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ZUR SOZIALGESCHICHTE DES KLEINADELS IN DER WART

ERNÓ DEÁK

Eingangs sei die Bemerkung gestattet, daß das gegenwärtige Referat sich auf die bereits 1977 erschienene Monographie, *Die Obere Wart*, stützt und deshalb im wesentlichen eine Art Zusammenfassung insbesondere des Kapitels über die *wirtschafts-historischen und sozialen Aspekte in der Neuzeit* darstellt. Obwohl dieses von zahlreichen Autoren erstellte Werk in seiner Art für österreichische Verhältnisse einen kaum betretenen Boden erschlossen hat und für die Forschung einige wichtige Resultate erbracht hat, fand es womöglich keine gebührende Aufnahme. Bezeichnenderweise trug auch die Zeitschrift, Burgenländische Heimatblätter zur Verbreitung nicht bei; seit dem Erscheinen des Buches fand das Redaktionskomitee offensichtlich keinen Rezensenten, der darüber hätte berichten können. Aus diesem Grunde liegt die Vermutung nahe, zumindest in diesem Kreise doch in mancher Hinsicht etwas Neues oder zumindest wenig Bekanntes aus der Geschichte der kleinadeligen Gemeinden im Bezirk Oberwart festhalten zu können. Dazu wäre auch noch zu sagen, daß die neuzeitliche Entwicklung der kleinadeligen Gemeinden quellenmäßig aus Scherben zusammengetragen werden mußte. Die im Burgenländischen Landesarchiv befindlichen Gemeindeakten sind zwar reichhaltig, aber dennoch lückenhaft und zudem nicht geordnet. Die Bestände der Hauptgemeinde, Oberwart wurden im Frühjahr 1945 beim Rathausbrand vernichtet. Das Gemeindearchiv Unterwart galt als verschollen, erst nach Erscheinen der Monographie fand man viele Schriften davon am Dachboden des Pfarrhauses. Durch diese Verhältnisse bedingt, blieb die neuzeitliche Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte ein Torso, der in mehreren Zügen rekonstruiert, ergänzt werden mußte. Glücklicherweise konnte das Gesamtbild mit Hilfe der Jabinger Gemeindeakten einigermaßen abgerundet werden, indem speziell die Wirtschafts- bzw. Finanzgebarung der Gemeinde für die Zeitspanne 1798/99–1848/49 lückenlos ermittelt werden konnte. Die bearbeiteten Belege gaben nicht allein über die Einnahmen und Ausgaben der Gemeinde Auskunft, sondern ließen ebenso Schlußfolgerungen auf die sozialen und Rechtsverhältnisse zu. Leider beschränken sich die Gemeindeakten größtenteils auf die Zeit ab etwa 1750, so daß die vorangehenden Jahrhunderte über die Ortsobrigkeit, d. h. die Gemeindeführung etwa spärlich überliefert sind. Äußerst wichtig sind dafür die Adelskonstruktionen, die sich auf den Zeitraum 1482–1845 erstrecken und ein hohes Maß an Kontinuität in der adeligen Bevölkerung bezeugen. Die Schriften der einzelnen Familien setzen erst gegen Ende des 17. Jh. mit einer starken Regelmäßigkeit

ein; sie gewähren Einblick in die wirtschaftlichen und Wohnverhältnisse auf Familienebene. Kurz um, das alltägliche Leben, die Wirtschaftsführung und die soziale Gliederung der im Gemeindeverbande lebenden Kleinadeligen lassen sich in ihren Grundzügen etwa seit Ende des 17., Anfang des 18. Jhs. verfolgen, wobei namentlich das letzte Jahrhundert vor der durch die Bauernbefreiung erfolgte Nivellierung zweifelsohne mit Schriften am besten belegt ist.

Die Anfänge der funktionellen Formationen der Kleinadeligen lassen sich zeitlich-territorial nicht genau verifizieren. Bemerkenswerterweise waren es österreichische Historiker, die schon vor Jahrzehnten auf die Parallelitäten in der Grenzverteidigung der Awaren und auf diese folgend der Magyaren aufmerksam gemacht haben. Es kann auch kein reiner Zufall gewesen sein, daß das Vorfeld, ungarisch *gyepűelve*, sowohl des awarischen als auch des magyarischen Einflußbereiches an der Enns endete; bekanntlich wurde die Burg Enns 902 als Grenzbefestigung gegen die Einbrüche der Ungarn errichtet. In der Phase der Expansionspolitik kann mit der Errichtung von Grenzwächtersiedlungen im heutigen burgenländischen Raum kaum gerechnet werden, weil sie sozusagen fehl am Platze gewesen wären. Auch nach der Schlacht am Lechfeld (955), als die Ungarn zum Rückzug gezwungen waren, räumten sie das Gebiet bis zum Wienerwald; die Spuren von Grenzwächterdörfern sollten folglich entlang der Thermallinie entdeckt werden können. Dem ist aber nicht so. Erst nach dem Tod König Stephans I. wurde bekanntlich der Raum um Wien von den Ungarn aufgegeben: zum Jahr 1038 heißt es, die Ungarn wären aus Wien vertrieben worden. Erst nach den nun folgenden Thronwirren, 1043 kam es zur Stabilisierung; von diesem Jahr an kann die sogen. Leitha-Lafnitz-Grenze datiert werden. Da das junge Königtum vom Westen her wiederholt angegriffen wurde, und gerade im westlichen Grenzbereich keine natürlichen Verteidigungsmöglichkeiten zur Verfügung standen, mußte die Grenzverteidigung künstlich und systematisch ausgebaut werden. Die Entstehung der von den *spiculatores* und *sagittarii* bewohnten Siedlungen kann folglich erst für die Zeit nach der Festlegung der Leitha-Lafnitz-Grenze fixiert werden, wenn auch die kontinuierliche Besiedlung erst ab 1327 datierbar ist. Bis dahin waren die Grenzwächter mehreren Erschütterungen ausgesetzt, zuletzt waren sie durch die Güssinger Fehde in Mitleidenschaft gezogen, so daß die festen Wohnsitze nur nach der sogen. Wiedererrichtung der Wart durch König Karl Robert als gesichert erscheinen.

Die Urkunde König Karl Roberts vom 1. Juli 1327 nennt die Region zwischen den Burgen Güssing und Bernstein als das bisherige und künftige Siedlungsgebiet der Grenzwächter. Daß dieses schon früher bestand, geht aus zwei Hinweisen unmißverständlich hervor: Erstens wird festgehalten, daß die Freiheiten (*libertates*) und Dienstbarkeiten (*servitia*) der Grenzwächter auf die Regierungszeit der Könige Béla IV. (1235–1270), Stephan V. (1270–1272) und Ladislaus IV. (1272–1290) zurückreichten, zweitens erteilt König Karl Robert Nikolaus de Superiore Eör den Auftrag, *spiculatores nostros, quocunque sint dispersi, requirat et reducat ad eorum loca propria*

et possessiones. Die Regelung der Rechte und Pflichten der Grenzwächter etwa ab der Mitte des 13. Jhs. bedeutet selbstverständlich bei weitem nicht, sie wären erst um diese Zeit angesiedelt worden, sondern lediglich so viel, daß die Organisationsformen ihren gesetzlichen Rahmen erhielten. Auch der Beiname des comes Nikolaus, *de Superiore Eör* bezieht sich weniger auf den Ort Oberwart, sondern vielmehr zur Unterscheidung von der unteren Grenzregion auf die besagte Region zwischen Güssing und Bernstein, die offensichtlich schon damals die Bezeichnung, Obere Wart trug. Dort hatten die Grenzwächter ihre eigenen Orte und Besitzungen und sollten sie auch künftighin haben.

Die Obere Wart bildete fortan ein eigenes Funktions-, Siedlungs- und Rechtsgebilde, indem sie von der Komitatsverwaltung ausgeklammert und ihrem eigenen Comes, genannt Hauptmann, ungarisch *örnagy*, unterstellt wurde. Möglicherweise konnte die Obere Wart ihre Sonderstellung zwischen Komitatsverfassung und Grundherrschaft vornehmlich aufgrund der organisierten Form als Hauptmannschaft (*capitaneatum*) behaupten. Wie lange sich diese Institution halten konnte, läßt sich nicht feststellen, auf jeden Fall bestand sie in der ersten Hälfte des 16. Jhs. nicht mehr. In der Kontroverse mit den Königsbergern ist nur noch von einzelnen Siedlungen die Rede, unter denen sich besonders Ober- und Unterwart hervorgetan hatten. In ihrem Bedrängnis, der grundherrschaftlichen Gewalt unterworfen zu werden, wandten sie sich an den Reichstag, der in seinem Beschluß von 1547 festgesetzt hat: sie in ihren Gütern und Besitzungen nicht zu belästigen, *cum nobiles sint regni Hungariae*. Ihren Adel betreffend sei festgehalten, daß sie die Dekrete des Königs Matthias Corvinus von 1478 als *nobiles unius sessionis* einstufen; Gesetzesartikel 20 : 1492 liefert dazu die nähere Definition: *nobiles autem unius sessionis, utputa, jobagiones non habentes*, d. h. diese Kleinadeligen hatten an Besitzungen nicht mehr als höchstens ein Ganzlehen, auf dem sie selbst ohne Untertanen saßen. Um über diesen sozialen und Rechtsstand ein klares Bild abgeben zu können, sei auf die diesbezügliche Angabe der Adelskonstruktion von 1717 vorgegriffen. Dort heißt es nämlich, die Kleinadeligen gehörten dem Komitatsadel an, hätten keine Bauernlehen und lebten in Taxalgemeinden.

Entstehung, Entwicklung und Festigung der kleinadeligen Gemeinden als Sondergebildemarkieren die erwähnten Privilegien, Beschlüsse und Dekrete. Die Zahl der *locus* genannten Grenzwächtersiedlungen muß in diesem Raum ursprünglich viel größer gewesen sein. Einerseits erinnern mehrere Ortsnamen – wie Schützen (Lövd) und Wart (Ór) – auf den einstigen Wehrcharakter, andererseits sind mehr als die spätere Zahl an kleinadeligen Siedlungen – so etwa Tatzmannsdorf, Deutsch-Tschantschendorf, Gaas und Sulz – als solche überliefert. Sieht man von Superior Eör, das dem von König eingesetzten Hauptmann Nikolaus als Beiname diente und – wie schon erwähnt – eher mit der Region als mit dem Ort gleichzusetzen wäre, ab, ist die Siedlung selbst aus dem Jahr 1331 in einer Grenzbeschreibung als *terra Ör* bezeugt, und kann für diese Zeit noch auf Ober- und Unterwart gemeinsam bezogen werden. Daß der Landbesitz Ör von Adeligen bewohnt war, kann aus einer anderen Grenzbeschreibung zwei Jahre später geschlossen werden: Karasztos (Bachselten) wird nämlich 1333 ebenso als Landbesitz von Adeligen angeführt (*terre nobilem de Kyrustus*). Im

gleichen Jahr taucht ein Peter, Sohn des *Mogh de Iobagi* als Vertrauensmann des Eisenburger Kapitels auf. Sein Beiname ist mit Jabling identisch, das in der soeben genannten Grenzbeschreibung 1333 eindeutig als Ort angenommen werden kann. Der Ortsname selbst erlaubt die Schlußfolgerung, daß die Grenzwächter als königliche Dienstleute zu der Gruppe der *jobagiones castri* gezählt werden können, d. h. im Bereich des Komitats keinem Grundherrn untertan waren, sondern unmittelbar dem König dienten. Im weiteren stellt sich die Frage, ob die fünf Brüder, Eöry, deren Name vom gleichnamigen Ort abzuleiten ist, und 1393 von König Sigismund in ihrem Besitz zu Jabling eingesetzt wurden, mit dem Hauptmann Nikolaus von 1327 verwandt gewesen wären? Vermutlich diese Familie, die nach der Adelskonskription von 1482 nicht mehr aufscheint, und letztmalig in der Adelskonskription von 1696 mit dem Beinamen Otth angeführt ist, trat 1617 ihre Besitzungen in Oberwart an Franz Batthyány ab. Zwei Brüder, Laurenz und Nikolaus nennt eine Urkunde König Sigismunds vom 5. Juni 1387, ihr Vater Michael nannte sich *de Karazius*, also nach Bachselten. 1409 erfahren wir wiederum über einen *Petrum Fekethew de Jobagy*, der allerdings in Siget wohnhaft war. Die gleiche Stelle dieser Urkunde bezeichnet die besagte Siedlung *villa Zygeth*. In der Neuzeit ist folglich mit den fünf kleinadeligen Siedlungen, Ober- und Unterwart, Siget, Jabling und Bachselten zu rechnen.

Die Sicherung der Sonderstellung erfolgte in einem permanenten Abwehrkampf gegen die umliegenden Grundherrschaften. Im Unterschied zur Unteren Wart, deren ursprünglich gleichrangige Grenzwächter im 17. Jh. zu Untertanen der Familie Batthyány herabsanken, retteten sich die Kleinadeligen der Oberen Wart ihre Position gerade in einer Zeit, als sie ihre gegen den Westen gerichteten Funktionen infolge der Türkenkriege und der Thronbesteigung der Habsburger ab 1526 gänzlich eingebüßt hatten. Daß ihre rechtlich-soziale Sonderstellung mit ihren militärischen Aufgaben eng verknüpft war, erklärt sich aus den Privilegien der Arpadenkönige und zuletzt aus dem Privileg König Karl Roberts, der mit der Wiedererrichtung der Wart sicherlich ein gewisses Gleichgewicht gegenüber den mächtigen Adelsgeschlechtern sichern wollte. Obwohl es darüber keine Zeugnisse gibt, erlauben die Folgeerscheinungen jedoch die Annahme, daß es König Ferdinand, der seine Macht unter schwierigsten Bedingungen ausbauen mußte, ähnlich erging wie König Karl Robert. Das von Stephan Werbőczy 1517 niedergelegte und bis 1848 geltende Recht für das Königreich Ungarn erklärt in seiner Einleitung zum Titel 4 im I. Teil: *Quod vera nobilitas, per exercitia militaria, et ceteras virtutes acquiratur, ac possessionaria donatione roboretur*. In Erkenntnis dieses Grundsatzes waren die Kleinadeligen der Oberen Wart weiterhin bereit, sich gegen die Feinde des Landes einzusetzen; mit einem Umschwenken der Zielrichtung nahmen sie ihre Verpflichtungen wahr und stellten die ihnen vorgeschriebene Zahl an Soldaten gegen die Türken zur Verfügung. Neben der bis dahin erfolgten inneren Festigung des adeligen Gefüges waren es allem Anzeichen nach die Türkenkriege, die die Kleinadeligen vor dem Verlust ihrer Sonderstellung retteten, ja, daß ihre Zugehörigkeit zum mit *una et eadem libertas* ausgestatteten Adel schlechthin 1547 im Reichstag inartikulierte wurde. In dieser Eigenschaft erhielten die Kleinadeligen von Ober- und Unterwart ihre Freiheiten 1582 *donatione regiae* bestätigt. Ähn-

liches wurde den Kleinadeligen zu Siget 1611 zuteil. Über Jabing liegt keine Urkunde vor, die Adelskonskription von 1726 hielt jedoch fest, auch die dortigen Familien hätten ihre Rechte *donatione regiae*.

Die Entwicklung der Gemeindeformen und die Entfaltung der einzelnen Familien im gemeinschaftlichen Verbandsverband war mit der Bestätigung der *ab antiquo* überlieferten Rechte keinesfalls zu Ende, vielmehr können die bis 1848 geltenden Normen erst ab Anfang des 18. Jhs. in einem besseren Licht erkannt und verfolgt werden. Auch Aufbau und Organisation der Gemeinden, die Gemeindeverwaltung erlangte erst um die Mitte des 18. Jhs. festes Gefüge. Die endgültige Ausformung erfolgte hingegen erst in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jhs., um dann mit der Nivellierung nach 1850 und 1854 bzw. 1871 folgend im allgemein geregelten Gemeinwesen gänzlich aufzugehen. Zum besseren Verständnis dieser Erscheinungsformen mögen folgende vergleichende Daten dienen: Die erste Landeskonskription 1715–1720 erbrachte unter den 8481 erfaßten Orten im eigentlichen Ungarn (also ohne Siebenbürgen und Kroatien) 1228 Kurialgemeinden, was einem Anteil von 14,48% entspricht. Diese lagen in einem breiten Streifen auf dem Gebiet des sog. königlichen Ungarn der Türkenzeit verstreut. In Transdanubien stand das Komitat Győr/Raab mit 22 Kurialgemeinden und 28,20% anteilmäßig an erster Stelle, gefolgt von den Komitaten Veszprém (31 Gemeinden, 25,83%), Sopron/Ödenburg (53 Gemeinden, 23,45%) und Zala (91 Gemeinden, 20,31%). In den anderen Komitaten gab es nur eine geringe Anzahl von Kurialgemeinden; auffallenderweise wurde im Komitat Moson/Wieselburg keine Kurialgemeinde registriert. Im Komitat Vas/Eisenburg, wo die Warter Kleinadeligen saßen, wurden unter insgesamt 515 Ortschaften 128 Kurialgemeinden mit einem Anteil von 24,85% ausgewiesen. Das Komitat Moson/Wieselburg ausgeklammert kann demnach festgestellt werden, daß die westungarischen Komitate mit dem heutigen Burgenland durchschnittlich zu einem Viertel von Kurialgemeinden besiedelt waren.

Auf die drei westungarischen Komitate beschränkt, deren westliche Teile das heutige Burgenland bilden, seien aus der ersten Volkszählung von 1784–87 folgende Angaben angeführt: Im Komitat Moson/Wieselburg wurden insgesamt nur 155 Adelige gezählt, dies entsprach 0,58% der Bevölkerung. Erwartungsgemäß gab es auch keine Siedlungen mit einem größeren Anteil an Adelligen. Das Komitat Sopron mit 3353 Adelligen erreichte einen Anteil von 4,65%, mit 7447 Adelligen oder 6,75% absolut und relativ überboten vom Komitat Vas/Eisenburg. Im ersteren war der Adel auf 41 Orte (17,15% der Siedlungen) verteilt, in denen er mehr als 10% der männlichen Bevölkerung erreichte, in 6 lag sein Anteil sogar über 50%. Bemerkenswert erscheint die Tatsache, daß von den 41 Ortschaften in 38 der Kompossessorat die grundherrschaftlichen Funktionen innehatte. Etwas anders waren die Verhältnisse die für den Oberwarter Raum ausschlaggebenden Komitat Vas/Eisenburg. Von den 659 Ortschaften gab es in 117 einen adeligen Anteil über 10% der männlichen Bevölkerung, was 17,15% entsprach. Während im Komitat Sopron/Ödenburg eine weitgehende Affini-

tät zwischen Kompossessorat und adeliger Gemeinde nachgewiesen werden kann, war es im Komitat Vas/Eisenburg von insgesamt 22 Siedlungen nur in 7, also nicht ganz ein Drittel der Fall. In 15 Orten kauften sich die Untertanen womöglich von den grundherrschaftlichen Verpflichtungen frei, ohne daß sie eine kleinadelige Stellung hatten, wenn auch in ihnen zu einem geringeren Anteil als in den anderen Kleinadeligen lebten. Nicht zu übersehen ist ferner der auffallende Unterschied zum benachbarten Komitat Sopron/Ödenburg, indem im Komitat Vas/Eisenburg der adelige Anteil der männlichen Bevölkerung lediglich in sieben Siedlungen, die mit den bereits genannten nicht identisch waren, überwog. Den höchsten Anteil an Adeligen hatte Siget (149 : 132) mit 88,59%, gefolgt von Oberwart (914 : 604) 66,08% und Unterwart (402 : 241) 59,95%. In Jabing waren von 348 Männern 95 oder 27,30%, in Bachselten von 105 26 oder 24,76% adelig.

