
Royal Military College of Canada

István Zombori, ed. *Magyarország és a Szentszék kapcsolatainak ezer éve* [Thousand Years of Interaction between Hungary and the Holy See]. Budapest: Magyar Egyháztörténeti Enciklopédia Munkaközössége, 1996. Pp. 337; 15 pages of photographs, 2 maps.

Hungary has had a close relationship with the Holy See ever since the nation's conversion to Christianity around the year 1000 A.D, and many historians have dealt with this topic. The most significant of the relevant works include Vilmos Fraknói's massive *Magyarország egyházi és politikai összeköttetései a római szentszékkel* [Hungary's Ecclesiastical and Political Connections with the Roman Holy See] (3 vols., Budapest, 1901-1903), Vilmos Tower's one-volume popular synthesis *A pápák szerepe hazánk megmentésében és fennmaradásában* [The Role

of the Popes in the Saving and Survival of Our Homeland] (Budapest, 1935), and Egyed Hermann's thorough *A katolikus egyház története Magyarországon 1914-ig* [The History of the Catholic Church in Hungary until 1914] (Munich, 1973).

During the half a century of communist domination the whole field of ecclesiastical history became forbidden territory. Research in church history was virtually taboo, and it was revived only after the collapse of communism in 1989.

One of the results of this collapse was the foundation of the "International Society for Encyclopedia of Church History in Hungary" [Magyar Egyháztörténeti Enciklopédia Munkaközössége = METEM] in 1989. The METEM immediately initiated the bilingual quarterly *Magyar Egyháztörténeti Vázlatok* [Essays in Church History in Hungary] (1989), as well as the monograph series "METEM Könyvek" [METEM Books].

One of the volumes in this series is the book under review. It is a multi-authored overview of the Papal-Hungarian relationship, that is covered by a dozen authors in eleven chronological chapters. With the exception of one (Gábor Adriányi from the University of Bonn in Germany), all of the authors are connected with various Hungarian institutions of higher learning or research. The latter include the Loránd Eötvös University of Budapest (Jenő Gergely, József Gerics, István Hiller, András Kubinyi, Erzsébet Ladányi), the Péter Pázmány Catholic University of Budapest (Péter Erdő, György Rácz, László Sólymosi, Kornél Szovák), the Janus Pannonius University of Pécs (László Katus), the Attila József University of Szeged (István Petrovics), the Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Péter Kovács), and the Ferenc Móra Museum of Szeged, which is the home base of editor István Zombori.

A brief review of this type cannot possibly do justice to the scholarly merits of the individual chapters, each of which was written by a different scholar. All we can do is to note that there are notable differences among these chapters both in their structure as well as in their style. On the whole, however, they are well-written and reliable scholarly essays. They combine to present a clear portrait of Hungary's millennial interaction with the Papacy.

The material in the Appendix is also very useful. It includes a chronology, a list of the popes, the Primate Archbishops of Esztergom, the Papal Nuncios to Vienna and Budapest, the accredited Austro-Hungarian (1867-1918) and Hungarian (1920-1998) ambassadors to the Holy See, and Hungary's Ministers for Religion and Public Education between 1867 and 1950. It is followed by 39 relevant photographs and two maps. It is to be lamented that maps of Historic Hungary were not included. The inclusion of such maps would have made the use of this volume much easier, as would the addition of a name and subject index.

Although not a true synthesis, *Magyarország és a Szentszék kapcsolatainak ezer éve* is a useful summary of Hungary's relationship with the Holy See. Its

expected appearance in English in the year 2000 should be a welcome addition to the growing number of English language scholarly works on Hungary.

Steven Béla Várdy
Duquesne University

Beáta Nagy and Margit S. Sárdi, eds. *Szerep és alkotás: Női szerepek a társadalomban és az alkotóművészetben* [Gender Roles and Creations: Women's Roles in Society and the Creative Arts]. Debrecen: Csokonai, 1997. 313 pp. Paperback. HU ISBN 963 260 113 0.

This volume represents the selected proceedings of a conference that had been held under the same title at the Petőfi Literary Museum in Budapest in 1996. The papers in the volume have been organized under the same two headings as the conference: part I "Női szerepek az alkotóművészetben" [Women's Gender Roles in the Creative Arts] and part II "Női szerepek a társadalomban" [Women's Gender Roles in Society]. Only some of the papers presented at the conference have been included in the book, but the conference's programme, as well as short summaries of each article in German, can be found at the volume's end.

Szerep és alkotás is a significant contribution to the still nascent area of research in gender studies in Hungary. Its somewhat widely defined scope may be explained by this very same fact: no specific time reference was given and neither was a geographic reference. Thus the volume encompasses papers that range from biblical times (Ilona Várhelyi's article about women's roles in the Bible, "Nőszerepek a Bibliában") all the way until the end of the 20th century (Erzsébet Rácz's "'Emberek-e a nők?' 20. századvégi korkép a német nyelvterület dramairóinak műveiből" [Are Women Human Beings? Panorama of German Women Dramatists at the End of the 20th Century]), and talks about women in such diverse geographic locations as the Holy Land (as mentioned), in France (Zsuzsa Acél, "A feminizmus visszacsapásának egy lehetséges formája a század közepén" [One Possible Form of Feminist Backlash at Mid-Century]), Germany (the above mentioned article), and England (Ágnes Bécsy, "Alkotás és önvédelem: Virginia Woolf írói indulása" [Creation and Self-Defense: Virginia Woolf's Coming to Writing]). Yet the majority of the papers focus on Hungarian women in the 19th and the first half of the 20th century. This may be explainable if one bears in mind the historical fact that the second half of the 19th century and the *fin-de-siècle* brought about the first women's movement in Hungary (as in other countries worldwide) entailing women's claims to political and educational rights. Consequently, women entered the public sphere on a much larger scale than ever before, including the universities as well as the previously male-dominated arts. Several articles reflect this, such as Csilla E. Csorba on women photographers at

the turn of the century ("A kisérletezéstől az önmegvalósításig: Magyar nő-fotográfusok a századfordulón" [From Experimentation to Self-Realization: Hungarian Women Photographers at the Turn of the Century]) or Éva Vámos on the history of women's education in the sciences and engineering ("Nők műszaki és természettudományos oktatása").

I would like to discuss two articles in more detail, one from each section of the volume, which I have chosen according to their topic as well as quality: Csilla E. Csorba's above mentioned article on women photographers from section I, and from section II, Susan Zimmermann's article written in German "Frauenbestrebungen und Frauenbewegungen in Ungarn: Zur Organisationsgeschichte der Jahre 1848 bis 1918" (Hungarian Women's Struggles and Movements: On the History of Women Organizing Between 1848 and 1918).