Wenn auch die Kleinadeligen rein formalrechtlich mit dem Mittel- und Hochadel gleichgestellt waren, und die Besitzungen ihnen auf dem Wege der von Werbóczi unterstrichenen königlichen Schenkung (*possessionaria donatio*) übertragen wurden, konnten sie ihren Rechten nur gemeinschaftlich, im kommunalen Verbände Gültigkeit verschaffen. Da ihre adelige Stellung ohnehin an den freien Hof (*curia*) gebunden war, verloren sie in der Regel sogar den Titel, sobald sie aus dem kleinadeligen Verband ausschieden oder zumindest nicht wieder in den Besitz eines Freihofes gelangten. In den kleinadeligen Gemeinden selbst lebten nicht nur Adelige allein. Eine allzu starke Zunahme an Nichtadeligen konnte das adelige Gefüge lockern und dadurch die Sonderstellung der Gemeinde gefährden. Die größte Gefahr drohte aber von Seiten der Grundherrschaften, die systematisch danach trachteten, die Kleinadeligen in ihren Besitzungen zu schmälern, und wenn dies auf dem Wegé der gewaltsamen Enteignung von einzelnen Gebietsteilen nicht gelingen sollte, so versuchten sie bei einzelnen Familien deren Höfe zu erwerben, wie es die Batthyánys in Oberwart und die Familie Erdödy in Jabing taten. Wenn nicht anders, suchten die Grundherrschaften andere Wege, um die Kleinadeligen zumindest zu verschiedenen Untertanendiensten anzuhalten. Wie bereits angedeutet, praktizierten diese Methode die Batthyánys bei den Grenzwächtersiedlungen der Unteren Wart mit Erfolg. Selbst die zahlenmäßige Abnahme der kleinadeligen Gemeinden bezeugt zur Genüge, daß die Lebensfähigkeit in einem permanenten Abwehrkampf ständig unter Beweis gestellt werden mußte. Die fünf kleinadeligen Siedlungen der Oberen Wart, insbesondere Ober- und Unterwart, Siget und Jabing bestanden die jahrhundertelange Herausforderung; man kann wohl sagen, gerade in der letzten Phase ihrer Sonderstellung, in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jhs. erreichten sie den höchsten Stand in ihrer Entwicklung als Gemeinschaften. Ihre selbstbewußte Vorgangsweise in der Verfolgung der eigenen Interessen demonstrieren etwa folgende drei Fakten: die adelige Gemeinde Oberwart setzte es durch, die Batthyányschen Besitzungen, die vormals dortigen Familien gehörten, aufzukaufen. 1813 und 1818 erwarb die Kommunität an Hausgründen, Äckern, Wiesen und Wald insgesamt 180 ha Grund und Boden. Das dazu nötige Geld wurde auf Kreditwege beschafft. Kurz vor der Bauernbefreiung überbot die kleinadelige Gemeinde Jabing die Herrschaft Erdödy zu Rotenturm, nur damit der freiwerdende Besitz der Familie So-

mogyi nicht entfremdet werde. Zum Kauf war sie allerdings zur Aufnahme eines Kredits in der Höhe von 16 000 fl. K. M. genötigt. Die Kommunität Siget holte 1838 zu einem entscheidenden Schritt aus: Zur Bewahrung des rein adeligen Charakters sollte es erschwert werden, daß Nichtadelige sich im Dorf niederlassen. Die vollzählige Gemeindeversammlung beschloß, künftighin dürfen fremde Nichtadelige nur gegen Hinterlegung von 200 fl. dort wohnen, es wird ihnen aber nicht erlaubt, Liegenschaften zu erwerben.

Der kleinadelige Stand nahm durch die organisierte Gemeinschaft konkrete Gestalt an. Schon die älteste erhaltene Urkunde, das Privileg König Stephans V. von 1270 bezieht sich nicht auf eine einzige Person, sondern es werden 99 Namen aufgezählt, die in der Folge 18 Gemeinden der sogen. Unteren Wart bewohnten. Ihre Organisation war der Oberen Wart ganz ähnlich; als *peculia sacrae Coronae* war sie noch in der Regierungszeit König Matthias Corvinus' *districtus nobilitarius*. Wie schon angedeutet, verlor die Obere Wart ihre territoriale Eigenständigkeit spätestens im 16. Jh., auf jeden Fall erlebte sie die Schlacht bei Mohács (1526) kaum mehr. Umso stärker traten die in ihrer Zahl reduzierten Siedlungen in den Vordergrund, die Anstelle der grundherrschaftlichen Gewalt dem adeligen Komitat als einer autonomen Körperschaft unterstellt waren. Im allgemeinen läßt sich feststellen, daß die fünf kleinadeligen Gemeinden in der Neuzeit für sich selbständig auftraten, in den Komitatsversammlungen vertreten waren, und sich nach den Beschlüssen dieser Versammlungen richten mußten. Als höhere Instanz fungierte der mit der Leitung eines Bezirkes betraute Stuhlrichter. Die Wahl der Ortsobrigkeit mußte von ihm bestätigt werden. Ebenso kontrollierte er die Geschäftsgebarung der einzelnen Gemeinden; schriftliche Anfertigungen wurden von ihm mitunterzeichnet.

Die organisierte Gemeinde bildete die Gesamtheit der kleinadeligen Familien und Geschlechter, die aufgrund ihrer Besitzungen (*sessiones*) als Kompossessorat bezeichnet wurden. Die rechtlich-administrative Form der organisierten Gemeinde war die kleinadelige Kommunität. Die Zahl der Gemeindevertreter betrug in der Regel zwölf, wobei es räumlich und zeitlich Abweichungen gab. Die vollentwickelte Körperschaft als Gemeindevertretung wurde von der Gesamtheit der Adelligen gewählt. Das dazu bestimmte Forum hieß die General- oder Großversammlung der Kommunität. Diese wurde vom sogen. Aktualgeschworenen (*aktuális esküdt*) nicht nur zwecks Wahl der Gemeindevertretung, sondern gleichermaßen zur Behandlung von Fragen, die die ganze Gemeinde betrafen, einberufen. Sachen, die allein in die Entscheidungsgewalt der Ortsvorsteher gehörten, wurden in der sogen. Kleinversammlung (*kisgyűlés*) abgewickelt. Die Zusammensetzung des gesamten Gemeindevorstandes zeigt ein zwischen der adeligen Kommunität und dem Pächter der unteren Mühle zu Unterwart geschlossener Vertrag vom 22. Jänner 1800. Seitens der Gemeinde kreuzten insgesamt 17 Personen ihren Namen an. Von diesen trugen 13 das Prädikat, adelig vor ihrem Namen. An erster Stelle steht der Name des Aktualgeschworenen, gefolgt von drei Altgeschworenen und fünf Räten (*tanács*). Im weiteren finden sich der Gemeindegaschaffer (*falu gazdája*) sowie der Altzechmeister und der Aktualzechmeister bzw. der Kleinrichter (*kisbíró*). Die restlichen vier Mitunterzeichner waren der Reihe nach

ein Bergmeister, der Aktualrichter der Agiles und zwei Altrichter. Der Text wurde vom Gemeindevorstand aufgesetzt und zum Schlusse unterzeichnet. Die Verrechnung vom 7. Februar 1789 weist die gleichen Funktionen auf, allerdings belief die Gesamtzahl im Hinblick auf die Geschworenen und die Ratsmitglieder auf zwölf.

Rechtlich-administrativ war der Ortsvorstand nicht nur Vollzugsorgan der Komitatsbeschlüsse, sondern agierte in den Gemeindeangelegenheiten selbständig. In der Gemeindeversammlung wurde nicht nur über das Soldatenstellen entschieden, sondern auch über die Verteilung und das Einheben der vom Komitat festgesetzten Steuern vorgegangen. Ebenso wurde hier bestimmt, von wieviel und von welchen Personen die Komitatsversammlung beschickt werden sollte. Als *primus inter pares* war einer der Deputierten in der Regel der Aktualgeschworene, der im übrigen auch in Sachen der niederen Gerichtsbarkeit urteilte. Dem Gemeindevorstand als Repräsentant der Gemeinde fiel die Leitung der gesamten Wirtschaftsgebarung, indem die adelige Kommunität als eigener Grundherr fungierte, zu. Tatsächlich waren die Kleinadeligen Herren und Untertanen zugleich. Die Kommunität war nämlich bestrebt, möglichst viele Besitzungen zu gemeinsamer Hand zu bewirtschaften. Dies betraf weniger die Weiden, Wiesen und Wälder, in denen jede Familie ihr anteilmäßiges Nutzungsrecht genoß, sondern jene Teile von diesen, insbesondere Äcker, die die Gemeinde in Eigenwirtschaft betrieb. Die Wirtschaftsführung oblag dem Gemeindevorstand; er sorgte dafür, daß die Äcker bestellt, die Saat geschnitten und das Getreide im Herbst und Winter gedroschen wurde. Ebenso mußten die Wiesen abgemäht und das Heu eingeführt, Brenn- und Bauholz für die Gemeinde geschlägert und transportiert werden. Zur Verrichtung der anheimfallenden Arbeiten waren die kleinadeligen Familien in Form von Hand- und Zugrobot (in der zeitgenössischen Terminologie *faludolga*, d. h. Gemeinde-Pflichtarbeit) verpflichtet. Über den jährlichen Ertrag legte der Gemeindevorstand Rechenschaft ab.

Seit 1351 galt in Ungarn das Prinzip der Avitizität: König Ludwig I. bestimmte, daß kein adeliger Besitz veräußert oder richtiger in nichtadeligen, d. h. Untertanensteuerpflichtigen Besitz umgewandelt werden durfte. Aufgrund dieser Bestimmung erbten den kleinadeligen Hof im Falle des Aussterbens einer Familie die nächsten Blutsverwandten, gab es keine Blutsverwandte, so hatte die Gemeinde Verfügungsgewalt. Ohne Einverständnis des Gemeindevorstandes durfte keine fremde, selbstverständlich adelige Familie herrenlosen Besitz erwerben. Da die Gemeinde ohnehin das Vorkaufsrecht hatte, war sie bestrebt solche Besitzungen, wenn nicht anders, käuflich zu erwerben bzw. wenn keine Erbberechtigten ausfindig gemacht werden konnten, fiel der betreffende Besitz an die Gemeinde. In der 1. Hälfte des 19. Jhs. besaß die Gemeinde Unterwart 165 Joch Äcker, 110 Joch Wiesen und 542 Fichten- und Eichenwald, die in Eigenwirtschaft bearbeitet bzw. genutzt wurden. Knapp vor der Bauernbefreiung erwarb die kleinadelige Gemeinde Jabing 1846 noch größere Ländereien; dadurch war sie außer einem Meierhof auch im Besitz von zwei halben robotpflichtigen Bauernlehen in Rohrbach, zudem waren ihr drei Söllner in Jabing selbst untertan. Ein wesentlicher Bestandteil der Gemeindebesitzungen waren die sogen. Kommunalbetriebe, die zumeist – nicht selten an ortsfremde Nichtadelige – verpachtet wa-

ren. Die kleinadelige Gemeinde Unterwart nannte schon in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jhs. zwei Mühlen, und ein Wirtshaus ihr eigen. Für das Jahr 1840 wurden für die obere Mühle 800 fl, für die untere 500 fl und für das Wirtshaus 400 fl Pachtsumme vereinbart. Dazu kam in der 1. Hälfte des 19. Jhs. auch ein Kaufmannsladen oder richtiger Krämergeschäft, für das der Pächter im genannten Jahr 325 fl zu zahlen hatte. Nach dem erfolgreichen Kauf der Batthyányschen Güter (1813 und 1818) verfügte die Gemeinde Oberwart über eine Mühle und einen Meierhof mit einer Schweizelei, Schmiede und einem Wirtshaus samt Fleischbank. Ergänzend sei noch hinzugefügt, daß außer den Arbeiten im erwähnten Bereich nur noch die Instandhaltung der Straßen und Wege durch Robot verrichtet wurde. Für handwerkliche Arbeiten wurden den Handwerkern als Hilfskräfte Tagelöhner zugeteilt; dafür waren der Gemeindevorsteher, der Lehrer, die Nachtwächter und Viehhüter bezahlte Konventionisten.

Obzwar die Belege über die Wirtschaft- bzw. Finanzgebarung nur lückenhaft vorhanden sind, können mit ihrer Hilfe Jabing und Unterwart betreffend auf die Verhältnisse um 1800 Schlußfolgerungen gezogen werden. Die Unterwarter Gemeinde hatte für die Jahre 1785–87 1895 fl 5 X an Einnahmen und 1883 fl 10 1/2 X an Ausgaben verrechnet. Das darauf folgende Verrechnungsjahr 1787/88 ist mit 537 fl 25 1/2 X Einnahmen und 537 fl 13 X Ausgaben belegt. Eine sprunghafte Steigerung trat 1796/97 ein, als die Einnahmen auf 8470 fl 49 1/2 X und die Ausgaben auf 8426 fl 32 X beliefen. Im 1. Jahrzehnt des 19. Jhs. trat eine starke Reduktion ein, wenn auch die Einnahmen von 1345 fl 18 X im Verrechnungsjahr 1801/02 auf 5852 fl 42 1/2 X im Verrechnungsjahr 1808/09 anstiegen. Die Ausgaben betragen in den gleichen Jahren 986 fl 44 X bzw. 4085 fl 20 X. Die Verrechnungen zeigen zudem beachtliche Überschüsse. Viel bescheidener schneiden die Bilanzen der kleinadeligen Gemeinde Jabing ab: Von 192 fl 35 1/2 X im Verrechnungsjahr 1801/02 wurde nach etlichen Rückgängen die höchste Summe mit 1855 fl 21 1/2 X 1809/10 an Einnahmen erreicht. Ab 1806/07 fielen die Ausgaben vergleichsweise günstig aus. Nach dem Wiener Kongreß bewegten sich die einzelnen Beträge bis 1836 unter tausend Gulden und erst 1847/48 wurden die Höchstsummen mit 3406 fl 31 1/2 X Einnahmen und 2842 fl 31 1/1 X Ausgaben ausgewiesen. Die Zusammensetzung der einzelnen Sparten ist sehr vielfältig. Auf jeden Fall warfen die verpachteten Kommunalbetriebe in Unterwart, insbesondere das Wirtshaus mit der Fleischbank keine hohen Gewinne ab. Neben der Eigenbewirtung der Gemeindevorsteher war es üblich jedes abgeschlossene Geschäft zu begießen (áldomás trinken), aber auch die Abgesandten des Komitats wurden eingeladen, und daß der Stuhlrichter gebührend bewirtet wurde, versteht sich von selbst. Auch bei den anderen Kommunalbetrieben war es so, daß über die vertragsmäßig vereinbarten Arbeiten hinaus alle für die Gemeinde geleisteten Dienste von der Pachtsumme abgezogen wurden. Einen nicht geringen Anteil unter den Einnahmen stammte aus dem Verkauf der Agrarprodukte, voran Getreide. Der Getreideertrag an Weizen, Korn und Hafer der Gemeinde Oberwart betrug 1825/26 insgesamt 201 Metzen. Aus Unterwart liegen folgende Daten vor: 1801 betrug der Getreideertrag der adeligen Gemeinde 8 köböl 3 méró Heidekorn, 80 köböl 8 méró Weizen, 78 1/2 köböl 3 méró Roggen, 22 1/2 köböl 3 1/2 méró Gerste und 50 köböl Hafer. Der Ertrag an

wählten Vertreter der Agiles, auch Kontraktualisten genannt, saßen. Tatsächlich war es so, daß nur die Gemeinde Siget ihren rein kleinadeligen Charakter bewahren konnte, in den anderen Gemeinden siedelten sich in zunehmendem Maße Nichtadelige an, die allerdings vorerst gegen Ablöse aus dem grundherrschaftlichen Untertanenverbande entlassen werden mußten. Ein beträchtlicher Teil von ihnen waren Handwerker. Lebten sie allein aus ihrem Handwerk und hatten keine Liegenschaften in einer Gemeinde, waren sie als Inwohner, Söllner eingestuft. Die meisten von ihnen trachteten jedoch danach, kleinadeligen Besitz, in der Regel durch Einheiraten zu erwerben. Ihre Erben, d. h. die Kinder aus der Ehe eines Nichtadeligen mit einer adeligen Frau wurden Halbadelige und waren persönlich dienstpflchtig, nach ihrem adeligen Besitz jedoch steuerfrei und wurden Agiles genannt. Solange es in einer Gemeinde in ausreichendem Maße Grund und Boden gab, und der Zuwanderer sich dort dauerhaft niederließ, konnte er aufgrund des Gewohnheitsrechtes nach zwei-drei Generationen durch die Bestätigung des Gemeindevorstandes in den Adelsstand aufsteigen. Der Militärdienst kam dabei ausgesprochen zugute. Seit Anfang des 18. Jhs. konnten die kleinadeligen Gemeinden die Zuwanderer nicht mehr vollständig integrieren und dadurch entstand die eigene Schicht der Agiles. Außer in Siget, wo die Adelskonskription sogar 1824 erst nur 4 Agiles, alle Ehemänner von adeligen Frauen, aufwies, konnten sie sich gemeinschaftlich als Rechtsperson etablieren, jedoch dem persönlichen Stand ihrer Mitglieder entsprechend nur die Stufe einer Halbgemeinde erreichen. Die Agilesgemeinden hatten in allen drei Siedlungen ihre eigene Vertretung, die aber rechtlich-sozial zur adeligen Gemeinde in einem gewissen Abhängigkeitsverhältnis stand, d. h. sie konnten ihre Anliegen in der Gemeindeversammlung und in den Vorstandssitzungen vortragen, im allgemeinen mußten sie sich jedoch nach den Vorstellungen der Kleinadeligen richten. Zum Unterschied des kleinadeligen Aktualgeschworenen trug der erste Vertreter der Agilesgemeinde den Titel Richter und mußte nach seiner Wahl vor dem Stuhlrichter den Eid ablegen. Über die Beziehungen zwischen den beiden Schichten auf Gemeindeebene aus Oberwart können leider keine Zeugnisse angeführt werden. Dadurch, daß in Jabing neben der kleinadeligen Kleinjabing die Untertanensiedlung (Groß)jabing entstand, versuchten Kleinadelige und Agiles gemeinsam ihre Vorrangstellung zu behaupten, während es in Unterwart mangels Gegengewicht die Kleinadeligen die Agiles wegen Nutzungsrechte zu einem jahrzehntelangen Prozeß zwangen, der zuletzt vom Komitat geschlichtet werden mußte. Dazu konnten die Kleinadeligen sogar auf dem Donationsbrief Maria Theresias von 1746 pochen, in dem die Agiles trotz ihrer Verwandtschaft als Ankömmlinge (*küljöttek, ergo advenae*), gemeine Bauern (nemtelen parasztok) genannt. Die Ursache dafür lag nicht in einer kleinadeligen Arroganz allein, vielmehr in der Befürchtung, die kleinadelige Stellung könnte durch die starke Zunahme an Nichtadeligen auf die Dauer untergraben werden, standen doch um die Mitte des 18. Jhs. 62 kleinadeligen Familien 36 Agiles gegenüber. In der Folge konnten die letzteren tatsächlich niedergehalten werden, indem die Zahl der adeligen Familien bis 1824 auf 126 anstieg, während die der Agiles auf 23 zurückging.

Es wurde bereits des öfteren angedeutet, daß die einzelnen Namen der kleinadeli-

gen Familien, richtiger die der erbberechtigten Männer bzw. der Witwen außer den Donationsbriefen die von der Komitatsbehörde durchgeführten bzw. bestätigten Adelskonskriptionen festhielten. Die älteste liegt aus dem Jahr 1482 vor und ermittelt in Oberwart aus 39 Geschlechtern 64 Familien, in Unterwart aus 13 Geschlechtern 15 Familien. Nach manchen Rückschlägen im 16. und 17. Jh. erreichten sie ihren höchsten Stand bei der letzten Konskription 1845: in Oberwart gab es 53 (56) Geschlechter mit 518 Familien, in Unterwart 24 Geschlechter mit 207 Familien. Siget und Jabing betreffend sind die ältesten Daten aus dem Jahr 1549 überliefert. In der ersteren Siedlung lebten 8 Geschlechter bzw. 13 Familien, in der letzteren je zehn Geschlechter und Familien. 1845 waren es in Siget 19 Geschlechter mit 105 Familien, in Jabing 14 Geschlechter mit 76 Familien. Sicherlich gab es in dieser großen Zeitspanne strukturelle Änderungen, dennoch kann in den einzelnen Gemeinden ein überdurchschnittlich hoher Anteil hinsichtlich der Kontinuität bezeugt werden: Von der Donationen 1582 und 1611 ausgehend kann in Ober- und Unterwart sowie in Siget bis 1845 über 1/3 an alteingesessenen Geschlechtern nachgewiesen werden. Infolge der stärkeren Beeinträchtigung lebte in Jabing nur 28,57% der Geschlechter von der 1. Hälfte des 17. Jhs. an bis 1845 fort. Geht man im Sinne der späteren Heimatberechtigung vor, so galten in Oberwart 1726 89,62%, 1784 89,45% und 1845 85,91% der kleinadeligen Familien als einheimisch; mit den Familien aus den anderen drei Gemeinden lag ihr Anteil sogar weit über 90%. In Unterwart bildeten die Einheimischen in den gleichen Jahren 93,18%, 95,96% und 83,09% der Familien, die restlichen stammten alle aus den Nachbargemeinden. Die Daten über Siget weichen von den obigen leicht ab, in wesentlichen sind sie aber ähnlich. In Jabing lagen sie 1845 mit 56,58% viel niedriger, mit den aus Ober-, Unterwart und Siget stammenden Familien erreichten sie jedoch sowohl 1784 als auch 1845 über 96%.