Csorba gives a short, feminist historical overview of women photographers since the mid-19th century. Even though women were involved in this new art form from its very beginnings, they mainly worked as their male colleagues' or relatives' assistants and acquired their knowledge in the profession as autodidacts since no formal education existed for women in the field. The first important women photographers appeared on the scene in Hungary around 1890 only, even though a few names, such as that of Karolina Werner, can be found in the records as early as 1858. At the end of the nineteenth century, photographers started taking on an increasing number of female apprentices who progressed very fast in the profession. An 1883 article in the photo-magazine *Fényképészeti Lapok,* written by the editor, praises women's fast learning, often much faster than men's, and concludes that if girls' education were to be improved, women would accordingly show much better results in the area of photography. And, truly enough, the turn of the century produced a few important names among whom the author mentions Erzsi Gaiduschek, Erzsi Landau, Ilka Révai, and, first and foremost, Olga Máte. Máte was a truly great artist, famous for her portraits of Margit Kaffka and other celebrities of her time. Csorba's article proves one of feminism's major theses, namely that women's absence in the history of art wasn't due to their lack of talent (as has often been argued) but, rather, to the lack of educational and professional opportunities. Only after this situation had started to change at the turn of the century did the first great women photographers begin emerging in Hungary.

Zimmermann traces the first feminist struggles in Hungary back to the revolutionary year of 1848 when a group of twelve young women wrote an appeal demanding equal civic rights for women — including suffrage and access to university education, both of which would be granted to Hungarian women only about half-a-century later. The years following the revolution were characterized by conservatism which was not particularly prone to supporting any changes in the status of the female sex. This situation changed in the 1860s with the opening of a first high-school (*gimnázium*) for girls in 1869 (an initiative of

Mrs. Pál Veres). During the period that followed, numerous women's journals were founded and women were organizing at professional and political levels. By 1910, an estimated 1,400 women's organizations had been established in Hungary.

Zimmermann devotes a large part of her very well researched and documented article to describing the split between the Social Democratic women's movement (with Mariska Gárdos as its leader) and the mainly middle-class Association of Feminists (Feministák Egyesülete, FE, with Rosika Schwimmer and Vilma Glücklich as its most active members). The FE was a truly activist organization; its leaders founded the journal *A nő és a társadalom* (Woman and Society) and established a counselling office for women, among numerous other activities. Zimmermann outlines how a kind of patriarchal thinking concerning the "woman question" took hold among Social Democrats, prompting them to resist the idea of granting women the right to vote, a point upon which Social Democratic women and the FE parted ways.

These two articles are representative of the volume as they use historical facts to support a feminist analysis of Hungarian women's fight for equality in politics and the arts. I recommend this volume as a valuable sourcebook for anyone involved with women's studies especially in relation to Hungary.

Agatha Schwartz
University of Ottawa

István Hegyi. *Világunk zeneoktatási öröksége. A zenetanítás kisenciklopédiája* [The World's Music Education Heritage. A Short Encyclopedia of Music Education]. Pécs: Janus Pannonius Tudományegyetem, 1997. Pp. 395. ISBN 963-6414572.

Ever since the development of the "Kodály-Method" by the noted Hungarian composer Zoltán Kodály (1882-1967), Hungary has been an important source of music education. The Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest, the Kodály Institute of Music Pedagogy in Kecskemét, and several other important centres — including the author's home base in Pécs — have been the exporters of the Kodály-Method and of various other systems of music education.

As Hungary's role in music education has increased, it became increasingly evident that the country's institutions of music education need readily available information about their counterparts throughout the world. This is the task that was undertaken by the author of the work under review in his capacity as Professor of Music Education at Janus Pannonius University in Pécs.

The work is basically a one-volume encyclopedia, which — in addition to an introductory essay on the history of music education in the world with

particular reference to Hungary (pp. 10-34) — contains detailed information about most of the countries of Europe, Asia, Africa, North America, South America, and Australia.

The bulk of the volume is taken up by separate essays on the individual countries (35-256). Each of the country-essays starts out by describing the history of education in that particular country, followed by the portrayal of music education on the primary, secondary and upper levels. This in turn is followed by the depiction of the music curriculum, music textbooks, music methodology, music training outside formal education, music educational associations, and, if applicable, the special methods of music education that may have evolved in that country.

The country-essays are followed by the biographical essays of the most prominent 20th century music educators of the world (257-318), a list of the noted relevant scholarly institutions and associations (pp. 318-322), a list of the institutions of higher learning that offer music education (pp. 322-330), a selected bibliography (pp. 331-347), and a series of comparative statistical tables. The latter show the chronological evolution of music education (pp. 349-355), the date and place of the foundation of the most important institutions of higher learning in music education (35~365), the number of schools, students, and teachers, as well as the gross national income of each country (pp. 366-375), and finally by the English translation of the author's preface (p. 376), and a most useful name and subject index (pp. 377-395).

Hegyi's *Világunk zeneoktatási öröksége* is a most useful volume, although because of the delay in its publication, some of the information in it is dated. As pointed out by the author himself, he had finished this work nearly a decade ago in the form of a doctoral dissertation, but he was unable to publish it until 1997. This means that some of the information contained therein is undoubtedly out of date. This is particularly true for the countries that in the meanwhile have disappeared or were significantly altered (e.g. East Germany, West Germany, the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia), as well as for those that have emerged into independent statehood (e.g. the former republics of the Soviet Union and of Yugoslavia).

Even so, Hegyi's work is a most valuable handbook of music education that has no rivals in Hungary. It would be desirable for the author to publish a revised version incorporating some of the changes that have taken place since his closing date of 1989.

Steven Béla Várdy
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Károly Kocsis and Eszter Kocsis-Hodosi. *Ethnic Geography of the Hungarian Minorities in the Carpathian Basin.* Budapest: The Geographical Research Institute, Research Centre for Earth Sciences, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1998. I + 241 pp. ISBN 963 7395 84 9 (2,800 forints)

Károly Kocsis and Eszter Kocsis-Hodosi have again provided an outstanding sourcebook for researchers of Hungarian minority communities in East Central Europe. Their coverage is compact, precise and effectively documented with excellent maps, tables and figures. The book is also based on a clear and elegant English translation. Finally, the timing could not come at a better time, as the inter-ethnic hostilities and conflicts in the region again occupy centre stage. Although Hungarian minorities have not been at the centre of most of these conflicts, they play a key role in efforts to stabilize the region. As the people with the most to lose they have been at the forefront of democratization and economic reform.

As Kocsis and Kocsis-Hodosi point out in their introductory chapter Hungarian minorities constitute the second most numerous minority people in Europe, second only to the Russians. In two states (Slovakia and Romania) they constitute the largest minorities, while in Yugoslavia they are second only to the Albanians. In total numbers the over three million Hungarians in minority status provide a larger population cluster than the total population in 87 different countries in the world, including states like Mongolia and Libya.