Zum besseren Verständnis der Stellung der einzelnen Familien seien die wirtschaftlichen Verhältnisse kurz gestreift. Bedingt schon durch die schlechte Qualität warf der Boden zu wenig Ertrag ab, um vom Ackerbau allein leben zu können. Dazu kamen die Realteilungen, wobei 4–6 Erben keine Seltenheit waren. So läßt sich schon gegen Ende des 17. Jhs. Bodenknappheit nachweisen. Die Auswertung der Donation von 1746 für Unterwart ergibt in der Kombination mit der Maria-Theresianischen Urbarialverordnung für die Untertanengemeinden (1767), daß die einzelnen Höfe der Güterklasse I–II der Gegend (1 Ganzlehen auf 18–20 Joch bemessen) um die Mitte des 18. Jhs. durchschnittlich 9–10 Joch aufwiesen. Bereits in der Türkenzeit mußte man daher zum (Vieh)handel, später auch zum Handwerk (Töpfer, Tuchmacher, Weber, Feitelmacher; seit der 2. Hfte des 19. Jhs. Mauerer und Zimmerleute u. ä.) greifen. Durch die Bauernbefreiung büßten die Kleinadeligen letztlich ihre Sonderstellung, durch die sie sich rechtlich-sozial vornehmlich von den bäuerlichen Untertanen der umliegenden Grundherrschaften abhoben, ein. Die Besitzersplitterung nahm dann solche Ausmaße an, daß die durchschnittliche Besitzgröße 1895 in Oberwart nur noch

7,77 Katastraljoch, in Unterwart 4,76 Katastraljoch, in Siget 4,60 Katastraljoch und in Jábing 3,80 Katastraljoch erreichte. Bezeichnenderweise lag die Größe der Wirtschaften 1910 in Oberwart zu 65,69%, in Unterwart zu 84,76% unter 10 Katastraljoch. Als auch Pendelwesen und Saisonsarbeiten keine Abhilfe mehr verschafften, entschied man sich mehr und mehr zur Auswanderung. Gleichfalls 1910 wurden beispielsweise 21,44% der Bevölkerung von Unterwart als „in Ausland abwesend“ registriert.

Unter diesen Voraussetzungen ist es begreiflich, daß die Kleinadeligen nach der Angliederung des Burgenlandes an Österreich zunächst in der bewährten Abkapselung ihr Heil suchten, dann nach 1938, ebenso aber seit dem Ende des Zweiten Weltkrieges in einer an die Selbstaufgabe grenzende Anpassung ihre Identität, vornehmlich ihr letztes Merkmal, ihre ungarische Sprache dem Erfordernissen ihrer Umwelt unterstellen.

(Referat, gehalten am 17. Österreichischen Historikertag in Eisenstadt am 3. September 1987. Eine leicht geänderte Kurzfassung ist im Bericht über den 17. österreichischen Historikertag, Wien, 1989 erschienen.)

Anmerkungen

Die vorliegende Untersuchung lehnt eng an den Beitrag, Wirtschaftshistorische und soziale Aspekte in der Neuzeit (1547–1848), vgl. die eingangs zitierte Festschrift, Die Obere Wart (S. 183–251) an. Die angeführten Daten stammen größtenteils aus diesem Beitrag, deshalb sei generell auf die dort zitierten Quellen verwiesen.

Neu bearbeitet wurde hier die Gemeindegebarung von Unterwart. Da die Archivalien im dortigen Gemeindeamt ohne Register aufbewahrt sind, können die einzelnen Schriften mit Signatur nicht angeführt werden. Ebenso neu sind die siedlungsgeschichtlichen Hinweise und die Angaben über die Größe der Wirtschaften. Dazu seien folgende Quellenpublikationen erwähnt:

Urkundenbuch des Burgenlandes 808–1342. 4 Bde, Wien–Graz–Köln 1955–1985; Elemér Mályusz (zusammengestellt von), Zsigmondkori oklevéltár 1387–1410. 3 Bde, Budapest 1951–1958;

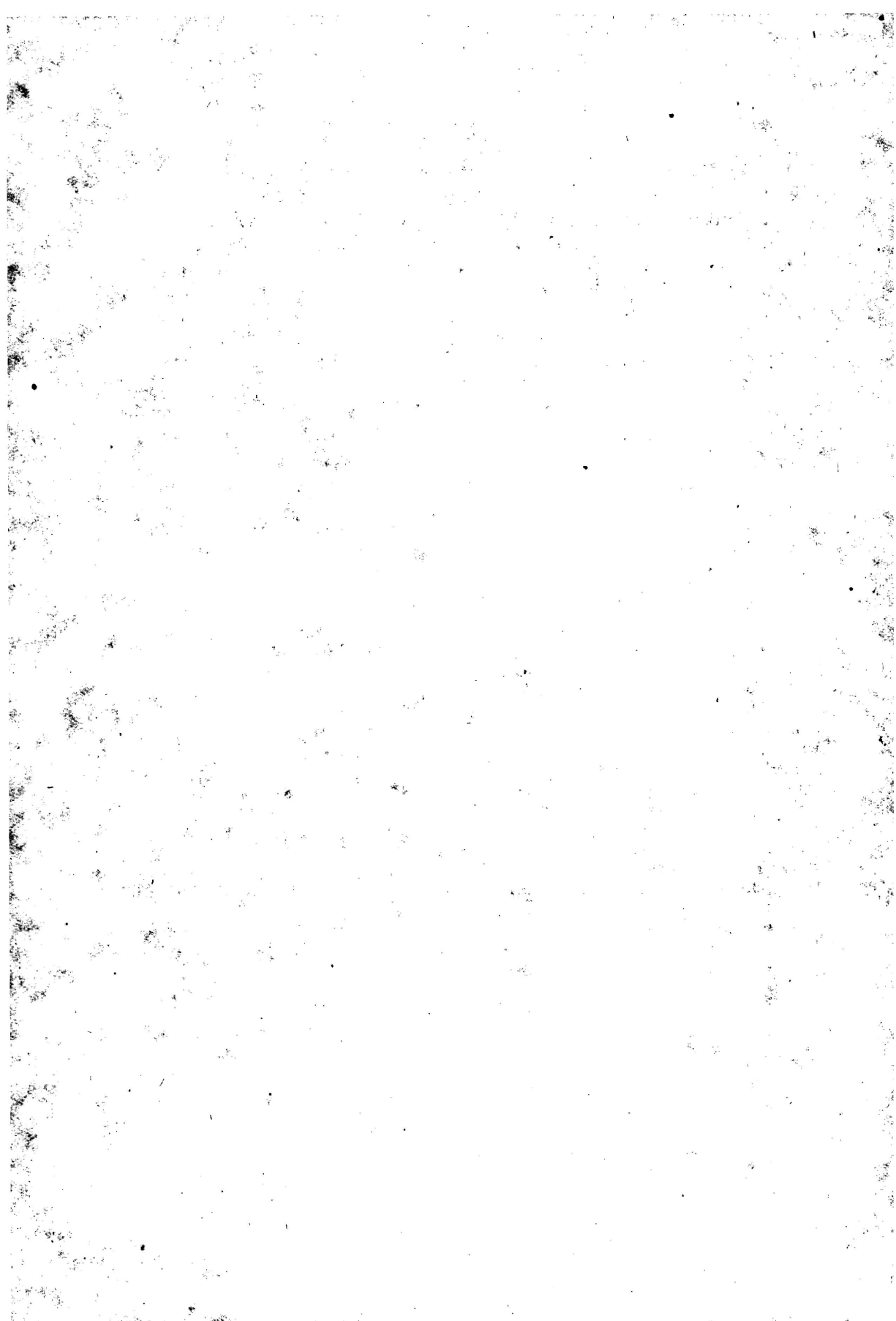
Magyarország népessége a Pragmatica Sanctio korában 1720–21. Magyar Statisztikai Közlemények, Új Folyam, Bd. XII., Budapest 1896;

Az első magyarországi népszámlálás (1784–1787). Budapest 1960;

Ibolya Felhő (redigiert von), Az úrbéres birtokviszonyok Magyarországon Mária Terézia korában. Bd. I. Dunántúl. Budapest 1970;

A magyar korona országainak Mezőgazdasági Statisztikája. 1. Bd., Budapest 1897;

1910. évi népszámlálás: Magyar Statisztikai Közlemények. Új Sorozat, Bde 42 und 56, Budapest 1912 bzw. 1915.



LES DEUX VISAGES DE LA LIBERTÉ

(Kassák et Lukács)

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Budapest, Hungary

En 1971, quelques semaines avant sa mort, Georges Lukács a qualifié ainsi ses relations personnelles avec Kassák: « Kassák devait me détester au même point que je le détestais. Moi, j'avais mes raisons. » Il faut qu'on s'arrête un peu avant d'examiner de plus près les prétendues « raisons » dont Lukács a parlé. Cette déclaration paraît relever de la vérité, bien que je n'aie pas trouvé de texte dans lequel Kassák se serait prononcé d'un ton aussi tranchant à l'adresse de son contemporain-philosophe. Cependant, nous avons l'impression qu'il ne s'agit pas là uniquement d'un manque de sympathie ; ce sont leur conception de l'art, leur vision du monde qui les ont séparés au cours de presque soixante ans. Ne nous référons pas cette fois aux arguments – évidemment simplifiants – que fournit l'enregistrement des différences qui ressortent de leurs origines ou de leurs conditions sociales. Il n'est pas absurde de supposer qu'une amitié à vie aurait pu lier le fils du banquier millionnaire à l'enfant de la blanchisseuse pauvre. En effet, dans une période décisive de leur vie, tous les deux se sont déclarés socialistes et révolutionnaires, voulant servir le prolétariat. Le fils du riche bourgeois a dénié sa classe sociale et s'y est opposé; le fils de prolétaire s'est également éloigné de son milieu sociale, vu que ceci était le seul moyen de s'assurer les conditions indispensables à ses aspirations artistique et philosophique.

En revanche, on trouve des arguments plus importants en analysant ce qui les distingue sur le plan du goût artistique et des positions esthétiques. Tous les deux considéraient comme primordial l'*existence* de l'art et de la littérature. Leur vision du monde s'est construite se fondant sur l'esthétique. Nous devons donc de toute façon aborder cette problématique, même si, dans une première approche, ces différences semblent être les conséquences d'autres facteurs. La personnalité humaine n'est pas, en fait, une formation qui puisse être réduite à un « noyau » primitif. On ne peut guère se faire des illusions quant à l'existence d'une cause première susceptible de fournir toutes les explications. Elle est d'autant plus difficile à trouver dans le cas de ces deux personnages hors du commun. Si l'on veut expliquer leurs divergences, leur opposition qui persiste malgré les positions souvent communes, cette explication sera forcément une abstraction grossière. Abstraction qui – dans le meilleur des cas – contient pourtant une part de vérité et donne lieu à des conclusions générales qui montrent au-delà des contingences et des éventualités dues au tempérament et à la carrière de l'individu.

L'objectif que je me suis fixé dans cet exposé limité, c'est de parcourir les principales étapes dans les rapports entre Lukács et Kassák, étapes qui, au fond, coïncident avec celles de l'histoire de la Hongrie et de l'Europe, à partir des années 10 jusqu'aux années 60. Peut-être de cette façon parviendrons nous à la dite abstraction qui, tout en mutilant l'abondance infinie des faits, du moins ne les contredit pas et peut leur assurer une certaine cohérence intelligible.

La première étape où leurs aspirations auraient pu se joindre, c'était au milieu des années 10. Le premier recueil de Kassák, « Épopée dans le masque de Wagner » paraissait en 1915 et c'est en novembre de la même année qu'il lance la première revue d'avant-garde hongroise, le « Tett » (« Acte »). C'est aussi en décembre 1915 que Béla Balázs, un des amis les plus proches et l'allié littéraire de Lukács (poète, écrivain, essayiste et plus tard théoréticien réputé du cinéma) c'est mis à organiser le « Cercle du dimanche ». Il est notoire qu'il ne s'agit pas là d'un simple « salon littéraire » : la plupart des participants se sont acquis une réputation européenne dans leur domaine. (Je ne cite que quelques noms : Frigyes Antal, Arnold Hauser, Charles de Tolnay, János Wilde, historiens de l'art, tous; Karl Mannheim, sociologue et philosophe, René Spitz, psychologue; même Béla Bartók et Zoltán Kodály s'y rendaient parfois, sans parler de quelques personnages moins connus à l'étranger, ayant tout de même un rôle considérable dans l'histoire de la culture hongroise, comme Lajos Fülep ou József Révai.) Pour Lukács, c'était le premier véritable foyer intellectuel en Hongrie, car il avait des rapports contradictoires et peu favorables avec la revue « Nyugat » (Occident), la plus importante revue littéraire hongroise de l'époque. Kassák et ses fidèles partageaient l'avis de Lukács à l'égard de la revue Nyugat. Kassák admettait aussi que c'est la meilleure revue littéraire à l'époque quelquefois il y publiait même des articles, mais, en réalité, la conception de la littérature et de l'art qu'il représentait ne le satisfaisait pas.

Béla Balázs à qui il aurait beaucoup importé de trouver un foyer à l'intérieure de la vie littéraire hongroise, aussi pour s'assurer les moyens d'existence, témoigne ainsi dans son journal ses premières impressions qu'il a éprouvées en lisant la revue de Kassák, le 29. décembre 1915.

« Le « Tett » est une minuscule revue littéraire qui se vend dans des bureaux de tabac. Elle est éditée par Lajos Kassák, un pauvre diable, jeune, de talent médiocre, n'ayant même pas d'acointances. Comment il se débrouille ? 1. Celui-là s'administre soi-même. 2. Il a réuni autour de lui les plus jeunes poètes et critiques du « Nyugat » qu'il refutait pendant longtemps. Tant pis. Il se crée un milieu et un camp de fidèles. 3. Il se trouve que ces étourdis dont j'ai tant ri, ne sont pas tellement ridicules pour autant. Pour le moment, il ne sont encore que des étourdis, peut-être. 4. Ce qui compte le plus, c'est que leur vision du monde, leur *Gesinnung* s'est détournée du « Nyugat » pour s'orienter, d'une façon inconsciente peut-être, vers moi. Ils sont contre l'impressionisme pleurnicheur et la décorativité dépourvue de sens. Quoi- qu'ils ignorent ce qu'ils veulent. Et si cela pouvait être une fois un terrain *pour moi*, un camp à moi ? Je devrais les contacter. »

On voit que Balázs sous-estime nettement l'autonomie de l'orientation des jeunes

avant-gardistes. Il pense qu'ils s'acheminent dans la même direction que lui et sur ce chemin c'est lui qui avance en tête. Mais bientôt il doit se rendre compte qu'il s'est trompé. Quelques semaines plus tard, il écrivait dans son journal : le 22 janvier 1916.

« L'éditorial du numéro suivant de « Tett » s'adressait à moi. Ils m'ont fait savoir que je n'avais rien à voir avec eux. Ils sont futuristes, les hommes de « l'action » qui entendent améliorer ce monde et nient la légitimité de la vie de l'âme. Ils ne savent pas ce qu'ils disent, mais de tout ce papotage décousu il ressort clairement une chose, c'est qu'ils n'éprouvent aucune affinité à mon égard, et qu'ils ne m'acceptent pas. D'ailleurs quelques-uns d'entre eux sont doués bien que pas mûrs et de mauvais goût. »

Peu après, en suivant le débat qui se dégageait entre le Tett et le Nyugat (ou pour mieux dire entre Kassák et Babits), il parvient à la conclusion que Lukács, lui aussi, pouvait tirer au même moment : « il existe une vie littéraire hongroise, vive et intensive, dont je suis totalement et irrémédiablement exclu. » Lukács, bien entendu, observait le globe hongrois d'un position trop élevée pour faire de pareilles tentatives d'approche. Pourtant, il a dû voir que Kassák, ce « pauvre diable » avait réussi là où, quelques années avant, lui et ses amis, des gens beaucoup plus cultivés, mieux formés, disposant de moyens pécuniaires suffisants, avaient subi l'échec. (Au moment de la fondation de la revue philosophique intitulée « Szellem » (Esprit).) Et quelle que fût son opinion sur la valeur de certaines publications parues dans le « Tett » et plus tard dans le « Ma » il devait sans doute admettre qu'une nouvelle voix autonome a surgi dans la littérature hongroise, une nouvelle voix, indépendante, qui ne devait sa naissance à aucun compromis fait en faveur des conditions sociales de l'époque et des tendances intellectuelles dominantes.

Nous ne possédons pas de document écrit témoignant de la position de Lukács par rapport aux avant-gardes naissantes. Cependant le simple fait que dans le gros volume de ses écrits de jeunesse, le nom de Kassák n'apparaît pas une seule fois, nous dit beaucoup sur son attitude. Il est évident qu'il s'est engagé sur un chemin différent de celui des avant-gardistes encore qu'il ait souhaité, lui aussi que l'art dépasse l'impressionnisme et qu'il ait également tenté à se construire une vision du monde reposant sur des fondements théorétiques solides. Une vision du monde qui permet de sortir de la situation actuelle qu'il nommait, d'après Fichte, « l'époque de la culpabilité absolue ». Son ami de jeunesse, le philosophe Ernst Bloch caractérise avec justesse sa conception de l'art qu'il avait à ce temps-là. (L'interview a été réalisé par Michael Löwy en 1974.)

« D'ailleurs, une fois déjà dans le passé il avait montré un instinct peu sûr, à propos de Paul Ernst. Comme vous vous souvenez, dans son œuvre l'Âme et les formes il compara Paul Ernst avec Sophocle : comment cela est-il possible ? C'est son néo-classicisme et, voyez-vous, ce néo-classicisme du jeune Lukács – que je n'ai pas suivi – s'est nommé ensuite « marxisme orthodoxe », composé lui aussi seulement d'ordre, ligne droite, adoration de la beauté grecque et des constructions *Kitsch* de Staline à Moscou, etc. »

Même s'il est exagéré de dire que Lukács aurait aimé l'architecture du « baroque

stalinien » (nous connaissons quelques remarques virulentes qu'il avait faites à ce sujet), il est hors de doute que ce pathos de l'ordre, ce principe de la cohérence et de l'homogénéité mené jusqu'au bout qui servaient de base aussi bien pour la conception de l'art de Lukács que pour sa philosophie, n'étaient guère un terrain convenable à la réception des œuvres de Kassák. Dans l'interview mentionné, Bloch se réfère à un exemple concret :

« Ces différences entre nous se sont ensuite développées dans notre discussion sur l'expressionnisme au cours des années 30. (...) J'ai été à Munich en 1916 et j'ai découvert les œuvres du groupe *Blaue Reiter* qui ont fait sur moi une très grande et très profonde impression. Or Lukács, lui, les méprisait, les désignait comme produits des « nerfs déchirés d'un tzigane. » (...) C'est alors que j'ai commencé à douter de la justesse du jugement de Lukács. »

Les conclusions du philosophe allemand aboutissent à la constatation du fait que le refus porté plus tard par Lukács à des écrivains tels que Joyce, Brecht, Kafka et Musil, résultait directement de ce jugement de sa jeunesse : « il les classifia comme l'art décadent de la bourgeoisie et rien de plus. »

Comme on le voit, dans cette période il s'agit plutôt d'une indifférence et d'une incompréhension mutuelles que d'hostilités. La fameuse confrontation s'est déroulée pendant la République des Conseils. On peut affirmer et sans exagérer, que ces quelques mois avaient déterminé les rapports des deux hommes jusqu'à leur mort. D'autant plus que les expériences de la dictature du prolétariat dont ils dégagèrent chacun des conclusions radicalement opposées, définissaient fondamentalement tout leur progrès intellectuel.