The book focuses on the Carpathian basin where almost all of the Hungarians are located. To historians this will come as no surprise, since historical Hungary included the entire Carpathian basin until the Treaty of Trianon (1920). Kocsis and Kocsis-Hodosi weave together the demographic profile with the territorial and topographic land base. The result is a fast-paced historical synthesis of the settlement of the central part of Central Europe. In addition to the fifty-three supplemental black and white figures and maps, and the thirty-six excellent population tables, the book includes a multi-coloured ethnographic map of the Carpathian basin and most of East Central Europe as far south as the Greek, Macedonian and Turkish borders. Even by itself this ethnographic map is worth the price of the book.

The book's organization is also logical and well conceived. After the overview in chapter one, it devotes a separate chapter to each region of the Carpathian basin under the control of the successor states to historic Hungary. Chapter 2 is devoted to Slovakia, and the subsequent chapters to Transcarpathia (Ukraine), Transylvania (Romania), Vojvodina (Yugoslavia), Croatia, Transmura region (Slovenia), and Burgerland (Austria). Excellent explanatory footnotes supplement the text whenever new or unfamiliar concepts, regions or peoples are discussed.

The book also includes a "Geographical Register" (pp. 205-241) in the languages of the dominant peoples who inhabit these lands today as well as the historic Hungarian place names. The register is divided to coincide with the chapters covering each region. Furthermore, the names appear in Hungarian and Slovak or Hungarian and Serb for "hydrographic names", "relief names", "historical regions", as well as settlement names, according to the Hungarian alphabetical order. Here I would like to point out that this section would be more useful to the international scholarly community if the alphabetization would be reversed. Thus, in Transylvania the current Romanian names should be alphabetized and the historic Hungarian names should follow. Of course, for scholars in Hungary the present set-up is more convenient, but information should be more accessible to scholars in the United Kingdom or the United States since this is the English version of the book.

I highly recommend this book to all foreign policy specialists, in government and academia, who have to deal with East Central Europe and inter-ethnic relations. It should be on the shelves of all research libraries that deal with this region and it should be in the hands of all human rights activists who wish to inform the rest of the world about the fate of Hungarians in Transylvania, Vojvodina, Slovakia, or elsewhere in the Carpathian Basin.

Andrew Ludanyi
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György Gyuris. *A* Tiszatáj *fél évszázada, 1947-1997* [The *Tiszatáj*'s Half Century, 1947-1997] [Szeged Multjából, No. 9] Szeged: Somogyi Könyvtár, 1997. Pp. 222. ISBN 963-7851-96-0.

Hungary's involvement and collapse in World War II was accompanied by the virtual eradication of the country's traditional cultural heritage and its replacement by a new Marxist based socialist culture. This eradication and replacement impacted upon all possible aspects of Hungarian culture, including the life of the country's main literary and cultural periodicals that had dominated the first half of the 20th century. These included the *Katholikus Szemle* [Catholic Review] (1887-1944), *Protestáns Szemle* [Protestant Review] (1889-1920, 1924-1944), *Új Idők* [New Age] (1894-1946), *Nyugat* [West] (1908-1941), *Századunk* [Our Century] (1926-1939), *Magyar Szemle* [Hungarian Review] (1937-1944), and a number of others — all of which went out of existence just prior to, during, or immediately after the war.

Following the war they were replaced by a new set of periodicals that were destined to be carriers of the flag of communism. Some of these became highly touted Marxist publications, such as the *Társadalmi Szemle* [Social Review], *Nagyvilág* [Wide World], *Jelenkor* [Present Age], *Kortárs* [Contempo-

rary], *Élet és Irodalom* [Life and Literature], *Kritika* [Criticism], and *Valóság* [Reality], while a number of others — particularly those published in various university and college towns outside Budapest — tried to survive by paying lip service to the regime's official ideology. The latter included the *Tiszatáj* [Tisza Region] (1947), *Alföld* [Low Lands] (1950), *Életünk* [Our Life] (1963), *Forrás* [Source] (1969), *Somogy* [Somogy Region] (1973), and a few others. Of these so-called "regional" or "provincial" periodicals only the *Tiszatáj* — tied intimately to the University of Szeged — managed to divest its "provincialism" and emerge as one of the major national monthlies, in competition with the much more favoured Budapest journals.

The book under review is the history of the *Tiszatáj* that was authored by a native of the city of Szeged and the current Director of that city's Somogyi Library. It is a pedantic scholarly monograph that treats the history of the periodical in ten chronological chapters, stretching through the half a century of its existence. Based on intensive reading of published volumes of the *Tiszatáj*, on relevant archival sources in the Somogyi Library, and on interviews with all of its former editors and its most noted contributors, the resulting book is a work of considerable scholarly achievement. It describes not only the everyday financial and personal struggles waged for the periodical's survival, but also the ideological changes that were manifested in its volumes, in line with the political pressures that were applied to it by the holders of political power.

The author is particularly effective in analyzing the ideological struggles waged during the 1970s and 1980s, when a new editorial policy initiated by editor-in-chief Mihály Ilia (b. 1934) and his successor József Annus (b. 1940) in the direction of patriotism met with a stiff resistance from the hierarchy of Hungary's Communist Party. This opposition ultimately lead to Ilia's resignation in 1974, and then to the journal's temporary suspension in 1986.

The book is complemented by detailed editorial data concerning the *Tiszatáj*'s first fifty volumes (pp. 189-199), by a survey of its special topical numbers (pp. 200-205), by a list of its student supplements (pp. 20~207) and recipients of its "Tiszatáj Prize" (p. 208), and finally by a complete name index (pp. 209-219).

György Gyuris's *A* Tiszatáj *fél évszázada* is a valuable scholarly work. It is helpful both as the history of one of Hungary's most important post-World War II periodicals, and also as a mirror of Hungary's intellectual life during the Age of Communism.

Ágnes Huszár Várdy
Robert Morris College

Gabriella Hima. *"Dunkle Archive der Seele" in hellen Gebärden des Körpers: Die Anthropologie der neusachlichen Prosa* [Dark Archives of the Soul in Light Gestures of the Body: The Anthropology of New Objectivity's Prose]. Frankfurt a.M: Peter Lang, 1999. Pp. 276. ISBN 3-631-33015-4

Gabriella Hima's book is a comparative study between prose by the Hungarian writer Dezső Kosztolányi and the German writers Joseph Roth, Erich Kästner, and Irmgard Keun. The author's aim is to reconstruct the image of the human being depicted therein as corresponding to characteristics derived from a literary trend in German literary history which is referred to as New Objectivity (*Neue Sachlichkeit*). New Objectivity, as Hima herself explains, is difficult to define both in regard to periodization (usually starting in the 1920s yet without a consensus regarding its end), as well as the stylistic heterogeneity of the authors usually subsumed. Rather than adding yet another definition of the term, Hima filters out its main characteristics — such as concentration on the factual, lack of psychology and metaphysical depth which is replaced by an increased importance of the gestures — in order to look for those in the characters of the analyzed texts. The originality of Hima's work lies in the fact that she discovers those very same elements belonging to a New Objectivity-aesthetics in Dezső Kosztolányi's novels and stories *Édes Anna* [Anna Édes], *Esti Kornél éneke* [Kornel Esti's Song], Alfa, *Fürdés* [Bathing], *A rossz orvos* [The Bad Doctor], *A kulcs* [The Key], *Pacsirta* [*Skylark*], and *Aranysárkány* [Golden Dragon]. She proceeds by a semiotic analysis of the spaces in which the characters move, live and act, and of their verbal and, especially, non-verbal forms of communication. What Hima hopes to achieve is a "decipherment of codes and (re)construction of meanings" (33). Her analysis confirms a relationship between New Objectivity and early theories of behaviourism as well as film theory of the 1920s (Béla Balázs): in both, the human being is viewed through his or her gestures. This, however, Hima concludes, does not mean the lack of a third dimension in the New Objectivity-way of depicting characters. It is the reader's task to add the seemingly missing depth.

Hima's monograph is a well-researched and well-argued text. It could have made its central point even stronger by avoiding unnecessary digressions — such as the inclusion, in some places, of Russian writers (e.g. Gogol). It would have been helpful for the reader to be introduced earlier to the source of the quotation she uses as part of her title "*dunkle Archive der Seele*" [dark archives of the soul]; she does not reveal until page 243 that this quotation derives from the works of literary scholar Helmut Lethen. This shortcoming could have been avoided by placing chapter 1 of Part III (titled "Menschenbild der Neuen Sachlichkeit" [New Objectivity's Image of the Human Being]) where the quotation is located, at the beginning of the book instead of at the end. Given the fact that

this chapter uses theoretical material such as behaviourism and film theory and demonstrates their relationship to New Objectivity, it could have been used more effectively as a building block for the analysis rather than for the conclusion. An index would also have added to the scholarly quality of the book.

Agatha Schwartz
University of Ottawa

Horthy István repülő főhadnagy tragikus halála [The Tragic Death of Lieutenant István Horthy]. Compiled and edited by Ilona Horthy. Budapest: Auktor könyvkiadó, 1992. Photos, facsimiles of documents, tables. Pp. 212, appendix.

On 20 August 1942, István Horthy, the eldest son of Regent Miklós Horthy of Hungary, died in a plane-crash on the Russian front. István Horthy was a lieutenant in the Royal Hungarian Air Force and was the Vice-Regent of Hungary, that is he was the designated successor as his country's head-of-state. Ever since his death, there have been rumours that his plane had been secretly tampered with. No concrete evidence has ever been found, but speculation persists to this day that the Nazi German leaders had a hand in his death as they regarded him an Anglophile and a friend of the Jews, and therefore a threat to Nazi interests. This book reproduces the diaries and reminiscences of soldiers who served with Horthy during his tour of duty, along with several relevant documents.

A few days before the plane-crash, Horthy's wife went to visit him. For the occasion they were guests of the commander of the German forces in the Ukraine who put his villa in Kiev at the couple's disposal. Not suspecting foul play, Horthy and his wife had long and intimate conversations which included a discussion of politics. In particular, Horthy told his wife that he was more convinced than ever before that the Germans were going to lose the war. He had also come to the conclusion that he would not be able to do much for his country either on the Russian front or in Hungary, and that the best course of action for him would be to make his way to Great Britain or the United States where he could probably do something for his nation during final phases of the war or at the war's end. Horthy's wife was to inform her father-in-law of these plans when she saw him next.

On reflecting upon this visit with her husband at a later date, Ilona Horthy came to the conclusion that the villa where they stayed was most likely bugged by the German intelligence services and the German leadership undoubtedly became informed of the younger Horthy's anti-Nazi attitudes and plans.

This realization further confirmed Ilona Horthy's suspicions that her husband's death was not an accident.

The Hungarian Parliament had elected István Horthy Vice-Regent of Hungary in February of 1942. With his election, the conservative leaders of Hungary wanted to make sure that, in the case of the 74-year-old Miklós Horthy's death or incapacity — he had been gravely ill during the late autumn of 1941 — the position of Hungary's head-of-state would pass to someone who would be both inclined to and capable of standing up to the Nazis if necessary. Vice-Regent Horthy, who was a reservist in Hungary's Armed Forces, decided opt for active service on the front in part to gain the respect of the country's military, and in part to forestall the criticism that, while tens of thousands of Hungarian youths were compelled to serve on the front, he would use his privileged position to evade such service.

Being at the front in 1942 had its dangers for everyone, from the lowest of privates to officers in command of front-line units. Contrary to generally-held opinions, the Soviet air force was active throughout this period, even if most of the time it felt obliged to confine its operations to night-time attacks. Just about every night during the time when István Horthy served in the Kursk region of the Ukraine, the Russians bombed suspected Axis positions, concentrations, warehouses and transportation lines. On one occasion the house that had been designated as Horthy's residence in a town, took a direct hit and was completely destroyed in a Red Air Force raid. Horthy was not there that night.

Then there was the danger of flying accidents and collateral damage. The Hungarian air force unit Horthy flew with, often provided escorts to German bombers that took off from airports at a greater distance from the front. In doing this, the Hungarians had to use improvised airstrips, ones which they had to abandon as soon as they suspected the Russians of finding out their location. The aircrafts they flew were inferior to both the planes of the German and the Russian air forces. Horthy's single-seater plane, in particular, was nose-heavy. Taking off and, especially, landing on earthen landing strips with this plane was very dangerous. Coming back from one of his early assignments, Horthy's plane flipped on its back upon landing. It was a miracle that its occupant managed to escape without injuries.

Another danger was accidental confrontation with German fighter planes. From reading the diaries of Horthy's *aide-de-camp*, reproduced in this volume, it becomes evident that on more than one occasion the Hungarians and their German allies mistook each other for enemy aircraft, and fired on each other. Horthy's unit shot down at least one German aircraft, and some of its planes (including Horthy's) sustained damage from German fighters shooting back at them. It seems in retrospect, that Horthy's unit suffered far more from accidents and "friendly fire," than it did from damage inflicted by the aircraft of the Red Air Force.