Il existe toute une bibliothèque traitant la volte-face de Lukács, c'est à dire son passage d'un coup dans le camp des communistes. Ce qui nous intéressait c'est plutôt la façon dont Kassák se comportait envers le mouvement ouvrier et le communisme. Les volumes de son autobiographie « La vie d'un homme » portant sur les révolutions nous dessinent une image nette sur ses positions à l'époque. A ce moment-là il est déjà éloigné depuis longtemps de la stratégie politique, l'idéologie du parti social-démocrate et la conception esthétique qui en résulte. Les communistes, il les attend sans préjugés, mais sa déception qu'il avait éprouvée en rapport du parti social-démocrate, il l'interprète de sorte qu'un vrai artiste ne doit se joindre à aucun parti – même pas à celui dont la politique lui est proche. Il dénonce la démarche des quatre écrivains qui quittent le groupe du Ma pour s'adhérer aux communistes. « C'est l'éthique humaine et non pas le règlement de parti qui doit définir notre mouvement. Que se soient nos propres lois inhérentes et pas une discipline imposée de l'extérieur qui nous retiennent dans les rangs des militants. » En fait, il attribue la volonté du ralliement à ce que ces écrivains manquent un peu d'initiatives. « Ils seront capables de devenir des organes exécutifs bien fonctionnant » – déclare-t-il. Il se nomme socialiste, il refuse à la fois d'être considéré comme social-démocrate ou communiste. « Moi, je suis lié au mouvement par l'éthique et non pas par la discipline du parti » – telle est sa conviction.

Mais revenons un peu à la déclaration de Lukács, citée au début. Quels étaient donc les motifs de sa « haine » pour Kassák ?

« Je n'appréciais jamais beaucoup la poésie de Kassák, mais lorsque j'ai adhéré au parti, Kassák était déjà là, s'agitant à la façon des bien-informés et je le reconnaissais absolument pour un écrivain communiste... Ensuite Kun et les autres ont été arrêtés. Tout d'un coup on a pu lire dans la revue de Kassák : dire qu'ils étaient communistes n'est qu'une calomnie, Kassák, il est pour la révolution éternelle, indépendant de tout parti ou de tout groupement humain. A ce propos je savais déjà à quoi m'en tenir. Et plus tard, le 21 mars (jour de la proclamation de la République des Conseils) lorsque Kassák souhaitait redevenir poète officiel du communisme ; alors là, c'était déjà trop dégoûtant, mon estomac bourgeois-radical n'en pouvait plus, et dès lors je considère Kassák comme un emmerdeur et je le déteste. Il désirait toujours devenir poète officiel de la Commune. Moi, je m'y étais radicalement opposé. A mon avis, la Commune n'a pas besoin de poète officiel, il faut par contre que chaque tendance qui peut être tolérée dans le communisme se réalise en liberté et si une idéologie arrive à se faire valoir, alors qu'elle se fasse valoir ! D'autre part, j'ai toujours défendu Kassák et son groupe chaque fois que les sociaux-démocrates ou la bureaucratie syndicale voulaient les réprimer. Je n'ai jamais permis qu'on les réprime mais je ne supportais pas qu'ils s'imposent comme artistes officiels du régime. »

Or, ce que dit Lukács sur la politique culturelle de la République des Conseils, correspond évidemment à la réalité historique, avec une seule restriction : c'est que cette politique culturelle, bien qu'elle n'ait pas favorisé, de fait, l'une ou l'autre des tendances, par le moyen d'interdictions ou de mesures prohibitives elle a tout de même recoupé l'aspect de la vie intellectuelle. Lukács en tant qu'adjoint du commissaire du peuple aux affaires culturelles, cherchait en fait à engager un grand nombre d'écrivains à travailler dans les organes récemment formés et à ne juger les productions artistiques qu'à partir de critères « purement artistiques ». (Kassák avait également quelques fonctions insignifiantes dans le cadre du Directoire des écrivains.) En revanche, ce que Lukács prétend par rapport au groupe Kassák, est à peine plausible.

D'abord, Kassák ne voulait jamais être « le poète de la cour » du communisme. Il avait bien le droit de se considérer comme sympathisant des idées communistes, puisqu'il en avait déjà plusieurs fois assumé la responsabilité, même avant la formation du Parti Communiste. Sans doute est-ce un fait du hasard, mais qui peut être interprété d'une façon symbolique, que Kassák vivait en « cohabitation » avec le Parti. Cette cohabitation, il faut la prendre à la lettre, parce que l'appartement où vivait Kassák n'était séparé que par une porte des locaux du Parti. Mais c'était lui qui y avait emménagé le premier et c'est le Parti qui est venu habiter chez lui. L'affirmation de Lukács, notamment que la revue *Ma*, en apprenant l'arrestation des chefs communistes, se serait pressé de se désolidariser d'eux, s'avère fausse. Même si nous prenons un peu de distance par rapport à ce que Kassák écrit dans son roman, c'est-à-dire qu'ils auraient voulu se charger de la rédaction du *Journal Rouge* au moment des arrestations (bien que ce ne soit pas tout à fait exclu), ils nous faut constater qu'ils ne prirent pas position contre le Parti devenu illégal pour quelques semaines.

Kassák, lui, a souligné déjà en décembre 1918 dans son article : *Nous suivons notre chemin* : « Nous sommes pour un art socialiste, tout en précisant une fois de plus que nous ne nous soumettons à aucune directive venant de l'extérieur. » Remarquons que, dans cet écrit, les significations des mots « communiste » et « socialiste » tendent à se confondre. « Nous vous saluons dans le communisme ! » – s'adresse-t-il au lecteur à la fin de l'article ; mais il pense à un communisme où le rôle de l'artiste n'est pas identique à celui de l'agitateur du parti.

Dans le numéro du 26 janvier de la revue *Ma*, un des collaborateurs, Árpád Szélpál reprend encore cette question sous le titre : *Art révolutionnaire ou art du parti*. Il écrit :

« L'art, c'est qu'on se situe dans le cosmos par l'intuition: et par la suite, on en fait une image sensuelle et symbolique.

L'art révolutionnaire c'est quand la synthèse se fait à partir d'une volonté de changer, de pousser plus loin les visions du monde actuelles et de les remplir de contenus de plus en plus progressifs.

L'art du parti, c'est quand la synthèse se fait à partir d'une volonté visant à réaliser un programme pétrifié dans un parti. »

Puis il y ajoute, tout à fait dans l'esprit des déclarations ultérieures de Kassák :

« L'artiste, le vrai, n'a jamais accepté un programme de parti, c'est lui qui avait créé un programme, une vision du monde pour lui-même et pour l'univers ; mais dès l'instant où il l'a créé, le voilà qu'il le nie, pour un autre, plus progressif, qui, à son tour sera aussi à dépasser. »

Il est possible qu ce ne soit pas cet article que Lukács avait en vue ; c'était plutôt une conférence de Kassák, tenue le 26 février 1919 et publié le 10 avril dans la revue *Ma*. Les idées fondamentales de cet essai qui porte le titre *Activisme* n'était guère sympathique aux yeux des dirigeants de la dictature, dont Lukács. Mais cette conférence ne reflète aucun changement de direction dans la pensée de son auteur qu'il approfondit plutôt en le concrétisant. Tout d'abord, Kassák précise qu'il n'a aucun doute quant à la nécessité de la dictature du prolétariat; mais lui et ses collaborateurs se sentent obligés de faire la critique de cette même dictature, évidemment d'un point de vue opposé à celui de la réaction. « En effet, la dictature est une formation politique à double tranchant, comme toute les formations du pouvoirs établies pour elles-mêmes. » Ceci dit, elle peut devenir réactionnaire à tout moment. « L'idéal du soviétique » des dirigeants actuels représente, vu les intérêts de la révolution, un organisme du pouvoir conservateur; car il est nécessaire que les partis, après un certain temps, fassent obstacle au chemin de la révolution. C'est l'art qui a pour tâche de s'écrier le premier « Vive la révolution » dans le cas où un des partis tue la révolution pour son propre intérêt. On peut supposer que la thèse de Trotski sur la révolution permanente a exercé une certaine influence sur la pensée de Kassák. Mais il est trop évident que sa théorie de l'art révolutionnaire toujours se renouvelant avait pour source, d'une part l'expérience des avant-gardes européennes et, d'autre part, sa propre personnalité en état d'effervescence continue.

Un mois plus tard, un autre membre de son groupe déclare : « Les artiste de la re-

vue Ma se sont refusé à servir la société bourgeoise et ils n'accepteront pas de servir la dictature du prolétariat non plus. » Comme on sait bien, la série des « déclarations d'indépendance » s'est terminée par la lettre ouverte de Kassák, adressée à Béla Kun, laquelle a été publiée aussi comme un imprimé à part. Le chef de la dictature, dans un discours prononcé à l'Assemblée Nationale du Parti, avait qualifié l'art de Kassák et son groupe comme « le produit de la décadence bourgeoise ». Dans sa réponse Kassák assurait Kun qu'il le respecte, en tant qu'homme politique, parmi les plus grands mais en même temps il a exprimé ses doutes sur sa « compétence artistique ». En éclaircissant l'attitude de sa revue à l'égard de l'idéologie communiste, il soulignait : « Chez nous, la vie n'a pas pour but la lutte de classes, car celle-ci n'est qu'un moyen de parvenir à l'homme absolue, dont la seule manière de vivre est l'action révolutionnaire. » Ce texte et surtout sa parution passait alors pour un acte illégal, qui exigeait donc pas mal de courage. Et même si l'auteur n'en avait pas subi les conséquences, sa revue, tout comme plusieurs autres, a été supprimée sous le prétexte d'un prétendu « manque de papier ».

Or, contrairement aux souvenirs de Lukács, ni Kassák, ni ses collaborateurs ne cachaient pas leurs réserves vis-à-vis de l'idéologie du parti communiste, ni avant, ni pendant la dictature. Les déclarations citées ne nous donnent guère l'impression, que Kassák aurait voulu devenir artiste officiel de la Commune et introduire, pour ainsi dire, sa propre petite dictature se supplantant aux autres tendances.

Cette accusation est venue de la part des sociaux-démocrates qui ont mené, pendant la dictature, une attaque dans la presse contre le groupe Ma. Avec des arguments minables, pratiquant une démagogie de quatre sous, ils s'acharnaient contre « les fous échappés de la revue Ma », dont les œuvres étaient qualifiées totalement incompréhensibles pour « tout ouvrier syndiqué ». Alors le Journal Rouge, l'organe du Parti communiste s'est rangé du côté de Kassák, en déclarant que la propagande de la revue Ma n'était pas une propagande gouvernementale et que Kassák était un écrivain « honnête ». Mais Lukács oublie de mentionner, que cette offensive était lancée contre lui-même et Béla Balázs autant que contre les avant-gardistes. L'activité du Ma n'était qu'un prétexte pour attaquer la politique culturelle des communistes. Aussi Lukács ne dit-il rien du fait que cette politique culturelle n'était pas capable, en fin de compte, d'empêcher la suppression du Ma.

Dans la partie intitulée *Commune* de son roman autobiographique Kassák décrit la fameuse scène qui s'est déroulée entre lui et Lukács. Selon Kassák, Lukács était d'avis que les fonctionnaires devaient aller au front parce qu'il trouvait que l'agitation politique menée auprès des soldats était une tâche d'importance primordiale. « Nous aussi nous sommes obligés de faire un sacrifice » – aurait-il dit. Lorsque Kassák osait exprimer son désaccord sur ce point, le philosophe-commissaire du peuple, le visage défiguré par la fureur, aurait sorti un revolver de sa poche, comme argument final qu'il s'est mis à agiter sous le nez de l'écrivain. Si nous trouvons ce détail du roman un peu caricatural, sans doute est-ce la conséquence de ce que la relation des deux hommes devenait très tendue à cette époque-là. Cette scène symbolise leur rupture finale. Lukács, dans les dernières années de sa vie, niait qu'il ait voulu envoyer Kas-

sák au front: à l'en croire, s'il avait appris que Kassák voulait y aller, il l'aurait empêché de partir. Peu importe que cette épisode se soit déroulée de cette façon ou non. L'essentiel c'est que Kassák a bien exprimé la nature de leur conflit. Lukács n'était communiste que depuis quelques mois ; les catégories de son époque pré-marxistes, comme p. e. « le sacrifice » ou « le service » jouent encore certainement un rôle important dans sa pensée. Voyons ce que Bloch en dit :

« Le Parti communiste a été pour Lukács la réalisation d'une vieille aspiration ; dans sa jeunesse, il avait voulu entrer dans une monastère: le parti était un remplaçant pour ce désir secret. Il était attiré par le catholicisme non comme système ou doctrine, mais par le mode de vie, la solidarité, l'absence de propriété, l'existence monacale si opposée à celle de la grande bourgeoisie à laquelle il appartenait... »

Et si l'on pense à ce que, par la suite, Lukács s'est vraiment décidé d'aller au front et en tant que commissaire politique – seul exemple dans l'histoire de la République des Conseils –, il a fait fusiller huit (selon d'autres sources six) soldats d'un bataillon qui avait cherché à fuir devant l'ennemi – alors, cette scène décrite par Kassák perd beaucoup de son caractère caricatural.

Après la chute du gouvernement révolutionnaire, et l'écrivain, et le philosophe sont obligés de prendre le chemin de l'émigration. Mais leurs conflit ne s'apaise pas pour autant, il s'intensifie (en premier lieu de la part de Lukács). Nous en possédons un document. Lukács a écrit un article non-signé dans le journal du Parti communiste édité à Vienne, *Le nouveau mars* (en novembre 1926). Il n'est pas inutile de nous arrêter un peu à cet article qui, d'une façon quasi concentrée, englobe tout les arguments proclamés contre Kassák jusqu'à nos jours par ses critiques marxistes ou lukácsiens. Au début, nous trouvons deux citations en devise, qui ont pour but de suggérer les intentions de l'auteur. D'abord c'est la phrase cynique devenue fameuse d'Ignotus, critique libéral de la revue Nyugat, et qui dit : « Je ne partage pas mon opinion »: Lukács fait accompagner ce bon mot d'une phrase de Kassák détachée de son contexte : « il n'y a pas un mot de vrai dans ce que je dis ».

Il qualifie Kassák d'être le « Mitläufer » du mouvement communiste. Ce mot allemand veut dire « comparse », un homme qui fait nombre, qui revient toujours, dont on ne peut pas se débarrasser. Donc, Kassák n'est pas seulement un « compagnon de route » (pour recourir à un terme fréquemment employé plus tard au mouvement ouvrier) mais en même temps, il représente un obstacle pour la classe ouvrière. Il diffuse des idéologies erronnées, des idées nuisibles. C'est un homme de faible caractère qui se présente toujours comme le véritable représentant de la révolution, mais qui se recule aussitôt que la « conjoncture » de la révolution se trouve ébranlée.

Bien sûr, ce qui intéresse Lukács, ce n'est pas le fait que Kassák « manque de caractère personnel ». Cet écrivain, dit-il, est né dans l'époque de la dégradation totale de la société bourgeoise en Hongrie. La consolidation de l'époque anti-révolutionnaire lui convient à nouveau (allusion faite à propos du retour de Kassák après sept ans passés dans l'émigration), car il est arrivé à une attitude qu'il imputait au Nyugat au début de sa carrière comme le plus grand péché notamment qu'il conçoit son art en tant qu'art « pur », art pour l'art. Aussi condamne-t-il l'art du prolétariat révo-

lutionnaire (à quelle sorte d'art est-ce que Lukács pouvait penser ?) au nom de l'art « pur », exempt de toute tendance et dénonçant donc avec rigueur tout contenu révolutionnaire et tout moyen d'expression révolutionnaire. Lukács aboutit à la conclusion finale : supposer que Kassák n'ait pas été tout à fait étranger à la cause de la révolution prolétarienne, ce n'était qu'une « déception optique ».

Sa poésie dans l'émigration exprime « l'égarement de l'intelligentsia petite-bourgeoise » et son incapacité de comprendre les événements. A quoi donc est-il dû, l'effet qu'il avait tout de même exercé dans les rangs des jeunes intellectuels de gauche ? « En règle générale » – explique Lukács – « pour les intellectuels, le chemin vers la révolution conduit par une étape de déclassement. (...) Ils sont déjà détachés de leur classe, sans être encore enracinés dans la classe ouvrière ; » C'est ce sentiment de dépaysement qui les pousse vers Kassák. Cependant, ceux qui ont déjà dépassé cette étape, ceux qui ont compris à fond les leçons du communisme, et le mouvement ouvrier révolutionnaire, ont tous rompu avec Kassák, « ce dernier représentant, sans doute doué, mais sans doute décadent de la société bourgeoise en pleine décomposition ». Voilà les phrases qui reflètent l'époque héroïque de la « langue du bois » du mouvement. Elles nous évoquent inévitablement les discussions, au cours desquelles les participants, l'un après l'autre, se qualifiaient de « dernier rempart de la bourgeoisie pourrissante ». Nous pouvons nous rappeler aussi les paroles de Bloch :

« Sous l'influence du parti son horizon est rétréci, ses jugements étaient obéissants et marqués du sceau des *apparatchiks* ; son échelle de valeurs éliminait, détruisait et méconnaissait tout ce qui n'était pas homogène avec les *apparatchiks* de Moscou... » Le cas de Lukács, bien sûr, n'est pas si simple que cela et cette fois le jugement porté par Bloch n'est pas tout à fait juste, puisque nous connaissons la lutte que Lukács menait pendant les années de son séjour à Moscou, contre l'idéologie et l'esthétique du stalinisme, au nom d'un marxisme sans doute différent du stalinien. Et si l'on apprécie l'esprit de suite de Kassák, il faut qu'on fasse autant dans le cas de Lukács, car on a vu qu'il avait l'aversion pour l'avant-garde déjà dans sa période pré-marxiste.

Jusqu'à la fin de la dernière guerre mondiale, lorsqu'il s'est enfin retourné en Hongrie, il se tenait de même sur la négative chaque fois quand il se prononçait sur les œuvres de Kassák. En 1928, il fait remarquer que face à l'*homme nouveau* de Kassák, abstrait et vide de sens, la solution n'est pas l'éternel humain qui n'est pas moins abstrait et moins vide pour autant. En 1939, il accuse Kassák de se cantonner dans la « tour d'ivoire » pour y prêcher son « inutile révolution éternelle ». En 1944, il le décrit comme une personne dont l'activité visait toujours à obscurcir « les intérêts authentiques du prolétariat ». Nous ignorons comment Kassák avait réagi à ces affirmations, mais il est facile de s'imaginer ce qu'il en pensait.

Lukács ne se réconciliait avec le vieux avant-gardiste même pas après son retour en Hongrie. Dans les années de la coalition, entre 1945 et 1948, il trouvait encore que Kassák « faisait, une fois de plus, un obstacle à la révélation de la vérité ». En 1947, à l'occasion du 60^e anniversaire de Kassák, ses fidèles ont publié un recueil d'hommages. Lukács et Balázs, en fonction de l'esprit de la politique du front populaire,

s'y exprimaient aussi. Balázs souligne que le rôle de Kassák était d'une importance historique, car avec lui « une nouvelle voix européenne, partant de l'Occident venait retentir jusque dans le cœur de la poésie hongroise ». Lukács se trouve dans une situation difficile, parce qu'il doit louer Kassák pour la circonstance. Il finit par admettre que l'apparition de Kassák sur la scène de la littérature et de l'art hongrois était, certainement, un acte révolutionnaire, mais il revient encore à son opinion bien connue, notamment que la notion de la « révolution chez Kassák se dégradait en une révolution de la forme et souvent même, quant à son contenu, en une révolution éternelle ». Son œuvre ne s'élevait pas jusqu'à la hauteur que Gorki a atteinte, toute fois elle reflète la vie de ceux qui « ont survécu à l'époque antirévolutionnaire sans détérioration humaine et intellectuelle ». « C'est la déjà quelque chose qu'on ne doit pas sous-estimer » – ajoute Lukács. On ne peut pas dire qu'il ait sur-estimé les œuvres et la vie de Kassák – c'est notre conclusion que l'on peut tirer ce texte. En tout cas, nous ne pouvons pas encore, à ce temps-là, nous douter de ce qui suivra après : la deuxième « emigration » intérieure, cette fois-ci, de Kassák, durant encore 7 ans. Il ne quittera pas le pays, mais il se retrouvera expulsé de la vie littéraire, dépourvu de moyens de publication. (Bientôt Lukács sera, lui aussi, une « persona non grata » dans la politique culturelle.)

Si aujourd'hui nous alignons Kassák parmi les plus grands personnages de la revue *Nyugat*, c'est grâce à son identité intransigeante, son indépendance, son attachement à l'autonomie de sa personnalité. Dès le début de sa carrière d'artiste il savait que la liberté ainsi interprétée est la condition indispensable à toute création artistique. Il se mettait à écrire un journal intime en 1955, après un long silence paralysé. Ce document traduit sa fidélité à soi-même et à l'idéal du socialisme. Il savait bien que son socialisme est un socialisme particulier, individuel qui ne peut pas être détaché de sa personnalité. « La pensée philosophique de ma jeunesse était que tous les maux et tous les biens résident en moi » – a-t-il écrit dans son roman. Cette attitude quasi magique déterminait son rapport avec l'art et la politique à la fois. « Et ma littérature et ma politique, c'est moi à cent pour cent » – dit-il. Pour Lukács, ça devait être à peine plus que de l'individualisme bourgeois ; citons donc quelques idées recueillies dans le journal de cet intellectuel petit-bourgeois, d'autant plus que le nom de Lukács apparaît plus d'une fois dans « Meule de foin » (titre de ses notes réunies).

Kassák qui se rapproche de ses 70 ans, fait apparemment un bilan tout en communiquant son opinion sur la situation actuelle. Il fait entrer en ligne de compte ce qu'il a gardé de sa jeunesse et de ce qu'il devait surpasser. « Le fait que je peux me considérer comme révolutionnaire, n'est pas dû à ma nature excitée, inquiète, mais à ce que je dénonce avec mon meilleur sens certaines choses du monde, l'arrangement souvent méchant, mais toujours imparfait de la société humaine. » Pourtant, l'accent est mis sur la construction et non pas sur la destruction dans ces notes ; « la révolution n'est que le déblayage rationnel des complexes et des inhibitions matériels et intellectuels. »

Toujours considère-t-il comme nécessaire « la décomposition par violence », « la négation sentimentale et rationnelle » des lois artistiques figées. Car ce n'est pas là

« un processus en soi se réalisant pour soi », « mais une des possibilités d'expression (sans doute profondément humaine) de l'équilibre social perdu ». En même temps il est d'avis que notre époque (n'oublions pas, nous sommes au milieu des années 50) est au-delà de l'étape révolutionnaire et, par conséquence, un véritable artiste peut être capable d'intégrer l'harmonie dans ses œuvres. L'harmonie chez lui n'est pas, bien entendu, une réconciliation avec la réalité. « J'ai toujours pensé que la force vivante et la puissance des œuvres d'art dépend du mélange convenable (et heureux) des éléments réels et irréels, c'est-à-dire leur harmonisation. (...) jamais je ne voulais m'accomoder aux règles de la poésie académicienne, mais, dans tout mes poèmes, j'ai fait des efforts pour serrer le monde dans le poing, pour montrer les mille faces des choses, pour que l'affirmation et la négation se fassent entendre dans une seule et même composition, bref, pour que toute la mer inépuisable se trouve insérée dans une goutte d'eau. »

On voit vraiment que Kassák se rapprochait d'un certain genre de « classicisme » bien qu'il n'ait pas renoncé à l'expression de la diversité intérieure des choses. Par conséquence, ce « classicisme se trouvait encore bien loin du « pathos de l'ordre » observé chez Lukács.

Certes, son rapport à la politique se modifiait moins que son *ars poetica*. Il restait fidèle, dans ce domaine, à sa devise, formulée dans les années 20 : « Dieu, si tu existe, nous te prions au nom de nous-même et de nos enfants de nous libérer de nos sauveurs ! » Se sentant toujours proche des idées communistes, il n'a jamais cru, contrairement à Lukács, qu'une théorie ou un parti politique ait été capable de sauver l'humanité. Voyons sa mise au point concernant le comportement à suivre à l'égard des dirigeants communistes de tous temps : « mon devoir, ce n'est pas de leur servir, de partager le pouvoir avec eux, mais les suivre avec une profonde attention pour la bonne cause et, quand je peux et ou je peux, élever ma voix contre leurs jugements inhumains, leur isolement orgueilleux et leurs erreurs bienveillantes. »

Vu ce qu'on a développé jusqu'ici, on s'étonne probablement que ses déclarations faites sur Lukács peuvent être qualifiées malgré tout, pourtant comme respectueuses. D'après lui, Lukács, tout comme son ami, l'écrivain Tibor Déry, n'est pas communiste selon les exigences actuelles du parti et ne pourra jamais l'être. Lukács, dit-il, « a beau philosopher et de faire de l'éloquence en faveur des dogmes du parti, lui-même sera toujours incapable d'être communiste, du moins dans le sens des déclarations et de la méthode staliniennes. « A ses yeux, la préface de Lukács aux nouvelles de Thomas Mann n'est pas digne ni de l'âge, ni de l'érudition, ni des capacités de l'auteur. » « Effectivement, je pourrais dire que l'itinéraire de Lukács est d'une signification et d'importance symbolique. Il a quitté le chemin qui conduit à l'exploration et à l'approfondissement de l'Idée et s'est mis au service des profiteurs de cette même Idée. » La constatation exagérée, faite par Lukács, notamment que Thomas Mann est l'écrivain de la santé et du socialisme, relève, pour lui, du subjectivité arbitraire. « Qu'on définisse et qualifie le caractère réaliste d'un écrivain par ses seules positions politiques, je le trouve aussi être une conception dépourvue de sens et même contraire aux intérêts proprement dits de l'art. » Il fait remarquer en même temps que Lu-

kács pourrait exprimer ce parti pris d'une façon beaucoup plus pertinente que lui. « Lukács sait bien de quoi il s'agit, mais il regarde le monde dans deux directions à la fois et, s'il faut, il peut parler de la même chose tantôt dans un sens, tantôt dans un autre. »

François Fejtő a saisi excellentement l'ambiguïté de la conception lukácsienne de la liberté, dans un essai paru en 1961. Il écrit: « ...durant toute sa vie, la liberté n'a cessé de le hanter, comme une nostalgie, comme un remords. Ce n'est pas lui qui ignore le mot de Hegel: l'essence de l'esprit, c'est à dire de l'homme, est la liberté. » « On le sentait tourmenté par l'idée que le marxisme est peu de chose s'il n'est pas l'instrument du « déploiement de toutes les virtualités de l'homme » (Hegel), une praxis subordonnée à l'idée prométhéenne de la libération permanente. Mais il continua à résister, opiniâtrement, aux tentations de la liberté, absolue, utopique, en se bornant à plaider, auprès des bureaucrates du parti, la cause de la tolérance, du libéralisme, comme correspondant à une tactique – en fin de compte plus rentable que la terreur. « En édifiançant le socialisme de manière plus humaine, nous servirons plus efficacement son triomphe international – déclara-t-il. »

Aussi Fejtő souligne-t-il que Lukács se tenait toujours à ses principes: « lui, il est resté fidèle, pour l'essentiel, à ce qu'il a toujours été depuis 1923 ». La liberté pour Lukács, c'est dans le service volontaire d'un système d'idées qui, de loin, dépasse l'importance d'une vie individuelle; en revanche Kassák (comme un poète de nos jours a écrit de lui) « toujours, en toute circonstance, ne voulait faire son salut qu'à sa manière ». Lukács était-il vraiment « hanté » par la nostalgie de cette autre idée de la liberté, appropriée à l'individu, comme le suppose Fejtő? Qui, peut-être. Peut-être regardait-il avec une hostilité insurmontable l'activité de Kassák parce que celui-là incarnait quelques-unes de ses aspirations plus profondes, refoulées, de sa personnalité.

Est-ce qu'il nous faut choisir entre les deux destins, les deux conceptions de la liberté? Il serait dépourvu de sens de jouer l'arbitre dans ce procès historique. Il est trop évident que, dans la situation actuelle du monde, en s'édifiant des expériences historiques du XX^e siècle, les choix de Kassák nous semblent être, la plupart du temps, plus sympathiques. Il serait tout de même déplacé d'essayer de réconcilier ces deux sortes de stratégies individuelles, mais aussi serait-il erroné de nous décider unilatéralement en faveur de l'une ou de l'autre. Au fond, elle ne sont pas seulement négations réciproques et se supposant, mais, par leurs valeurs éthiques, ils peuvent se compléter tout en restant contradictoires. Au lieu de porter un jugement, contentons-nous de dire que ces deux destins, ces deux esprits conséquents *constituent ensemble* l'expérience plein de conflits, jamais harmonieuse, de la liberté dans notre siècle.

THE RECREATION OF THE NATION – ORIGINS OF THE HUNGARIAN POPULIST MOVEMENT

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The interwar years in Hungary were a crucial period of social, cultural, and political transition. The partition of the Hungarian state after the Treaty of Trianon, in which both the territorial nature of the country and the psychological climate of its citizens had been drastically changed, demanded a rethinking of Hungarian national identity. For small groups of young intellectuals, both within and without Hungary's new borders, this was a period of intense questioning of traditional values and structures.

The new generation of university youth, their prospects for the future drastically diminished by Hungary's reduced size and status, were particularly affected by the tensions and conflicts within their socially stratified society; a society struggling to adjust to radically altered conditions. The uncertainty of their future was matched by uncertainty about the future of the nation; the "Magyar sorskérdés" or question of Hungary's fate. With several million Hungarians living outside the new borders, the very nature of "magyarság" (Hungarian-ness) came into question.

Searching for their Hungarian roots and their role in society, they turned to the villages, believing that here they would find an original Hungarian culture, the key to Hungarian identity. As they became aware of the problems of the large Hungarian agrarian proletariat, their movement turned from a romantic search for "roots" into a search for solutions to the economic and social plight of the agrarian poor.

Until quite recently there has been little historical analysis of the populist movement because of the political sensitivity of the subject. Populist reform methods, including the creation of an independent self-confident peasantry, were rejected by the Communist regime after 1948. Today, as Hungarian leaders search for alternative routes to reform, there is renewed interest in the ideas and methods proposed by populist writers, particularly the so-called "third way", a unique Hungarian road to reform.

Hungarian scholars usually speak of the populist "writers' " movement, referring to the activities of a number of influential writers in the 1930's who attempted to awake the literate urban population to the problems of Hungary's agrarian proletariat. These men of diverse background and views had indeed a powerful influence on the literate public in the late 30's and early 40's. Yet my research has convinced me that the writers were only the most visible part of a much broader movement beginning in the 1920's – a movement of young intellectuals to remedy the deep cleavages in Hungarian society through social and economic reform.

The origins of the movement can be traced to several small youth groups in the 1920's, radically different in composition and goals from the prevalent national student organizations.

In the second half of the 1920's a new type of youth organization was started..., which never became widespread, never took over the whole intellectual youth, never replaced the dominant student organizations which held the life of the university youth movement in their hands, but was still of lasting influence.¹

The activities and interaction of three youth groups; the St. George Scout Circle, later Sarló, formed among the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia; the Youth of Szeged, started by refugee students from Transylvania; and the Miklós Bartha Society in Budapest, founded by recently graduated refugee students from the lost territories, exerted a dynamic influence on Hungarian students and writers. Of primary significance were the unique aims and activities of the Sarló group, whose village exploring and village research program, widely publicized in Hungary at the end of the 1920's, created a model to be followed by young intellectuals in the 30's.

The future leaders of the Sarló movement were children at the time of the Peace Treaty of Trianon. Growing up in the newly established nation-state of Czechoslovakia, they were caught between two cultures. At school and in public they sang the new Czech national anthem: "Where is my home, where is my country". In their scout troops and in church they prayed for God's blessing on the Hungarians.² In their awakening self-consciousness as adolescents, they had to find a way out of this confusing duality, to decide where they belonged.

As the Czechs attempted to unify their multi-national population after the Treaty of Trianon and create a Czech national identity, the Hungarians were a suspect minority. The approximately one million Hungarians who came under the rule of the newly formed Czechoslovak state, openly opposed separation from Hungary and never accepted the new boundaries as anything but temporary.* To the Czechs it appeared a reasonable security measure to remove all Hungarians from state employment, even those in the predominantly Hungarian areas.³

The majority of the Hungarians who left Czechoslovakia after the change of governments were of the upper and middle classes, most who had been employed in the public sector; judges, administrators, teachers; even postal and railroad workers.** The elimination of this politically most conscious and articulate group seriously impaired the ability of the remaining Hungarian minority to function. They left behind them a predominantly agricultural population, stretched out in a ribbon of towns and villages along the new Hungarian border. Called the highlands, the area had been an integral part of Hungary. The inhabitants had no independent history as a region to unite them, as did the Transylvanian Hungarians in Rumania, and no natural center. The new generation of youth came of age in a vacuum of Hungarian leadership.

* Statistics on the number of Hungarians remaining in Czechoslovakia are disputed.

** Ibid., p. 48.

The formation of the personal identity and career goals of the new generation were dramatically affected by their position as a minority. They were fiercely conscious of their Hungarian identity. Yet they faced two contradictions. Legally they were Czech and not Hungarian citizens. Ethnically the Hungarians were a mixed group, the result of centuries of blending of Hungarian and various other ethnic groups who had absorbed the Hungarian culture and language. The older generation still identified with the 1,000 year old Hungarian Kingdom in which Hungarian culture was prized. The younger generation, the Hungarian Kingdom only a memory, were under pressure to forget their Hungarian culture. They needed new guidelines to establish their identity.

Their minority status created bonds between the members of this socially mixed new generation, uniting them to a degree unfamiliar in Hungarian society. The loss of lands and position of the former so-called "ruling classes" eliminated many of the social barriers that had divided them before in Hungary's strongly class-conscious society. As adolescents, facing similar contradictions between public and private life, differences in rank and social standing, so important to their parents, seemed inconsequential.

Edgár Kessler-Balogh, one of the organizers of the Sarló movement, described the transformation in his life when his father, a former officer in the Imperial Austrian Army, lost his position. The family lived from his mother's meager earnings as a teacher, and "I became a skinny adolescent, afflicted with lung ailments and *weltschmerz*", until a former gym teacher started a boy scout troop in 1921. The scouts, with its democratic spirit, "released me from a bunch of restrictions... As long as my father wore the uniform of the Imperial Austrian Army I was considered a 'young gentleman' and was invited to the formal teas at the governor's... When I became a boy-scout I became a brother to all those children who had never been invited to the governor's, the sons of middle-class lawyers, merchants, teachers, artisans".⁴

It was within the framework of Hungarian scouting that the Sarló leadership developed. During this time of flux, many youngsters found a refuge in the revived Hungarian scout units. The pedagogical ideas of scouting—self-reliance, peer leadership, learning activities in small independent groups—were well-suited to this generation—often at odds with their fathers' ideas. Seeking their role in society and believing that they had been selected to play a special role in history, they found fulfillment in the romantic ideals of scouting. The idea of service to humanity and the brotherhood of mankind gave substance to their sense of mission.

Jenő Krammer, teacher to a number of Sarló members, wrote:

Anyone who writes the history of the minority in the interwar period must examine separately the role of the Scouts. While Hungarian institutions were paralyzed, the scout movement was able to ignite the souls of Hungarian youth. The scout spirit, the requirement to be a more humane human, struck the youth of the post-war period as if it had been created for them.⁵

The organization of Hungarian scouting in Czechoslovakia was severely hampered by lack of official recognition from the Czech authorities. Individual troops found ways to function, usually under the auspices of the so-called "middle school", which included grades five through twelve. The movement thus excluded all of those Hunga-

rian youth whose schooling ended with elementary school. By June 1921, troops were already functioning in ten different towns.⁶ There were 689 Hungarian scouts in 1922 of whom 106 were girls, roughly one-sixth of the Hungarian middle-school students in Slovakia.*⁷ Considering that at the same time there were 5000 scouts altogether in the Czechoslovak Scout Organization and 4000 in Hungary, this was a significant sum, but still only a fraction of the youth in the Hungarian minority.⁸

Scouting created a communal framework for the minority youth, not only through scouting bonds, but as members of a unique Hungarian community. The scout publication, *A Mi Lapunk* (Our Paper) established in January, 1921 for the Hungarian student and scout youth of Slovakia, partially filled the communications gap left by the absence of an official organization, giving advice on common problems of the minority youth, keeping scouts informed of local and international scouting activities, even providing a "mailbox" for exchange of personal notes. Editor Lajos Scherer brings out their common cause, repeatedly emphasized, in the 1921 May issue, explaining that whereas scouts in other countries receive assistance from the state, the Slovakian-Hungarian scouts must rely on their own strength.

The new generation began to develop a world view in marked contrast to that of their elders. The young people, growing up with students of other nationalities, learning their subjects in a language that their parents did not even understand, began to realize that one could not go back to the world before Trianon. The generation gap was illustrated by an incident recounted by Edgár Kessler-Balogh. Once when his scout troop, returning from a hike, met a group of Slovak scouts wearing the same leather caps and the same green ties, he happily greeted them with the special three-finger salute which he had learned to use to greet brother scouts. At the end of the hike, the visiting scout leader from Budapest reprimanded their young leaders for allowing him to greet Slovaks as brothers. To the young scout, the Slovaks were scouts like himself. To the Budapest leader, they represented the opponent.⁹

The necessity of facing the realities of life as a minority came upon graduation from gymnasium. The Hungarian institutions of higher learning in Slovakia had been moved to truncated Hungary in the first years of the Republic. Not recognizing the Czech universities, Hungarians had sent their sons to university in Hungary, only to find that it was very difficult for the graduates to find suitable employment in Czechoslovakia.

It was members of the graduating class of 1924, Sarló's future leaders, who were the first to consider entering university within the Czech Republic. Since few of them knew Czech or Slovak most elected to go to Prague or Brunn to study in the German-speaking universities. A small brave group registered at the nearby university of Pozsony (Bratislava), where the language of instruction was now Czech.

* According to newspaper reports there were 538 Hungarians among the 7233 students in the 38 Slovakian middle schools (language of instruction Czech); 3028 Hungarian out of 3431 students in the twelve middle schools with instruction in Hungarian; 138 Hungarian speaking students in the three German middle schools. Thus altogether there were 3704 Hungarian-speaking students in middle school in Slovakia in the school year 1922/23. *A Mi Lapunk*. February 1, 1923. pp. 29-30.

The university experience cemented another bond among the young intellectuals. Away from the familiar home environment, uniformly poor and struggling with the language, they sought out their compatriots. Zoltán Boross, son of a county judge, was one of those few students who registered to study law at the university of Pozsony. His father, who had never mastered Slovak, encouraged his son to study in the language of the majority. A stranger to the city, Boross could understand nothing in his first weeks of classes. After some time, Hungarian friends took him to the Toldi Club where they held their Saturday evenings discussions. It was here that he first met Edgár Kessler-Balogh and heard of the formation of the St. George Circle.¹⁰

Kessler-Balogh was one of the number of Hungarian students who matriculated at the University in Prague. The students from the various Hungarian towns of Slovakia, universally poor and struggling with the language, were a social mixture—most of peasant background but some from the former gentry and intelligentsia. Kessler-Balogh and a friend roomed in an old house equipped with a petroleum lamp but no water. Fasting once a week and eating in cheap eating places, he contracted scurvy by the end of the first year.¹¹

The Hungarians were not the only strangers at the university. Prague was filled with refugee students: Russian and Ukrainian emigres, Armenian refugees from Turkey, Jews and other groups from Poland. Student life had come to be organized by nationality groups, since Czech and German organizations took care of the scholarships, dormitories, and clubs for their own students. After a time the Hungarian students also started to organize. Their first organization, the "Hungarian University and College Students of Prague", was formed in May of 1925 to "cultivate the Christian spirit and Hungarian culture, and for the financial support of its student members".¹²

Also during the spring of 1925 the St. George Circle senior scout troupe was formed by Kessler-Balogh and three Hungarian scout friends. Since the Slovakian-Hungarian Scout organization still had not received official recognition, the group was formed under the aegis of the "Studentsky Domov" Czech senior scout club. A Mi Lapunk announced the formation of the senior scout circle and the scouts two goals: mental and physical excellence, and the use their strengths in the service of society.¹³

The small group spent much time in their Saturday night meetings discussing the Hungarian minority problems that puzzled them. What was Hungarian culture? What did nationhood mean? How could the Hungarian minority continue to hold together? They agreed on the importance of solidarity among the minority, and began their efforts to unite the Hungarian youth in Slovakia. That summer Kessler decided to get to know the villagers who formed so much of the minority Hungarian population. He persuaded scout friends from Pozsony to join him in hiking through the countryside. Near the end of their tour as "guests" of the villagers, they were inspired by a group of German "wandervogel", who had had great success in entertaining the children of a German village group. They decided that they too would become "friends of the villagers".