On August 20, Horthy was to go on his last assignment to accompany German bombers on their usual pre-dawn mission against Russian positions. Later on in the day he was scheduled to inspect Hungarian infantry units located in the region and, soon thereafter, he was to begin preparations for his return trip to Hungary. This mission proved to be Horthy's last act of his life. While circling a nearby airstrip from where additional Hungarian planes were to join his small formation, his plane crashed. The troops that converged on the crash-site covered the burning plane with earth to extinguish the fire. Once freed from the wreckage and the dirt piled on it, Horthy's charred corpse was identified by his *aide-de-camp.*

Hungarian military personnel in the air at the time, or on the ground near the scene of the crash, tried to explain the tragedy. One pilot in Horthy's small team was convinced that Horthy's plane malfunctioned before it went into a dive taking its occupant to his death. A sentry on duty at a nearby Hungarian military installation claims to have seen Horthy's plane on fire before it went into a dive. The same soldier relates that the morning of that day was unusually calm: there was no artillery or even gunfire to be heard, and the only planes visible in the sky at the time were those of the Hungarian Air Force.

Horthy's plane then, could not have been shot down. Was it sabotaged on the ground before it took off? Indeed, it received servicing and minor repairs the day before its fated flight, and, as some of the men serving with Horthy testified, German airmen were often present at the airfield, as they usually walked about the place unhindered. Yet, could they have had access to the plane and, wasn't there a high chance that any tampering with Horthy's plane would have been discovered? We have information from Horthy's *aide-de-camp*'s diaries to the effect that Horthy inspected his plane after these repairs and found it in order.

No further suspicious circumstances are produced in this volume by the testimony of those who served with Horthy on the front. In fact, the rest of the reminiscences printed in this volume are by people who had known Horthy or had worked under him in his various administrative positions — one of these was being the C.E.O. of the Hungarian state railways before 1942. Most of these recollections were written in the months after István Horthy's death and were first published in 1943. Their tone conforms to the standard that was evidently expected in such work of tribute to the second highest-ranking member of Hungary's first family.

While the book under review does not solve the mystery of István Horthy's death, it throws light on his character, his career as a military aviator, the conditions which confronted Hungary's soldiers in occupied Soviet lands.

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Laura-Louise Veress. *Clear the Line: Hungary's Struggle to Leave the Axis During the Second World War.* Dalma Takács, ed. Cleveland, Ohio: Prospero, 1995. Pp. xxii, 404. Paper. $24.95 (U.S). ISBN 1 57087 207 4. Available from the editor: P.O. Box 21011, Cleveland, OH 44121, U.S.A.

Historical texts can be dry and therefore difficult to enjoy. What a great difference it makes when such an account is also a personal one. *Clear the Line...* is a memoir of two people, who met while working for the Revisionist League in Budapest, and whose loyalty to and love of their homeland were the defining factors of most of their lives. Although the book was started by László (Leslie) Veress, he passed away before completing it; it was finished by his wife and collaborator, Laura-Louise Veress.

The story recounts the personal experience of the diplomat, Leslie Veress, who was entrusted by the Hungarian government to conduct secret negotiations with the British, for the purpose of breaking contact with Hitler's Germany and surrendering to the Allies. What makes this account especially interesting and valuable is a generous inclusion of military and political documents relating to the Allies' role in these negotiations including British reactions to Hungary's offer of surrender. These documents were kept under lock-and-key in the Public Record Office in London, and were only made public 30 years after the war.

The book also talks about Hungary's difficult position as a land-locked nation, her desire and efforts to remain independent and, finally, her reasons for allying herself with Hitler's Germany. For believing Hitler's promise of help in regaining her territories lost at the end of World War I, Hungary ended up paying the high price of having to contribute to the German war effort and being branded as Hitler's ally.

By 1943 the government of Hungary was playing a difficult balancing act: it was looking for a way out of the clutches of Hitler and sought contact with the Allies with the intention of surrender; further, it tried gradually to replace pro-German members of the government with anti-German ones; and, lastly it made efforts to protect the country's Jews. Hungary had to proceed with great caution in order not to bring Hitler's rage upon the country.

To avoid the suspicion of the Germans, whose authorization was necessary for travel outside of Hungary, a low-ranking, therefore inconspicuous, diplomat had to be selected for negotiating with the Allies. László Veress — who was from a good family, multilingual, and familiar with international affairs — was an ideal choice. During the course of events, he made several trips to Istanbul and Lisbon where he met British consular officials, and conducted fairly promising negotiations on behalf of the Hungarian government. However, before these became finalized, in a quick succession of events, Hitler invaded Hungary with horrible consequences. The Allies, in the meantime, embarked on their final

offensive against Hitler through Normandy and not through the Balkans as many in Hungary had hoped.

Shortly after the war, Veress and his future wife, together with their immediate families, sought asylum in England where they both worked for the Hungarian Section of the BBC.

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Red Star, Blue Star: the Lives and Times of Jewish Students in Communist Hungary (1948-1956) Compiled and edited by Andrew Handler and Susan V. Meschel. Boulder, CO.: East European Monographs (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997). Cloth: $31.50 (US).

Red Star, Blue Star is an unusual book. Though poorly organized, it is still a compelling anthology of Jewish autobiographical writing. Comprised of seventeen personal stories or short life writing texts, the book's aim is to record the experiences of young Jewish men and women during the post-war period in Hungary. The narrators of these stories were all children or teens living in Hungary in 1948 when Hungary became a Soviet satellite nation. The assumption of the editors is that "[b]eing Jewish in a Communist country meant being out of sight but not out of mind" (x). Thus, the majority of the stories told in the collection recall the anguish and the bravery of living under Stalin's eye, and sometimes this intersects with the experience of anti-Semitism. Andrew Handler, one of the story-tellers, writes in a long introductory essay to the collection that "[e]nding the war as the last ally of the Third Reich and the last executors of the Final Solution of the Jewish Question left permanent scars on the national character. The provisional system of governance proved not to be a prelude to democracy." Handler's conclusion is the ironic observation that "the liberators turned out to be occupiers" (7). In other words, the anti-Semitism that was rife in the final stages of the war in Hungary grew into a new form during the communist era, the victims of which are the Jews whose stories are told here. The truth is that not all the story-tellers focus on anti-Semitism, but all regret the period of Russian domination.

The majority of the story-tellers eventually left Hungary, most after the uprising of 1956. Though many are academics in the West, some are prominent members of the business community in various American cities — Washington and Los Angeles, for example. Yet a few more remained in Budapest, such as two of the three women represented in the book — Éva Székely and Márta Hentz.