In the fall of 1925, the St. George Circle had devised a plan to take the Hungarian scouts out into the countryside to make contact with the villagers. They decided to hold

a contest among the Hungarian scout groups to hold "story-telling afternoons" for village children. The contest was announced in the scout publication, *A Mi Lapunk*, their only means of communication with the scattered scout troops. Scouts would compete in storytelling for the village youth—their "neglected village brothers". Winners would be announced in the paper and receive prizes. Specific directions were given for the conduct of the "storytelling afternoons" including the number of children to invite, where to meet them, and what kinds of story material were suitable.¹⁴

The first results of the contest were modest, but *A Mi Lapunk* continued to report the successful "story-selling afternoon" which continued after the contest, spurred on by the symbolic title awarded to the most zealous story-tellers, "regós" or "minstrel", recalling the services carried out by wandering minstrels during the Turkish occupation, who carried information to the Hungarian settlements.

A significant step in the growth of the fledgling movement was the scout camp called by the St. George Circle in summer of 1926 for all Hungarian scouts in Czechoslovakia. All scout troops were asked to send representatives to the week-long meeting at Liptószentiván in order to create a "united Hungarian scout way of thinking in the Republic".¹⁵ The St. George Circle, which now had a second branch at the University at Brunn, hoped to transform the traditional self-contained scouting movement into a specifically Hungarian movement reaching out to the people, particularly the minority youth who were not part of the middle-school scouting population. Representatives from scout troops in seven cities adopted the idea of a "village friends movement" and agreed that the scouts should cultivate their Hungarian roots from the villages. Symbolically the St. George Circle scouts abandoned the Baden-Powell traditional leather replacing it with the Hungarian "Bocskay" cap.¹⁶

The participation and approval of university and middle-school scouts at the Liptószentiván camp immeasurably strengthened the small core of university students in the St. George Circle. In August the senior scouts from Érsekújvár and Pozsony together experimented with "regós" or minstrel wandering as a new form of Hungarian scouting. In groups of four they visited Hungarian villages, relying on the villagers' hospitality for food and lodging, and trying to make friends with the villagers, especially the children. One specific task was to recommend children's books and magazines for the village library. After the successful experiment they began to make detailed plans for more extensive "regós" wandering in 1927.

They hoped to extend the new program into middle-school scouting, encouraging the students to get to know the villages and the real conditions of life. The senior scouts hoped to revive the traditional middle-school "self-improvement circles", once intended to meet students' interests, but now – under the leadership of conservative middle-school teachers – concentrating on Hungarian patriotic literature. A Sarló member, Lajos Jocsik, explained the problem. The middle-school teachers, mainly from their fathers' generation, had grown up during the patriotic "Petőfi" years of the last century, and could only see the Hungarian future in terms of patriotic verses. Left out were the pressing social questions of the Hungarian minority. Jocsik found that under the existing type of teaching, one couldn't even talk about social problems in the self-im-

provement circles, and "the coming generation of students lose any feeling for the problems of today's life".¹⁷

The "regős" movement was quite successful in arousing the interests of the scouts. A poem, published in the scout paper in December, called them the "regős" students, a name which quickly caught on. In an article in the paper's January issue by the St. George Circle, the "New Year Regős Students" emphasized that scouting had grown so strong in the cities, that they could now turn to organizing village youth. An article by Zsigmond Móricz, well-known Hungarian writer, in the March 1927 issue of *A Mi Lapunk* entitled "Hiking is Good", inspired numbers of scouts to spend part of their summer vacation hiking through the countryside.

During the summer of 1927, the senior scouts carried out an extensive program of "regős" wandering. The existing branches of the St. George Circle in Brunn, Érsekújvár, and Prague, had been strengthened by the addition of a Pozsony group. Their mobility facilitated by organization in small groups, senior scouts visited more than fifty places in the countryside. Hiking through the villages they recorded ethnographical materials in their notebooks in order to preserve what they perceived as village traditions: interesting peasant farming terminology, superstitions, designs of wood-carvings, and painted tulip patterns on peasant chests.¹⁸

Throughout 1926-27 as more and more university and middle-school scouts took part in village activities, the expanding movement also gained public attention. In the Hungarian language paper in Prague, the "Prágai Magyar Hírlap", the popular young poet Dezső Győry began a public debate over the crisis of the traditional scouting movement, awaking the older generation to the new ideas developing within the youth group. The debate became a heated one. Some scout leaders questioned the village activities. Middle-school teachers were particularly concerned, since the "regős" movement had upset the activities of the traditional "self-improvement circles". A battle began in which the teachers, trying to protect their students from exposure to social problems, objected to their participation in village exploring. Finally, in the summer of 1928, the middle-school scouts were forbidden to take part in the "regős" activities.¹⁹

By 1928, the conceptual framework and aims of the St. George Circle members had begun to crystallize. At a scout camp called at Gombaszög from August 3rd to 13th, they declared publically the goals of their "Hungarian" scouting movement, with themselves as the new generation of leaders. The flags flying over the camp symbolized the transformation of the movement. On one sixteen meter flagpost, the St. George Circle green lily scout banner; on the other flagpole, the sickle (sarló), the "regős" symbol of Hungarian peasant power.²⁰

Rezső Peéry's words of greeting carried the message to the fifty assembled middle school, apprentice, and university scouts through the camp publication, "Vetés" (Sowing):

Lads, we have gathered together to harvest, to gather in our crop of three years. From Prague to Beregszász our crop waves [in the wind], proud, hard, firmly golden, but thinly sown... We cannot, we must not stop now, not to rest, not to enjoy our accomplishments. We harvest only for the new seeds.

The St. George Circle's camp at Gombaszög is the great compressor of our movement—a strong declaration of the new Czech–Hungarian generation's consciousness of its peasant roots, preparations for the building of democracy, and intellectual ethnic unity—so that after the harvest, with new strength we can spread the prepared seeds, with a marvelous vision of new larger sowing fields and billowing bronze colored Hungarian seas.²¹

The expansion of the *regős* program was a key element in expressing the “new Czech–Hungarian generation's consciousness of its peasant roots, and preparations for the building of democracy”. A “*regős*” school was held to explain the development of the new scout practice of going to the villages. Edgár Balogh explained that originally, going to the village youth to bring them culture, the scouts had found that the village had much more to give them through the cultural treasures of the people. Gradually the idea had developed of the cultural and social regeneration of the city scouts from the united strength of the Hungarian people. Eventually, through the practice of going to the villages – and contacts between scouts and village youth – a new Hungarian intelligentsia would develop with a democratic history.²²

At campfire discussions, a number of social issues to be addressed by the scouts were discussed including Hungarian workers unity and social problems, the legal position of the Hungarian scouts, village hygiene, modern Russian literature and the peasant conditions.²³ The *Sarló* flag was voted by the scouts to be symbol of *regős* movement, proclaiming the birth of a Hungarian scout movement with its roots in the people.²⁴

The students, now known as *Sarlós*, determined to broaden their village exploring with ethnographical and sociological work, conducted only by university students using scientific methods. When prevented from visiting the village in 1928, the *Sarló* groups turned to self-education seminars to learn the subjects that had been missing from their school curriculum: Hungarian history, Hungarian culture. The Hungarian university student organization in Pozsony set up a “Hungarian Scientific Seminar Organization” with specialized groups in law, medicine, liberal arts, and teacher training.

The first semester program, written up in a third issue of “*Vetés*” to help the Prague and Brunn students set up similar seminars, emphasized the role of the young people whose duty it would soon be to work in the villages. In writing about health problems in the Hungarian villages, Mihály Csader wrote of the need for new social thinking in educating the new generation of doctors. Young doctors did not need to live in the city but should turn to the villages to solve their problems of alcoholism, tuberculosis, and venereal disease.²⁵

In the session on the duties of young teachers in the village, the need for social renewal was discussed with an emphasis on Hungarian culture. The two most powerful weapons of the new generation of teachers, according the Béla Forgách, were the modern pedagogical reform and knowledge of the social sciences, which could be used for the benefit of the people.²⁶ In 1929 *Sarló* expanded its program to Hungarian worker youth, organizing separate groups for young workers and young agricultural laborers.

The students, now known as “*Sarlós*”, resumed their “*regős*” wandering in 1930, now with ethnographical and sociological research. They developed sociographical

questionnaires to gain a more scientific knowledge of the people, the medical students putting together 100 questions on people's health, and another group composing questions on the incidence of "colonial and class exploitation". In the summer of 1930 the completed research of four groups was compiled with the intention of publishing a collective work.

The activities of the St. George/Sarló group had reached a wide audience by 1930. The accounts of their first attempts to reach out to the people in A Mi Lapunk had been followed in intellectual circles in Hungary. Sándor Karácsony, a prominent educator and writer, took the idea of "regós" wandering from the St. George Circle to use with his scout troop.²⁷ Count Pál Teleki, statesman and honorary "Chief Scout" of the Hungarian organization, followed the village exploring activities closely. Both Dezső Szabó and Zsigmond Móricz, popular Hungarian authors, corresponded with the St. George Circle/Sarló group and wrote articles for A Mi Lapunk. In his visit to the St. George Circle in 1927, Móricz praised the intellectual quality of A Mi Lapunk, explaining that he and his daughters read it eagerly each month. On his return, Móricz wrote enthusiastically about the dynamism of the movement.

Starting in 1928 through their cooperative activities with the Bartha Miklós Society (BMT), news of their activities reached an influential group of university students and graduates. The society, one of the "new style" youth movements, had been founded by recently graduated students, refugees from the lost Hungarian territories, concerned with the problems of the remaining minorities. Influenced by the Sarló youth and their new leader, Dániel Fábián, the attention of the society turned to more general social problems within Hungary as well, and a number of prominent young intellectuals joined their circle, including several of the later populist writers.

The first contact between the two groups came through László Vass, a student from Slovakia studying at the renowned Eötvös Kollégium with several of the BMT members. The son of a village coachman, Vass had become friends with Zsigmond Móricz while in secondary school in Debrecen. On joining the BMT, Vass initiated a "Zsigmond Móricz 25th anniversary celebration" in the spring of 1927 which attracted a large number of students. That spring, Vass accompanied Móricz on his visit to Slovakia, meeting the members of the St. George Circle for the first time, and returned to take part in the declaration of "Sarló" at Gombaszög. Named Sarló's ambassador in Budapest, Vass spoke enthusiastically of Sarló's endeavors and circulated their articles to the elite student groups in the Eötvös Kollégium and the Pro Christo Diákok Háza.²⁸

In 1928 Edgár Kessler-Balogh studied at the University of Budapest, and with Vass became active in the BMT. Together the two helped to organize a second student celebration in memory of the poet, Endre Ady, revolutionary hero to youth. Balogh was asked to leave the country by the authorities a few days before the celebration, but the collaboration continued. The BMT took up the problems of the agrarian poor in their lecture series, and together with Sarló published several issues of the publication "Új Magyar Föld" (New Hungarian Soil) which publicized the activities and concerns of the Sarló group.

The high point of their cooperation, and also the last, came with the March 15, 1930 celebration of the 1848 Hungarian Revolution for independence, a traditional student holiday. The Sarló group had become convinced that the Hungarian minority problem could only be solved within the framework of a Danubian Federation of Peoples. They sent two emissaries to Budapest to place a wreath at the statue of Hungarian patriot Sándor Petőfi, the wreath with Hungarian national colors, but also with ribbons in the colors of the Czechs, Slovaks, Serbians, Croatians, and Romanians—celebrating their idea of the fellowship of the Danubian Peoples. Their action forbidden by the authorities, two other emissaries laid the wreath on the grave of Mihály Táncsics, accompanied by members of the Miklós Bartha Society.

The so-called "wreath affair" raised a storm in parliament, the debate prompted by social democrat representative István Farkas, who questioned the minister of the interior on the reason for forbidding the wreath laying.²⁹ Much of popular opinion was summed up in the answer of another representative: "Would the Czechs allow it if they put a Hungarian wreath on Masaryk's statue?"³⁰

The issue was publicized by the press throughout Europe. Hungarian conservatives accused the Slovakian Sarlós of betraying Hungary's efforts to regain its territories. Czech leaders applauded the students' idea of cooperation among the peoples of the Danube area. Sarló members were banned from Budapest and the Sarló action condemned by the conservative youth organizations for being anti-Hungarian. Only a small group from the Bartha Miklós Society supported them, breaking away from the organization.

The "wreath affair" marked the beginning of Sarló's decline. During the next few years the Sarló movement also split, as some of the members led by Edgár Balogh, became increasingly involved in the communist movement. As the members completed their studies, the ever-present problem of securing employment in Czechoslovakia became a greater concern. By 1934, when László Vass was imprisoned by the Czechs on charges of conspiring against the Czechoslovak state, and Edgár Balogh was forced to leave the country, the Sarló movement had ended.

Still, the impact of Sarló on the Hungarian intellectual community continued. Although the Sarló members were "persona non grata" in Hungary, leaders of youth movements such as Dániel Fábíán of the BMT and György Buday of the Szegedi Fialatok were free to visit them in Slovakia. In 1930 the leaflet "Out to the Village", written by Dániel Fábíán and the poet Attila József, had a strong impact in convincing university students to explore the villages. The "go to the village" movement was taken over by Hungarian scouting, and the sociographic research by university youth groups in Hungary.

By the mid-30's young populist writers in Hungary were beginning to expose the misery of the agrarian proletariat, shocking much of the literate urban population. Young intellectuals in the late 1930's, increasingly concerned with the need for internal reform, became active in the effort to create a leadership elite from among the agrarian population. "Folk High School" (népfőiskola) sessions for young adult villagers were started in Reformed Church schools during winter break, and quickly spread

throughout the country. Their aim was to encourage within the students a sense of pride and self-confidence in their own abilities.

University graduates lived, ate and slept with the villagers on an equal basis, breaking down ingrained social barriers. Seminars encouraged students to participate in debate and formulate their own opinions. Lectures by populist writers stressed the importance of Hungarian culture within the villages. Newspapers and workbooks for agrarian youth gave advice on proper social behaviour. A cartoon lesson in a workbook for Catholic Youth, trying to change social habits signifying inferiority, shows the young peasant that it is not necessary to bow to the ground when greeting a gentleman. "The self-confident young man simply inclines his head, even before his superiors."³¹

During the early war years in Hungary, with desperate attempts to find a third way between fascism and communism, folk high schools multiplied throughout the country. An effort was made to enroll talented village youth in university courses, and in 1940 a College for students of peasant origin was established in Budapest. A new concept of the nation was evolving, based on the renewal of Hungarian society through the creation of a socially mixed leadership, which would lead the Hungarian nation in a unique Hungarian road to reform. It is this concept, the so-called "third way", which is proving so attractive to Hungarian intellectuals today.

Notes

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2. László Dobossy: *Két haza között*. Magvető Könyvkiadó. Budapest, 1981, p. 9.
3. István I. Mócsy: *The Effects of World War I. The Uprooted: Hungarian Refugees and Their Impact on Hungary's Domestic Politics, 1918-1921*. Brooklyn College Press, 1983. p. 41.
4. Edgár Balogh: *Hét Próba: Egy nemzedék története 1924-1934*. Magvető Könyvkiadó. Budapest, 1981. pp. 14-15.
5. Károly Drien: "A Sarló pedagógiai elvei és aktív szerepvállalása a nevelő munkában" *Ez volt a Sarló*. Kossuth Könyvkiadó. Budapest, 1978. p. 232.
6. László Fogarassy: *Magyar cserkészmozgalom Csehszlovákiában 1919-1932., 1933-1939*. Unpublished manuscript. pp. 6-8.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Balogh: *Hét Próba*. pp. 18-19.
10. Zoltán Boross: *Interview*. Debrecen. 3/22/88.
11. Balogh: *Hét Próba*. pp. 19-20.
12. *A Mi Lapunk*. 1925. June. p. 93.
13. *A Mi Lapunk*. 1925. June. p. 94.
14. *A Mi Lapunk*. 1925. December. p. 166.
15. *A Mi Lapunk*. June 1926. p. 110.
16. *A Mi Lapunk*. 1926 September. p. 126.
17. Lajos Jocsik: "Vetés." III. p. 10.
18. *A Mi Lapunk*. "Regősjárás 1927-ben." 1927. October. pp. 155-157.
19. Imre Nagy. p. 118.

20. *A Mi Lapunk*. 1928 September. p. 167.
21. "Vetés" I. August. p. 1.
22. "Vetés" I. p. 7.
23. *A Mi Lapunk*. 1928 September. p. 168.
24. "Vetés" I. p. 7.
25. "Vetés" III. p. 11.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 14–15.
27. Interview. Zoltán Boross.
28. László Vass, Jr.: „Debrecentől a Sarlóiig”, *Hajdú-Bihari Napló*. 1985. March 11, 18, 25, June 2.
29. *Budapesti Népszava*. 1930. III. 20.
30. *A Reggel*. 1930. March 20.
31. *KALOT Munkafüzet*. 1942, October 25–November 25. p. 38.

A SELF-PORTRAIT

CARL RAKOSI

I was born in Berlin. My father had moved there from Budapest to go into a business manufacturing walking sticks, which every well-dressed man carried in those days. He had no money of his own to put in but he managed to find a silent partner who did and an active partner who knew machines and could run the plant. My father's position was to represent the firm and sell. He was immediately successful, not because of any extraordinary *savoir faire*, he explained, but because of the extraordinary rectitude of business practice. Everyone then, around the turn of the century, took integrity for granted and assumed that your product would be exactly as you represented it, no less, and that it would be delivered on time, and the merchant, in turn, paid you exactly what he said he would. Thus, all you had to do was to make a good product and the rest followed. It helped if it had some new, attractive feature, however, small, but it was not necessary. And since it didn't require salesmanship, it was a dignified occupation in which my father felt thoroughly at home. The rectitude suited his character to a T.

He was young then and on his way to a fortune, whereupon the partners, seeing how well the business was doing, bought him out. Thus, his own success led to his undoing. It was the one time in his life, he said, when he was almost a millionaire. He remembered these years affectionately and never tired describing them years later in Kenosha where he had a jewelry store. He would talk as he sat at his workbench fixing watches, a looped magnifying glass in one eye and the other eye squinting in sympathetic concentration, and I at his feet rapt in the glow of his recollections.

I can see it all: my father with his trim moustache and grey eyes and straight gentlemanly nose and fair complexion... looks, clothes, manner clean-cut... the voice big and resonant, unexpected in such a small man, and an air of utter integrity. An ideal Swede, as I imagined an ideal Swede might look. This man, Leopold Rakosi, setting out for the day, walks into a store with his sample case, introduces himself... educated Hungarians spoke an elegant German as a second language in those days... and hands the owner his card. The owner responds courteously, a sign that Leopold Rakosi is *persona grata* and can proceed, and Leopold Rakosi begins to show his samples, unhurried, dignified. Enough simply to show the merchandise. That is understood. The merchant could see for himself that the sticks were of the highest quality. The firm's reputation for rectitude stood behind every item. No need to say more.

Berlin with its wide, splendid boulevards shaded by trees, people out for a stroll in the evening (no motor cars yet), decked out in their best clothes, the men twirling their canes as they walked, the elegant carriages. Hadn't I heard of Unter den Linden? The Tiergarten? It was obvious that he admired that well-ordered, reliable society.

I have to remember that he was only thirty at this time and soaking up new experiences. He had one in particular which was in the nature of a revelation and forever changed his thinking. It happened somewhere near the Tiergarten, I think. A crowd had gathered around two speakers. He walked over to listen. One was a young man about his age. He was almost shouting, in order to be heard, about the terrible privations of the poor, working men included, the disabled, the homeless, the unemployed, the other Berlin portrayed years later by Käthe Kollwitz, urging his listeners to band together... in union there was strength... and join him. Force the government to improve their condition!

My father was all ears and became more and more excited, dazzled by the power of the words, moved in every cell by the speaker's deep moral passion, which he felt at white heat, and his commitment to a cause from which he himself could not benefit, and the realization came to my father then that this was the noblest thing a man could do... he could not conceive of anything nobler... to have a great cause, to be a spokesman, an advocate, a champion of the oppressed and downtrodden. He never got over that. There was awe in his voice, almost reverence, and a hush, and his face became transformed when he mentioned the names of the speakers, and I, sitting at my favorite spot next to his right elbow by the workbench, basked in the glow of his idealism. And when he went on about the brotherhood of man and the necessity for justice, his favorite themes, a wave of emotion surged through me and lifted me up, and I was glad. Not wanting to disturb the alchemy of the moment, I did not tell him that I knew very well who the speakers were, they were well-known in history, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg.

All his life my father was an idealist and a socialist at heart, and I'm afraid much of this has rubbed off on me.

He was born in Szilágymegeye, a village in Transylvania, the most ancient part of Hungary, the son of Barbara Mayer and Abraham Rozenberg, neither of whom I ever saw. "Father Abraham", the peasants called him, out of affection as much as teasing... he was their Jew... and because of something different about his appearance, something biblical, his tall, patriarchal bearing and long beard and that he prayed in Hebrew, the sacred tongue. He dealt in grain and when I heard from my father that the peasants, who distrusted Jews, also had great respect for him, I knew that he must have been extraordinarily honorable in his dealings with them.

"Father Abraham" had two sons and two daughters, all of whom moved to Budapest at an early age, as there was no future for them in a village. The eldest, Jacob, went first. He had attended a Jesuit gymnasium, probably because there was no other secondary school in the village, and had done so well that his teachers urged him to continue his education at the University of Budapest. But there was no money for this. Besides, it was very questionable whether, as a Jew, he could get into the University.

So the Jesuits agreed to underwrite the costs and Jacob converted, apparently as part of the arrangement. My father was deeply disturbed by this because nothing offended his moral sense more than a Jew giving up his religion and identity to become a Christian, especially for practical reasons. He avoided talking about it because he was very fond of his brother and looked up to him.

Jacob graduated with honors from the University and went on to teach philosophy there for many years. What must have been for reasons of expediency he changed his name to *Rákosi*, a variant of *Rákóczi*, Hungary's great national hero. With that, he ended once and for all his connection to the world of Szilágymegeye and "Father Abraham". In Budapest, however, it was not at all unusual for Jews to take on Magyar names, not necessarily because of expediency but because they had become Magyars in spirit and wanted Hungarian names to show it. It was he who, later, started the first movie studio in Hungary. The photograph he sent us of his wife, the country's most beautiful screen star, sent me into idolatry.

Towards my father he acted as a guardian. Knowing that my father would have to have some kind of a trade to make a living, Jacob arranged a watch-maker apprenticeship for him with a master craftsman in Budapest, a reputable Christian approaching retirement age. My father was only thirteen then. By agreement he was to work and learn under this master for the whole time, a period of seven years. In return he lived in the master's home, got room and board and pocket money, and agreed to behave decently, according to the life-style in the house. Living there, he came to feel like a member of the family, and the master felt the same towards him and looked out for his welfare.

My father found the regimen exacting and severe and too limited, but he wasn't complaining when he told me about it. When he was through, he had learned not only how to diagnose what was wrong with the most complicated timepieces and repair them but also how to make new parts from scratch, if necessary, on his lathe to replace the damaged ones. There was no such thing for him, therefore, as not being able to fix a watch, any watch. He was in control. By this time, you will guess, he had become a perfectionist, and that too, I'm afraid, has rubbed off on me. The severity became only a tiny memory towards the end, for when he too had become a master craftsman, he had also become a young man about town, enjoying the pleasures of Budapest, which sparkled in his telling like champagne. By this time he too had changed his name to *Rákosi*.

Now came a stretch as a hussar. *Stretch* is the wrong word but I can't find the right one, one which would express pure romance, for in a small, homogeneous country with a long history like Hungary, being a hussar was, in my father's memory, pure romance: the brilliant crimson braided coats slung gallantly over one shoulder, the swords, the proud, dashing horses, everybody knowing – wasn't it all the books and daily papers? – that the hussars were the finest fighting cavalry in all Europe, nonpareil.

My father, always attracted to spirit, did his best to live up to this standard. He became a crack shot with a pistol, able to split a playing card down the middle along its edge at a hundred paces, and never took an anti-Semitic slur or look from any man

without beating him down, and he had many stories to prove it. And I too have many stories to prove how I beat down slurs and deprecatory looks on the playground cast at me because I was small and looked slightly different, and bullies thought I would be an easy target. Bam! would go my fist at the first sign. It never occurred to me that I might lose. How could I? I was in the right. As I write this now, I realize the behind me was always the spirit of my father.

All this talk about him has made me run ahead of myself. Actually I have just been born. The address in *ein und sechzig Kommandant Strasse*, which pronounced in German sounds like a no-nonsense Prussian order not to be countermanded. The day in November 6, 1903; parents, Flora Steiner and Leopold Rakosi. I am in a very long room, so long that I can not see its end. There is very little furniture. The ceiling is very high and vast. There are shadows. The further away they are, the longer and heavier. There is no one there. I lie in my crib. All I'm aware of is that I *am*. And the silence. The silence is loud. No one comes. The silence is all there is. The nothing is oppressive. Hours go by and it becomes harder and harder to bear. There is no end. There is only the silence. And nothing. But beyond what I can see is something ominous looming.

This is not a dream; it's a memory, and I am bonded to it. It's a memory of no one being there and no one coming. A mother was not there. I'm sure.

I am bonded to the silence. Blessed silence in which poetry comes. Silence as my behavior, in which I say little and listen, always listen, in order to find out. That I do not mind. It has become my character. In it I find a strange, supernal ecstasy, related, it seems to me, to the magical inner quiet in a perfect poem, in the process of embodiment losing its supernal quality. Or to the absolute silence in the landscape behind the figures in some fifteenth-century Italian paintings, as if everything for some mysterious reason had stopped. Closer at hand the silence in Magritte's *A la Rencontre du Plaisir*. Here there is both absolute silence and absolute emptiness, compelling the spectator, in the spirit of the painting, to ask:

Mother, why is the sky overcast?
 Why is the building empty?
 Why is the ball there?
 Why is the ball so large?
 Who are the two men?
 Why can't we see who they are?
 Where are they destined?
 Why aren't they talking to each other?

I would be surprised if Magritte could tell you why he painted this picture this way. The reason is buried in his early experiences, as my own style, whatever it is, is buried in mine. The larger point I deduce from this is that any style, any aesthetic taste, originates in life experiences which long antedate any experience one has with the arts and which have nothing to do with them.

The same applies to those hushed moments in a Beethoven symphony when he ar-

rives at something mysterious at the center of things, the great forces all around held in suspension. This overwhelming quiet is explained and dismissed as inspiration. It would be more accurate to perceive it as a greatly enlarged artistic re-creation of an early experience, large and great in proportion to the imagination and inspiration.

I am also bonded, however, to the aloneness of that distant room, aloneness on a scale beyond physical bounds, the unbearable shadows in the distance, the bodiless, terrifying Something looming out there. That's always with me. It was there in the short story I started to write years ago. I started with where I was in the story, in an empty house, and as I went on to describe what was in the house, I felt myself being pulled further and further into its extremities until I was sure that just beyond the last, looming shadow I was going to encounter it. At that point I had to stop. I was too scared.

It's there in my meditation on *Christopher Smart*:

Yet I have been
 in the same presence
 alone at night
 in the forest,
 spellbound in the un/
 conscious
 where there is no
 perception
 of purpose
 universe.

It was there in a secluded farmhouse in Pennsylvania which a friend had loaned me to work in over the weekend. The drive from New York was sunny and uneventful. When I reached it, however, I noted that the nearest farmhouse was beyond sight. I was alone, and when the night came on, darker and darker, the daemonic spirit of the whole house, which my mind tells me could not be there, came down on me, and I fled in terror.

It is there to this day in my own apartment in San Francisco when I'm alone there at night and become aware of the unending silence facing me, and the aloneness creeps closer and closer to the moment when it will leap into a far greater aloneness, that utter aloneness in the universe, derived, I feel, from my aloneness and helplessness as a baby in that enormous room long ago. It does not help me to know this, however. The supernatural continues to have me in this thrall. It is not fear of anything physical, for I do not have this fear when anyone is with me, even a dog. This thrall affects what I like in poetry. Although I am a rationalist through and through, I am held in a similar thrall by the approach to the mystical in poetry, which seems to be in poetry's nature to express (to be *in* the mystical is to be in the occult and that is quite a different world). Another case example of what we mean when we say, literary taste is a personal matter, as against its being the product of one's literary influences.

In any case, I think now that it was my mother's inability to function as a mother which led to my parent's divorce, a thing unheard of in those days. I suspect she suf-

ferred from what was called melancholia then, and now deep depression, and that it was simply more than she could bear to mother my brother, Lester, and me, and finally even to be with us. It could not be ruled out even that my father and her parents thought that in her condition it was dangerous for the children to be with her and kept her out. How else can I explain never seeing her, even in Baja, Hungary, where we lived next with her parents, Rosalia and Samuel Steiner, until I was six, and never remember her ever touching me all that time?

I have considered other possibilities and have had to rule them out. The Steiners were a fine, upright couple, greatly admired by my father. The likelihood, therefore, of her being unfaithful in a small provincial town like Baja, where the Jews lived in their own neighborhood, was practically nil. Besides, she was extraordinarily beautiful, both my father and stepmother agreed, with rich black hair falling to her waist and very full, expressive dark eyes; the kind of beauty that my daughter Barbara too has, who at the age of nineteen won two beauty titles, Miss Minneapolis and Miss ROTC. Knowing my father, I'm sure only something as impossible to cope with as her melancholia and incapacity to function as a mother would have made him break with her.

Furthermore when her name came up in conversation, which was not often, there was never the slightest suggestion that they had been incompatible. On the contrary, he would stop a moment as if this was a special case and he had to find the right words for it, and his voice, and my stepmother's too, would become gentler than I heard at other times, and they would both look sad and sympathetic, as if what they would have said if they had not held back was, "Poor woman, because of a condition she couldn't help, she lost her two boys forever".

My father did not volunteer information on the subject, perhaps out of delicacy, not wishing to say anything against her, because he had nothing against her, and I never asked. It never occurred to me. She wasn't *in* my life, after all, and I felt no need to know. Beside, I would have been reluctant to make waves by asking something that might have been embarrassing all around and have led to other questions even more embarrassing, and who knows how destabilizing. In my later years when I was far enough away from these early events to be free of possibly suppressed feelings about them, I perceived what was basic and unchangeable in the situation, that we were of common stock and that I did have questions to ask about her whose answers might have restored some lost knowledge about myself. By that time, however, it was too late. There was no one left alive to ask.

The next thing I'm aware of after Berlin is that I'm in Baja, Hungary (if I were literary I would add, "a dusty, sleepy town on the Danube", but I don't know for a fact that it was that). It is 279 Fő utca. There is a fence in front of our house and a cobbled street. The street is usually quiet. Occasionally a troop of hussars rides by, their coming announced from a distance by the sharp clatter of the hooves on the cobblestones, and the kids rush outside to watch, all eyes, mouths agape. And once in a great while the street explodes. It's a rock fight between older, invading Christian boys and defending Jewish boys on the block. I watch but it's much too fierce for me. I'm only

a little kid then and it's as if the mighty forces of nature had broken loose and were rushing at me, and I run into the house. But my brother, who is five years older, is out there among the defenders and holds his ground, small as he is.

Back of the house is a large yard, and that's where the main action and the wonders are. I know them only in the summers when the heat induces a throbbing in the air, tiny heatwaves almost tactile. And a single high, perpetual note, a tone rather, too airy and pure to emit from an instrument, seems about to emerge... a sister note to singing, a fundamental tone under it... a zinging? ...yet imaginary like the fundamental bass in music.

It is summer, man's element, and nothing can keep me indoors. There's a large barn in the back that has a touch of mystery about it but I never go inside to investigate. The mulberry tree is more important. There all along its branches are planted caterpillars chewing the tree's leaves. At first nothing seems to be happening but if I watch patiently, I can see a thread of silk extruding by millimeters as slow as summer from its rear. I can't believe silk is coming out right in front of my eyes!

And chicken and geese wander around the yard. One goose is tied up and from time to time our maid goes over, forces its jaws open and shoves in a handful of corn kernels. Then she holds the jaws shut and with her other hand squeezes its throat and pulls downwards until the corn is too far down to be regurgitated. A peasant girl.

Then a moment I can't forget. She has climbed up on the swing and with her legs apart and skirts up, she swings back and forth relentlessly, and Lester stands facing her, looking up her legs, transfixed. Something electric is going on but I don't know what.

Throughout all this, I have a sense that my mother is somewhere around, somewhere in the back. It is persistent as the summer and hangs in the atmosphere, a vague rumor, slightly mesmeric. But I never see her.

Once a year at different times Grandfather Steiner's two sons visited us from Munich. They were now middle-aged but as young men they had caused my grandparents great heartache and worry with their carousing and sponging and squandering and shady deals, never willing to work. In desperation my grandfather, who had been successful in business, loaned them his reserve funds in order to put them into a business and set them on their feet once and for all. But they squandered that like everything else and were dishonest. This ruined him. He had no capital left with which to recuperate and in his last years had to start all over in a small store, repairing umbrellas.

This is when I knew him. What I did not know, of course, as a young child, was why he was always so somber and preoccupied. When Grandmother took me downtown through the darting, confusing traffic to visit him in the store, I was cautioned not to bother him but to just watch. There he sat at his workbench, like my father at his, bent over, repairing an umbrella.

As I was saying, when the Munich sons visited, they came with a large retinue of wives and children and presents for everyone... for Lester and me a large, extravagant box from that exciting foreign world of chocolates with various liqueurs inside. You

can imagine the excitement and commotion: my grandparents standing at the door, smiling and looking pleased, the welcoming, the embraces, but they were just going through the motions. There was an unspoken distance between us in which we could not move towards each other, for the sons after moving to Munich had converted to Christianity and married German wives, and the children were Christian and had always been that.

"Carl (Károly in Hungarian), meet your cousins", someone said.

We looked at each other. We were expected to feel something.

Grandfather had a third son, Károly, after whom I was named. He was the good son, a sweet, likeable man. He was youngest of the three and remained in Baja. Grandfather, however, was unlucky in him too. Károly lost his life in a building collapse before I was born.

There's not much more to recount. In Hungary the state regarded the Jews as a separate community and provided funds to them for education. Thus, there were Jewish public schools administered by the local Jewish community body. It was in one of these that Grandmother enrolled me when I was five. All I remember of it was the confusion of that first day, the older boys on the playground doing breakneck acrobatics on the trapezes, yelling and shouting back and forth, and finally tearing off in my direction to get back to class on time, so close that for a moment I had the sensation that they were going to run me down and trample me.

I remember too what I should not remember, it is so trivial. It is summer again. A Serbian workingman has just sat down on a bench to have his noon lunch and I smell something overpowering. He takes out a pocket-knife and holding a slab of smoked bacon in one hand, he slices it with the other the way one would slice a peach, and the way he slices his country bread too, and eats with gusto, a thousand years of peasant life... the peasant and his pig... behind him. Apparently the body has a memory not plugged in to the screening intellect because that aroma, which could not possibly be important, is still in my nostrils.

And finally there is my departure. I can not improve on what I have already written about that. I have never able to remember, even in analysis, what I felt as a boy of six when I parted from my grandmother. She had been my mother, but more gentle and kind than a mother. Her presence has always been with me. The eyes are sad and reflective, the face tired, beginning to show wrinkles, but the mouth smiles and an incomparable sweetness that is her character exudes from her, holding back nothing, and envelops me. She leans towards me, attentive, smiling, and I respond in like, as I had learned to do from her, also smiling, and inside me all is light.

Now my father had remarried and this woman had come to take my brother and me back with her to America, where I had never been. I do not know now whether I suspected that I would never see my grandmother again but I did know it was an important parting, yet all I remember of that last day is the hustle and bustle and a great silence and my extraordinary calm and robustness and spirit.

I found the explanation for this many years later in a passage of a book. The author was describing how the political prisoners in a Siberian detention camp during the Sta-

lin terror managed to preserve their sanity. "The main thing", she wrote, "was in a certain self-control: it was important not to think about the future. Expect nothing and be ready for anything. The only other thing was to scream, but no one would have heard".

With that formula I managed my transition to America quite well. But my poor grandmother, what was there for her to hold on to?

I can imagine the final moment. The bags are packed. We are all dressed, ready to leave. The time has come. All I am thinking of is the going and the necessity to act as if this were like any other day. She has suppressed her tears so as to make the parting bearable to me. I walk up to her and like my granddaughter Julie, also six at the time I wrote this, let myself be hugged and kissed with that self-possession and vigilance which protect children. And I leave without recognizing her grief or even acknowledging that this is a separation.

Forgive me.

I had a chance in 1980 to visit Baja when I was in Budapest to give a lecture to the PEN club on American poetry of the 1930's but chickened out. What happened was that when I told my host that I would like to see Baja again, where I had lived as a child, but would need an interpreter to go with me because I had lost most of my Hungarian, he looked blank, as if he couldn't comprehend why anyone would want to go there. Typical for a Budapestian, I learned later, but I didn't know it then. His look fazed me. What was wrong with Baja? What had happened? In any case, an interpreter who would be interested and have the time couldn't be found at the moment, so I let the matter drop. I told myself that I had done the right thing, that the Communists had probably changed all the street names and I wouldn't have been able to find my old house anyhow; that in seventy years the town would have changed so much that I wouldn't have been able to recognize it; and that the houses, like the great old public buildings in Budapest, would probably look terribly neglected and shabby. I was afraid what little I remembered of Baja would be demolished. But I don't know.

In that connection I have a story to tell. Before going to Budapest I gave a reading at Cambridge and visited with my friend Jeremy Prynne, most rigorous and intellectual of British poets. When he heard I was going to Budapest he gave me the name of a young man he knew there that he thought I would find interesting, Dr. Mihály Szegedy-Maszák. When I got into the city I called Dr. Szegedy-Maszák and told him about my lecture at PEN, and he said he would meet me there; he would be carrying a copy of *Amulet* under his arm so that I would be able to recognize him.

After the lecture, when he learned I was from Baja, he told me this. Years ago he had spent a year at Cambridge studying American poetry with Prynne. Prynne, who had been introduced to my work by Andrew Crozier, a former student of his, and had come to have a high regard for it, introduced his Hungarian student to *Amulet*, an early book of mine. Dr. Szegedy-Maszák subsequently returned to teach poetry at the University of Budapest and one year had a student who was similarly interested in American poetry, and he introduced him to my work. After graduation the student went to Baja to teach... my work, hopefully, among others. And thus I lie, cushioned, on the

bed of fantasy that I have become reconnected to my past in actuality because things of my making, of my self, therefore, objective *Doppelgängers*, have returned to Baja.

I was now in the hands of the woman from America whose mission was to take me safely to my father, whom I didn't remember ever seeing, and she looked as if she had every intention and the competence to do so. All I had to do was listen to what she told me to do. At six, with nothing between me and what was now going to happen, there was nothing else I could do, and I did it.

Our first stop was Budapest, where Lester and I were outfitted with new clothes. Then Vienna where, for a treat, we sat in an outdoor cafe and had pastry and coffee under an equal layer of whipped cream, which I was urged to drink because it was so special to the city. Our next stop was our point of embarkation. Was it Bremen? Hamburg? Rotterdam? I don't remember. It was a city so congested and bustling that I was glad to board ship.

We went second-class. I remember Lester leading me down a forbidden flight of stairs to see what it was like in third class. It was more crowded there and the talk was thicker and louder and more of it, but otherwise not different that I could see. We tried also to see what it was like in first-class, what the rich people looked like and what they were doing, but the steps were barred to that deck.

The only other thing I remember is throwing up night after night at the dinner table on the clean white tablecloth, and my father's wife... I didn't think of her yet as a stepmother... rushing me outside. It must have been a trial for her but she didn't reproach me. She just handled it efficiently. It was her responsibility, she had taken it on, and she went about it with what I was to learn later was her characteristic common sense.

Then an enormous excitement seized the ship. Everyone was out on deck, babbling away, and looking out into the distance. I had trouble seeing anything but I finally did. It was the Statue of Liberty. After much tooting from small vessels all around and men scurrying and shouting, the ship docked and the next thing I knew we were on Ellis Island.