The stories are interesting, some more than others, and some better written (and better edited) than others. What the stories lack is a proper introduction which contextualizes them, and an obvious sense of ordering. As they

stand now, they seem to be randomly placed in a long line of uninterrupted contents referred to only as "Part Two." (This means that the introduction is "Part One.") A clearly articulated Table of Contents might at least provide an ordering principle to help the reader link details, themes, experiences of internal deportation or perhaps emigration. How each story illustrates what I assume is the thrust of the book — anti-Semitism did not die in Hungary with the end of the Holocaust — would be a happy conclusion to the multitude of experiences and ideas expressed by the narrators. Moreover, the experiences and ideas expressed by the narrators do not necessarily coincide with the objectives of the introductory essay leaving me to wonder what the purpose of the editors is. Having said this, the stories themselves are interesting recollections of a period of Hungarian history not often discussed by Jewish survivors of the Holocaust and although not mentioned and not problematized, the issue of gender is prominent. Only three of seventeen stories are by women, two of those women remained in Budapest, and among the other 17 stories, women's roles are often implicated. Take for, example, the most poignant of the stories, "My Blue Velvet Dress," where the once-buried blue velvet cloth is all that remains of Susan V. Meschel's beloved father as she crosses the Hungarian border "into freedom" (143).

The book has some meaning for Canadian readers for two reasons: first, the introductory essay ends with an all too brief reference to the György Landeszmann affair (38-9), and second, the final life story, "Turnaround," is told by Peter Barta, a professor of electrical engineering at Ryerson Polytechnic University in Toronto. Although "Turnaround" ends too abruptly, it tells the story of an adolescence spent in Miskolc by a "Budapest kid" who "longed for Budapest" and its "Eleventh District, Gellert Hill, Horthy Circle (now Zsigmond Moricz Circle), Bottomless Lake, our temple, and the railway tracks going toward Vienna." This image of the railway tracks is metaphoric: most of the narrators fulfil their longing to escape Hungary and emigrate to the United States, Norway, Denmark, Sweden and, in one case, Toronto. Indeed, readers will notice that certain countries of immigration are over-represented, as are certain professions. Many of the tellers are scientists or engineers, often working in an academic setting. Some of the writers, however, such as Andrew Handler himself, and Paul Hollander, are professors of history and sociology respectively, at American universities. Perhaps most dramatic among the stories is Hollander's. A schoolmate of the Hungarian dissident, George Konrád, Hollander was forced to leave Budapest with his family at nineteen years of age to take up a wretched existence with a "peasant family also regarded with disfavor by the authorities" (107). Hollander is quick to say that his "difficulties in Hungary between 1948-1956 had nothing or little to do with being Jewish" (107). Instead, he pays the price for the financial success of his maternal grandfather which, he admits, is the plight of many Jews in Europe who survived as businessmen, industrialists and property owners (102). Refreshing is Hollander's measured sense of change. Glad to leave

Hungary in a way, he is less romantic than his colleagues about the problems he will face in the West where "there were more choices to make and the problems to be faced were no longer political" (115).

Marlene Kadar
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Az 1956-os magyar forradalom a világpolitikában: Tanulmány és válogatott dokumentumok [The 1956 Hungarian Revolution in World Politics: A Study and Selected Documents]. Csaba Békés, ed. and comp. Budapest: 1956-os Intézet, 1996. Pp. 184. Paper.

This volume was produced and published under the aegis of the 1956 Institute in Budapest, an institution that has seen its funding slashed recently. It is a fine work, like many of the others produced by the 1956 Institute, offering useful documents and well as an excellent introduction to the subject.

Békés's 74-page introductory study in this volume is a succinct and lucid examination of the international context and impact of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, written in the light of recently released secret documents. The author's main argument is that in October and November of 1956 the great powers of the world acted purely on the basis of perceived self-interest. In particular, the United States, the leading power of the "Free World," did not want to see the events in Hungary derail the process of increasing accommodation between the West and the USSR. By this time, the leaders of the US had acknowledged Eastern Europe to be in the Soviet sphere of interest and their policy towards the Soviets had accepted the importance of negotiations over confrontation; as a result, they wanted to make sure that this status quo was not upset by events in Hungary. Notwithstanding this desire, the Americans also wanted to make sure that the world did not get the impression that the US would do nothing in response to the Soviet intervention in Hungary. The result was a major chasm between American rhetoric and action — or more precisely, inaction — which had disastrous impact on the outcome of events. The attitudes of the other great powers were equally self-serving. France and England had more of an interest in unrest in Hungary than the US, but only as a factor that diverted Soviet attention from the Middle East. The Soviets themselves would have preferred a Polish-style resolution to the crisis, but they were ready to intervene if this was not possible and the existing Marxist-Leninist order in Hungary appeared threatened.

Békés devotes most of his attention to an analysis of American policy. In this connection he observes that Washington's two-faced policy of proclaiming the need to "liberate" Eastern Europe from Soviet rule while seeking peaceful accommodation with Moscow became especially pronounced after the advent to

power of the Eisenhower administration in January of 1953. Under Eisenhower, funds were made available to such establishment as Radio Free Europe, as well as anti-Soviet emigre organizations and their publications. In reality, American diplomacy increasingly sought negotiated solutions to such East-West issues as the question of Germany and the status of Austria. By the mid-1950s, Washington did not contemplate any interference in Eastern Europe, nor did it expect any fundamental change there. The only possible change there that was seen as possible by a few American analysts, was the spread of the "Yugoslav model" of communism. Not surprisingly under the circumstances, when an anti-Soviet uprising broke out in Budapest in October, 1956, the Eisenhower administration was taken by complete surprise.

In Moscow, the outbreak of trouble in Hungary was not entirely unanticipated. Ever since the disturbances in Posnan, East Germany, the Soviet leadership watched East European developments with concern, and sought to resolve them by political means — such as the removal from power of such unpopular leaders as Mátyás Rákosi. Nevertheless, the Soviet leaders informed Yugoslav leader Tito at the time that, should serious trouble break out in Soviet-controlled Eastern Europe, they would not hesitate to use any means necessary to preserve their control.

This then was the attitude of the Great Powers to Hungary before October, 1956. Békés stresses that, contrary to the charges made by Moscow later, Washington did not plan to provoke or incite a revolt in Hungary. In this connection he points out that, while the Americans were not guilty of plotting trouble, by their constant anti-Soviet propaganda, they spread the conviction among Hungarians that America would come to their aid should a struggle for freedom erupt or, at the least, it would put overwhelming diplomatic pressure on the Soviets to accept the independence of Hungary.

Diplomatic efforts to this end were most unlikely to succeed. Soviet attitudes and behaviour since 1945 made it extremely doubtful that the Kremlin would accept any significant change in the post-war strategic status quo in Europe, especially the departure of Hungary from the Soviet satellite empire. True, only a year earlier, the Kremlin had accepted the neutralization of Austria, but in this instance the Soviets received substantial counter-concessions from the West: the departure of Western occupation troops from western and central Austria. Furthermore, it should be remembered that in Austria there was no Soviet control over the government to give up in 1955, unlike the scenario the Soviets would have faced in Hungary a year later if they conceded Hungarian independence.

Even though the Soviets were determined not to give up Hungary, in the early days of the revolution they were anxious to use caution and circumspection. To resolve the crisis, they were even ready to make some concessions. We know now that the Kremlin was most reluctant to commit Soviet troops stationed in

Hungary to quell the disturbances and agreed to do so only on the pleadings of Ernő Gerő and Soviet Ambassador to Budapest Yuri Andropov. At one point the Kremlin even contemplated the admission of a few formerly non-communist leaders to Hungary's government, should such a gesture resolve the crisis. Such concessions, however, did not satisfy the Hungarians' yearning for multi-party democracy and neutrality in the realm of international relations.

As time passed and the crisis deepened, the Soviet leaders became willing to make even greater compromises in their desire to avoid a military showdown. They were, however, unwilling to yield on four essential points: the control of Hungary's government (i.e. the principle of one party rule), of her security forces, armed forces, and the media. At the same time, Hungary's masses, whose appetite was only whetted by the concessions made and promised, were increasingly reluctant to accept anything short of freedom from Soviet control.

In the early days of the revolution, the people demanding reform and change had the sympathies of several governments in the Communist camp. These included the leadership in Beijing and Belgrade. Soon, however, the former were brought aboard and, in the end, provided complete support for Soviet decision-making. In Belgrade, Tito had hoped at first that what would evolve in Hungary would be the Yugoslav model of national communism, but by the first hours of November it was increasingly clear to him that the model the Hungarian leadership aspired to resembled more that of Austrian neutrality. Consequently, when Tito received a high-ranking Soviet delegation on Brioni Island on the 2nd and 3rd of the new month, he voiced his agreement with the Soviet plan to crush the Hungarian uprising.

In the West, the events in Budapest evoked reactions of "extreme caution," motivated no doubt by the fear that conflict with the Soviets would lead to a military showdown, involving probably nuclear war (p. 54). Collective diplomatic action by the West might have prompted the Soviets to change their plans regarding Hungary, but the chances of such action greatly diminished with the outbreak of the Suez Crisis at the end of October. The author points out that this development not only prevented combined US-British-French diplomatic action in support of Hungary, but frustrated attempts to coordinate the strategy of the anti-Soviet forces in the United Nations. Under the circumstances, a condemnation of Soviet actions by the UN's General Assembly could be passed only after the start of the Soviet invasion of Hungary on Nov. 4, by which time it could have no impact on Soviet decision-making. Békés reminds us that, of course, it cannot be taken for granted that effective action by the UN, even if taken a few days earlier, could have had significant impact on the Soviets. He concludes that the Suez Crisis made the work of the Soviet leaders much easier, but there is little indication that without it the outcome of events in Hungary would have been different (p. 67).

In turning to the consequences of the Revolution for the evolution of international diplomacy, Békés observes that the crushing of the Hungarian uprising proved the bankruptcy of the proclaimed American policy of "rolling back" the Iron Curtain. Indeed, from 1956 on, the chasm between American rhetoric and actions came to an end, and the United States began accepting, not only in actual fact but also in its pronouncements, the division of Europe that had been in effect for the better part of a decade. The defeat sustained by the leading nation of the West, along with the advances made in Soviet military technology in 1956 and soon thereafter, contributed to the growth of confidence in Moscow that the race for strategic supremacy had been won (p. 61). Eventually this confidence gave way to overconfidence which was not dispelled — or, at least, shaken — until the Cuban missile crisis a few years later.

Békés mentions an interesting "might have been" of the Hungarian revolution. He points out that the events in Hungary of 1956 created such a deterioration in East-West relations that reconciliation became impossible and the Cold War dragged on with all its fury. Had there been no crisis in 1956, the Americans and the Soviets might have come to some settlement of their differences — including mutual demilitarization — in which case the arms race would have moderated. In this case the Soviet economy would not have collapsed three decades later and the U.S.S.R. could be still around today (p. 72). The Hungarian Revolution then, might have been the cause of the historical processes that eventually saw the collapse of the Soviet Union, in more ways than one.

Much more could be said bout this fine study, but the above should give a good illustration of Békés's scholarship and arguments. The only concern and regret I want to express is that with the decline in the 1956 Institute's funding, in the future works such as this one might encounter more problems in being researched and published.

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Obituaries:

Francis S. Wagner (1911-1999) and Peter Gostony (1931-1999)

by N.F. Dreisziger

Since the appearance of the 1998 volume of our journal, the Hungarian diaspora in the West has lost two prolific historians: Francis S. Wagner and Peter Gostony. They join a long list of our associates remembered in obituaries of the past.

Francis (Ferenc) Wagner hailed from an ethnically mixed region of East Central Europe where German, Hungarian and Slavic influences had mingled throughout the centuries. He was born in 1911, in the town of Korpona, in what today is south-central Slovakia. Since the Middle Ages, Germans had known this place as Karpfen, the Hungarians as Korpona, and the Slovaks as Krupina, which became its official name after the region was awarded to the Czechoslovak Republic in the wake of World War I. Perhaps appropriately, the young Ferenc had a keen aptitude for learning languages. As student he specialized in Slavic languages and cultures. He completed his education at the University of Szeged (today's József Attila University). He excelled in his studies, as well as in music and sports. He was granted his doctorate in 1940. Subsequently he taught high-school in Szeged and in Budapest. In the wake of World War II he entered the services of Hungary's Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a Slavic specialist. From 1946 to 1948 he headed the Hungarian consulate in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia (before World War I, known as Pozsony or Pressburg). As is well-known, 1948 was the year when the communists consolidated their power both in Hungary and in the Czechoslovak Republic. Not surprisingly, Ferenc and his wife Irén left Eastern Europe that year and headed for the United States.

They arrived in New York early in 1949. There Ferenc shared the fate of many newly-arrived DP (displaced person) intellectuals, and for a while made his living through manual work. In 1952 he gained employment with the

American government and, the following year, was offered a position with the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. No doubt, his fluency in several languages — and, by then, also in English — made him an attractive candidate for a post at this great institution.

Working at the Library of Congress had many advantages. One of these was ready access to the vast holdings of this world-renown library. This was of particular importance to someone who loved books, research and writing. Working for the L.C. was also prestigious and, no doubt, congenial. Dr. Wagner's only regret — as he told the writer of these lines in the Library's cafeteria during the mid-1970s — was the fact that he had to share an office, albeit a very spacious room, with several of his co-workers. He retired after 29 years of government service, in 1981, at age seventy. During the next decade he continued to work furiously, producing one book after another. In some of these books he collaborated with his daughter, Christina Maria Teresa Wagner (Mrs. R.H. Starley), a former White House staff member, now a freelance writer.

From the Hungarian point of view, Dr. Wagner's most important work was probably his *Hungarian Contributions to World Civilization* (Center Square, Penna.: Alpha Publications, 1977). Professor Steven Béla Várdy has described this book as a "lexicon of Hungarian achievements in the natural sciences, physical sciences, biological sciences, social sciences, economics, business, arts, music, politics, and sports."[1] Dr. Wagner's last major monograph, which deals with the history of the United States, appeared in 1985.[2]

The years since the appearance of that work have not been kind to Ferenc Wagner. In 1990 his wife, Irén, was left paralyzed after a mishandled operation. Disturbed by her misfortune, he stopped writing. Then came his own prolonged illness. He died in April of this year.

* * *

Peter Gostony or, as he is known to Hungarians, Péter Gosztonyi, has probably been the most popular author-historian of the post-1956 Hungarian emigration. This is not surprising: he wrote about popular topics such as the history of the Second World War, the events of the 1956 Revolution, the life of Miklós Horthy, and so on. Most of these works were published in Hungarian, but there are others that appeared in German or French.[3]

Péter Gosztonyi was born in December, 1931, in Budapest. He had planned to be an economist but had to leave the Hungary late in 1956 because of his involvement in the Revolution. In emigration he continued his studies and earned his doctorate in Zurich. In 1963 he became the head of Switzerland's East European Library in Bern. From that time on, he produced study after study, monograph after monograph on subjects of military history, especially the role of Hungary in the Second World War and the story of the Hungarian Revolution.

The factors that enabled him to produce so much were undoubtedly his insatiable curiosity combined with his inexhaustible energy. Working in a library probably also helped. Yet, on one of his visits to North America, he told me that what permitted him to write so much was in part the fact that he lived in a quiet small city instead of a busy metropolis.

After a successful career as a librarian and historian and over three decades of unceasing publishing, life became increasingly disappointing for Péter. He was unhappy when, after approaching age 65, his employer told him to take retirement. He was to be replaced by a Swiss-born East European "expert" who, according to Péter, did not know the difference "between Slovenia and Slavonia."[4] He was also most unhappy about the results of the 1994 elections in Hungary, and what he perceived to be the fading memory of the 1956 Revolution there. His health also began to deteriorate. Under these circumstances he curtailed his lecturing and his involvement in the work of the Hungarian Literary and Fine Arts Circle of Switzerland (Svájci Magyar Irodalmi és Képzőművészeti Kör).

Péter Gosztonyi was both an eye-witness to and a historian of the Hungarian Revolution. His most relevant work on this subject was *1956: A magyar forradalom története* [1956: The History of the Hungarian Revolution] (Munich: Griff, 1981). Yet his most notable works dealt with Hungary in World War II. His magnum opus on this theme was *A magyar honvédség a második világháborúban* [The Hungarian Army in the Second World War] (Roma: Katolikus Szemle, 1986), a nearly 500 page volume. Another work of his, the multi-volume *Magyarország a második világháborúban* [Hungary in the Second World War] (Munich: Herp, 1984) contains relevant shorter studies and documentary articles that he had published earlier.

Gosztonyi was one of the first historians to attempt a biography of Admiral Miklós Horthy, the Regent of Hungary from 1920 to 1944. At first, Gosztonyi's book appeared in West Germany, in German: *Miklós von Horthy: Admiral und Reichsverweser* (Göttingen: Musterschmidt, 1973), but with the collapse of communism in Hungary, it was also published there in Hungarian translation: *A kormányzó, Horthy Miklós* [The Regent, Miklós Horthy] (Budapest: Téka, 1990).[5] Though Gosztonyi's biography has been superseded recently by a more extensively researched monograph,[6] it remains a significant work partly because it had sold a great many copies, and partly because those who do not read English — and cannot afford the price of a hardbound book produced in the USA — have no access to the more recent biography.[7]

What Francis Wagner and Peter Gostony shared above all was their love for history and historical writing. The former was a member of the post-World War II Hungarian emigration, the latter was a "fifty-sixer". Having met both of them but not having known either of them well, I have the impression that their

demeanour and outlook on life reflected this difference. Nevertheless, besides their love for history, they had other things in common. Both of them were indefatigable workers. Both of them had a command of several languages. Both spent much of their lives working for world-famous libraries. And, by coincidence, each of them published two articles in our journal.[8] With their passing, the Hungarian diaspora has lost two prolific authors. At the same time, our journal has lost two more members of that group of scholars which constitutes our pool of occasional contributors.

NOTES

[1] Steven Béla Várdy, *Historical Dictionary of Hungary* (Lanham, Md., and London: The Scarecrow Press, 1997), p. 762.

[2] Francis S. Wagner with Christina Wagner-Jones,, *Nation-Building in The United States; The American Idea of Nationhood in Retrospect* (Center Square, Penna.: Alpha Publications, 1985), pp. 181f. The book was an expanded version of Dr. Wagner's earlier study: "Hungarian Contributions to American Culture," which was included in the September 30, 1975, issue of the *Congressional Record.*

[3] Two of his papers I have translated for our journal, then known as the *Canadian-American Review of Hungarian Studies.* For details see below, note 8.

[4]These and the following observations are based on Éva Saáry, "Az utolsó levél: búcsú Gosztonyi Pétertől" [The Last Letter: Saying Good-bye to Péter Gosztonyi], *Magyarság,* 1 May 1999, p. 11.

[5] This was followed soon by another volume, *A kormányzó Horthy Miklós és az emigráció* [Regent M.H. and the Émigrés] (Budapest: Százszorszép Kiadó, 1992).

[6] Thomas Sakmyster, *Hungary's Admiral on Horseback: Miklós Horthy, 1918-1944* Boulder, Co,: East European Monographs, distributed by Columbia University Press, 1994).

[7] For my own assesment of Peter Gostony's writings on Horthy see my article: "Miklós Horthy and the Second World War: Some Historiographical Perspectives," in *Regent Miklós Horthy, István Horthy and the Second World War,* N.F. Dreisziger, ed. (Toronto and Budapest: the *Hungarian Studies Review,* 1996), pp. 6-9.

[8] In the case of Francis Wagner these articles are: "Diplomatic Prelude to the Bombing of Kassa: Reflections and Recollections of a Former Diplomat," X, 1-2 (1983), 67-78; and "The Gypsy Problem in Postwar Hungary," XIV, 2 (Fall, 1987), 33-43. In the case of Peter Gostony they are: "Horthy, Hitler and the Hungary of 1944," II, 1 (Spring, 1975), 43-58; and "The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 Viewed from Two Decades' Distance," III, 2 (Fall, 1976), 139-153.

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