There, into what looked like an enormous, barren barracks, the immigrants poured and stood around, waiting nervously in their best clothes to check out their papers and to go through the required medical examination, and it hit them head-on for the first time that no one knew exactly what state of health they had to be in order to pass. The room became all waiting and tension, and in the suspense they all burst out talking at the same time, relating dread stories about people they knew who had failed to pass and had been sent back.

Our guardian was worried too. She was worried about Lester. He was small and skinny and a hunchback. A medical examiner might well think he was a poor risk. Her face looked tight and anxious. We waited. We heard it could take weeks. Finally our names were called. Our guardian explained to the examiner that Lester and I spoke no English, and he asked her a few questions, examined Lester carefully, then me, less carefully, and waved us on. At the immigration desk the officer looked down on me and smiled kindly, and we passed through.

Was my father outside to meet us? I don't remember. Our destination was Chicago, where he had a position as master craftsman with Moore and Evans, a large wholesale jewelry firm, where he was assigned to work on returned, complicated timepieces difficult to repair.

How did I learn English? I haven't the faintest idea. It occurred as if one day I didn't know a word of it and the next day I was speaking it like everybody else. Only one small incident marred the process. A kid on the playground made fun of my accent. In a flash I was on him and chased him into the schoolhouse. I don't think he expected that.

The plan was not to remain in Chicago but to open up a jewelry store in some town nearby, where competition was less fierce. Moore and Evans was willing to supply the stock on credit, and my father had saved up enough for store rent for the first few months. During that time, he figured, he would be able to bring in enough from repairing watches to support the family. With that in mind, he opened up a store in Gary, Indiana, which was booming then.

Gary's school system was better than you'd expect in such a rough steel town. That was because it happened to have a bold, innovative superintendent at the time who assigned children to grade levels not on the basis of age but mental ability. Thus, one day I was sent to a room I had never seen before and given a test; I had not the foggiest notion why. The next day I was called out of class to the principal's office and told I was going to be moved ahead a grade. I couldn't understand it. Then a month later, the same thing, another grade ahead. I had no difficulty doing the work in the upper grades, but now everybody in the class was two years older than I, and that did make a difference in my life because henceforth everybody in class would always be two years older and bigger and I would always be two years younger and smaller, even at the university.

I think my father would have done all right in Gary... in fact, if he had stayed long enough and bought a few lots, which were selling for under a hundred dollars then, he would have made a fortune... but he thought he could do better in Kenosha, Wisconsin, and we moved there. That was his last move.

I grew up in Kenosha and have been affected by its particular Middle-West character... industrial, some sixty miles from Chicago, on the southwest shore of Lake Michigan, which we could see from our front window, population 50,000, heavily German and Polish, and the way of speaking that goes with that.

Our house was a house of daily scrimping and worry because of the nature of my father's business. As I said, he had started in Gary with only a credit line from Moore and Evans. He earned enough from his watch repairing to provide us with food and part of the other necessities; he could depend on that, but he never knew whether he would sell enough jewelry to provide for the rest and pay his bill at Moore and Evans on time. As long as I knew him, when that time approached, my father and stepmother would stop everything else and absent themselves for days, trying to figure out how they could pay that bill, where the money was going to come from. It was all worry. They usually made it, but just barely.

Sometimes they would have to ask for an extension, and those were the most anxious moments because their credit was at stake. If they lost that, they were finished. In good times, what was left over after paying Moore and Evans was put into enlarging the stock to attract more customers, and in the best times, into putting up a new building with a more attractive store and with living quarters for us upstairs, a saving in the long run. All very nice, but now on top of the constant debt to Moore and Evans there was a monthly mortgage payment to make. Thus, no matter what happened, there was never anything left over for the family. And it was in the nature of the situation that there couldn't be. A jewelry store in a working-class neighborhood could never bring in enough from sales to be able to accumulate the capital for moving to an expensive downtown location where there would be a chance for greater profits.

There was the additional worry that years of concentrated use of his eyes on minuscule watch parts was bringing on symptoms of glaucoma in my father and we didn't know when he would lose his sight and have to stop work entirely.

This is what had my parents locked in and dominated their lives, subsuming their softer, convivial qualities. It locked me in, too. It locked me into a lifelong concern about making a living and affected my personal habits and the way I deal with practical matters. For example, not so long ago, Ed Dorn was telling me that he was thinking of moving to San Francisco with his family, and I asked him the thing that would be foremost in my mind, what job was he going to?

"Oh, no job", he replied.

"How can you move", I asked, "if you don't have something?"

"Oh", he said, "I can always find something."

Outside the store, the streets and empty lots and beaches were teeming with boys, and perhaps in somewhat the same way that I had learned English, one day I was just a little kid playing by myself around the house and the next day I was one of them, playing baseball and basketball and soccer and ice hockey, and swimming and roller-skating and ice-skating, flying along in long musical lines, and riding a bike without hands, all my natural medium - my song of summer, turned crystal in winter. I was utterly content and absorbed.

After school, I found odd jobs. I washed dishes in an icecream parlor, I did menial chores in a barbershop, things like that. Summers, I worked with the men, assembling chairs and bedsprings at the Simmons Bed factory and reading house meters for the electric power company. I was in fact an all-American boy.

Although my father and stepmother were intelligent and had a high regard for learning, she was too practical and literal to be interested in more than a newspaper, and his eyes at the end of a day were too tired to be able to read. Thus, there were no books in our home. That didn't bother me because I didn't know I was missing anything, until one day I discovered the public library on the other side of town.

The library, courtesy of Andrew Carnegie, was a charming building in the style of a graceful Grecian temple. It was set in an equally charming and well-kept park. You

approached this distant sanctuary from a long and winding path that looked lonely and a bit melancholy because no human figure was to be seen on it. When I started out across it, I too felt a bit lonely and melancholy, and the venture felt as if it would take a bit of daring. As you entered the portico, a high, massive bronze door carved in the Renaissance manner confronted me, and the pillars, which from a distance looked so graceful, now loomed over me, as massive in their Grecian way as the door, and cowed me with their majesty and austere, imperial spirit.

Now to pull open that heavy door and enter. All inside was cool and quiet, illuminated by a golden glow from vaulted lights. Before me was an open space that looked like an atrium. It was so cool and quiet that I would not have been surprised to hear water murmuring as in a glade. At the far end two ladies were sitting at a desk and when they saw a small boy approaching, they looked a bit surprised and smiled encouragingly. There was only one other person in the library, a lone man in the periodical room, absorbed in reading.

"Could I look at the books in the stacks?" I asked in a subdued voice to go with the subdued air, expecting to be told, with the well-bred manners of such a place, that I was not old enough.

"Oh yes!"

They looked pleased and continued smiling. I gathered from that that it was safe to be bolder.

"Could I take some home with me to read?" I asked, again expecting to be rebuffed.

"Yes. Yes."

They looked even more pleased and as one of them led me to the adult books, they were positively beaming. But I couldn't quite believe it. There was a mistake somewhere. When it came right down to it, they weren't *really* going to let a little kid like me take adult books out of the library. Furthermore, how could precious books like that be free? So when I brought back five books from the stacks to check out that first day, I stood mute and avoided looking at anyone, hoping in this way to appear as if I was unaware of the error and that it would go unnoticed. But the lady checked the books out without any hesitation, smiling all the while, and I hurried out with them before she could change her mind.

Now, however, I had the problem of how to get them home unobserved, for if I ran into Jewish boys of my acquaintance, who altogether unlike Jewish boys of their age in New York, read only schoolbooks when they read, they'd razz me and I'd never hear the end of it, and I had no way of protecting myself because the razzing hid under the guise of masculine humor. So I'd slink through downtown very fast on my way home, hoping they wouldn't be in their father's store to see me.

There was another reason I didn't want to be seen: in all the time I was in Kenosha I don't remember ever seeing a grown man carrying books on the street, and I knew they weren't reading. So I couldn't help feeling embarrassed, suspecting that they might think me peculiar, and I avoided looking at them when I was carrying my embarrassing cargo so as not to draw attention to myself.

Once I was across the bridge on the immigrant North Side I was safe. During the day there was no one in the long block of saloons on the way to our house, and if a lone figure did happen to be in one and looking out at the street at that exact moment, books were so far outside anything he was interested in that I passed by, invisible. The few who knew me as Rakosi's boy already knew I was different, and beyond that they weren't interested. As for my folks, they didn't object to my secreting myself in my room with my books as long as I did my chores.

The library now became my secret home and my secret vice. When my parents asked my where I had been, I referred vaguely to it or to some other place, always in a casual way as if it were of no importance, not wanting them to suspect that my life had changed or that I was different from before. With my friends the matter never came up, so my secret life was never found out.

The stacks where I made my home were illuminated like the atrium by a soft glow and were quiet, too, and deserted. There was a small table and chair under a window for sitting and reading as long as you pleased, without intrusion or question, and all around a great collection of the classics in literature and philosophy in almost mint condition, most wonderful of all a complete set of the old Scribner's edition of Dickens with the original illustrations; ditto Thackeray; and the great Russians... Maxim Gorki's unforgettable *My Life* comes to mind; and Huneker who introduced me to the wonders of music and the cross-cultural currents in the arts. To make a long story short, I read everything, everything. And I found there the mental universe which suited me, and I discovered its scope and depth and excitement, but I had no one to share this with or the wild nature of my excitement.

I had no inkling of anything in me beyond this until I was sixteen and wrote a piece in high school in senior English on George Meredith. To my wonderment the teacher wrote back a long enthusiastic response as to an intellectual equal, with comment after comment indicating that she respected my literary mind. That is how I learned that I had one and that I could express it.

I was now beginning to be fixed in my future course. I had been a B+ student until then, except in English, which had been A, so it made no sense to my parents to end my education there. They thought they could manage to support me at a university if they were very careful and if I lived frugally and worked during the summers. They would send me as much as they could.

It was decided that I would go to the University of Chicago because there was a Jewish family not far from the University with whom I could room and board cheaply, an elderly couple that our boarder, Samuel Kleinman, had lived with for many years when he worked in Chicago and spoke of very highly and affectionately. I had already been attracted by the University's somewhat Byzantine aura, so I was jubilant, and my parents, who had been concerned about leaving a sixteen-year-old on his own in such a big, impersonal city, felt reassured that I would be under the eyes of a responsible couple.

My first sight of the University was exciting. There before me was old England, a quadrangle of Gothic buildings more severe and cloister-like than Oxford or Cam-

bridge, possibly because the interiors seemed to be always in shadow, and passing unhurriedly in and out, older students, at one with the atmosphere, in very serious dialogue so monkly quiet as to sound like murmuring.

By the term's end, however, my spirit felt as if it was being dragged against its will into a cloister and began to retreat. More and more it was a relief getting back to the city. The students broke up after classes and dispersed like buckshot so quickly that there was no opportunity to make friends. As a consequence I felt lonely and cramped, and was too young to get much out of Chicago on my own. By the end of the second term my spirit was in full revolt and I decided to transfer to the University of Wisconsin.

Before I did, however, I wrote poetry for the first time in an English class, along with George Schuyler, my only friend then, a black student who wrote Kiplingesque verse and later became well-known columnist in the black press. Again, like the invisible way I had learned English, one day I was a reader of literature and the next day, there was the knowledge, as if it had always been there, that I wanted to be a writer and that I could best express myself in poetry, not prose. It happened in this class.

In Madison, in order to save money, I moved in with some older Jewish acquaintances from Kenosha who were preparing for the law and medicine and who already had rooms. We had our meals on the other side of town with a youngish Jewish widow with a slew of small children. She was a cheerful, stocky little woman with ruddy cheeks. As soon as we sat down to her table and saw spread out before us all the dishes heaped high, steaming hot from the kitchen, and rich spicy smells all around, like a home, we unwound and started jabbering away, joking and bantering and laughing, and she stood by our chairs with a big smile, as if entranced, and took in every word, laughing hard along with us and making herself a part of us without intruding. How she enjoyed seeing us eat heartily! And when the food ran out, how happily she ran into the kitchen for more. The place had the jovial spirit of Dickens when she was there, and the warm, giving spirit of a genial mother who knew how to keep hands off. How much she gave us! And how uncertain her own future was.

Despite this connection, I had no question in my mind by this time that I was a poet, that that was the authentic *I* and that my life would be determined by that. Thus, when I was being a poet, I felt as unconnected to being a Jew as if I were on another planet which admitted no extraneous body. This had me in such a powerful fix that it shut out the reality of my father's support and I acted as if it would go on forever, taking only courses that fitted this planetary purpose, with no view to a vocation.

It was in this state that I met my new friends. By the time I got to Madison, Leon Serabian Herald was already established there on a Zona Gale fellowship for talented young writers. We formed an immediate bond. It was he who told me about Margery Latimer, saying that I'd like her. She was the other Zona Gale fellow on campus. Leon was an Armenian whose parents had been killed in the Turkish massacres. He had been brought up by an uncle in Cairo and had come to the states on his own at the age of what he thought was twenty. He couldn't be sure because the Turks had destroyed the

vital statistics in his village. When I met him, he had learned to speak a faultless English.

He was a gentle friend with a sunny, open disposition. He had an endearing simplicity. All he wanted was to be a poet. The only other thing he needed was a woman, and to her he wrote paeans of lovely, exotic metaphors. Neither Margery nor Leon at that time had intellectual interests outside literature, so they didn't bother to go much to classes except to William Ellery Leonard's writing course. Leonard was Madison's Man of Letters, as well known then as a poet as Carl Sandburg.

Margery came from Portage, a small town near Madison, and as God-awful a place to her a Gopher Prairie. She was descended from the great Bishop Hugh Latimer and from Anne Bradstreet and John Cotton. What struck one immediately about her was her radiant presence: a great shock of golden hair falling free to her shoulders, gold with more life to it than auburn and more serenity than red; a radiant smile, full, warm, committed, trusting, guileless; a mellow, vibrant voice, the most earthy part of her, coming as if from the deep; a hearty laugh with a musical lift at the end; unusually large, observant eyes, always curious... a presence that would have made Blake sing.

Embellishments seemed false to her and demeaning. As a consequence, she wore no makeup or lipstick or high heels and only the most plain dresses, and her walk was very straight and direct, unself-conscious. Not that she was not womanly, but it was not in her nature to act any differently with men than with women. When we were together, Eros was in Blake country, and woman as Blake envisions her, but earthy and hale, was Margery herself.

From the start I was drawn into a deep relationship in which, to borrow Blake's imagery, our souls contemplated each other happily, sporting and embracing. She accepted everything I felt and imagined and aspired to and delighted in its uniqueness and gave it a radiant affirmation. Yet her conversation was not exceptional, but there was an overpowering depth and perspicacity in her intuitions which called for the same in me. I remember being with her one afternoon not long after we met. As I talked, I noticed that I was feeling extraordinarily free, as if for the first time I was in the presence of a *wholly* congenial soul.

This went to my head. As I talked on and the afternoon light became dimmer, time seemed to slow up. Deeper and deeper I probed for this other-soul until all restraint was gone and time stopped, for I found myself before the awful prospect of boundless potentialities on a universal scale. I seemed as if my understanding, deeply buried until then, could grasp *anything* in the world. I had to draw back: the scale was monstrous. But our spirits had been in a deep union and a quasi-supernatural force had been present.

Even in our pedestrian contacts her great confidence in my work shone on me like the sun. In fact, she was responsible for my first success. She had gone on before me to New York to look for a publisher for herself and had learned that Jane Heap had taken over as editor of the *Little Review*, in which Joyce's *Ulysses* was running serially at the time along with new work by Yeats, Pound, and Eliot, and that she was looking for new talent. Margery told me about it but I couldn't believe that could mean me. I

was only twenty-one. Except for a few poems in the *Nation*, nobody had heard of me. But Margery persisted: I ought to try. Finally one thing she said clicked: "Jane Heap", she said, "likes to meet young, unknown writers and just talk with them. Really!" That convinced me.

But how do you do this sort of thing? I didn't know anyone who knew her. Do you call in advance? I didn't have enough confidence for that. Margery kept reassuring me with an impish smile that all you had to do was walk in on her, that other young poets had done it, and that I was exactly the kind of person Jane Heap had in mind. She left me no choice. But what did I have to say that would be interesting to such an editor?

Apprehensive, I climbed the circular staircase one afternoon to the *Little Review* office, which was then in the Village. It was dark in the hallway. At one end on the first landing was a small white name-card, *THE LITTLE REVIEW*, and a push button under it. I rang the bell, there was silence for a moment, then the door opened and a pudgy figure appeared in a red velvet smoking jacket, smoking a small cigar, the face very round, the hair bobbed to look mannish. For a moment there was an astonishing resemblance to Oscar Wilde. It was Jane Heap.

This startling appearance, for some reason, at once put me at ease. I simply gave her my name and she invited me in. It was not an office at all but an apartment she shared with Margaret Anderson. She was pleasant, served tea, and we talked – she as to a fellow writer. I found myself stimulated and was not lacking for words. I remember our conversation as lively and straightforward. At the end, she said, "I suppose you brought something with you", and I said, "Yes", and pulled out a batch of poems from my coat pocket. She read them closely, thought for a few moments and then said, "We'll take these".

That was it. I was in. I had made it into that illustrious company! I got up and left right after that while I could still hold in my exultation. I wanted to get out of there fast before she changed her opinion of me, and rushed to tell Margery about it. She listened with a happy smile, relishing everything, my anxious climb up the stairs, the dark hallway, the surprisingly small, neat name-card on the wall, the sudden apparition of Oscar Wilde in the doorway, Jane Heap's simple courtesy, the quick way our conversation took off... the whole thing. "Oh Carlos", she said at the end, she called me Carlos when she felt affectionate, her voice dripping to that low, pulsating resonance so characteristic of her, as of no greater pleasure were possible to anyone. She had known this was going to happen.

Margery Latimer, Leon Herald, and I were a threesome at first. Kenneth Fearing joined us a bit later. Kenneth and I must have been together a lot in Madison. Charles J. Duffy, writing in the *Wisconsin Alumnus* in 1967, refers to us as "the Fearing-Rakosi circle", and recalled him with "his great shock of uncut, unkempt hair, which was the talk of the campus". As I write, I can hear his low, gravelly voice, like Humphrey Bogart's, and see again his thin, loose-jointed frame, the tiny, short-sighted eyes behind very thick glasses, and the familiar quizzical, amused look on his face, the limp, black hair falling low over his forehead, almost covering one eye. He seldom left his room. In one corner his dirty laundry lay piled up on the floor, chest-high. In the oth-

er, he reclined far back in his chair, almost on the small of his back, with his knees up. He was already a heavy drinker and did his writing at night with a bottle of whisky at his side and an unlit cigarette dangling from the corner of his mouth, and slept all morning, skipping classes the next day, a bold thing to do in those days. He had admirers even then who hung around him, basking in his bohemian boldness and waiting for his next *bon mot*, which dropped in a flawless idiom sounding like Thomas Carlyle. When asked in the *Wisconsin Yearbook* for a summary of his achievement, he wrote, "Indian Reservation".

Madison in those days was a very clean, respectable small town of one-family homes with well-kept lawns. The University had some ten thousand students, mostly from Wisconsin farms and small towns, blond young Babbitts, their hair cropped close. Time was suspended for these boys and girls from the country while they looked each other over and saw that they were comely, and flirted and horsed around. And the big events were football and the Big Ten pennant ahead, and standing guard was a smugness hard to imagine these days, although Nancy Reagan comes pretty close to it.

Entered I, poor little Jewish boy, stewing in an inner life, sensitive, mystical, full of Tolstoy and Nietzsche, feeling as if I had been branded by a stigma. Duffy in the *Wisconsin Alumnus* recalled me as "a little fellow with an intense manner and tragic eyes" and my verse as "soulful". I myself had this to say in 1923 for the contributor's column of *Palms*, a little magazine published in Mexico.

I am sure sex chose me for destruction; that my tropsemitic savoir will defeat itself in the way a poetic technique, too conscious of its facture, defeats itself. Since 1920 I have tried to fend off oblivion and the domination of trifles and quasi-poets by a life of exact ritual. Nothing can convince me that my passive attention will not sometimes surprise depth and novelty; nothing but a feeling of non-existence, a humour of calculation. Yet can these defining words frame anything but the words, *Carl Rakosi?*

And an early poem, "Orphean Lost", recalls my deepest inner tone then:

The oak boughs of the cottagers
descend, my lover,
with the bestial evening.
The shadows of their swelled trunks
crush the frugal herb.
The heights lag
and perish in a blue vacuum.

And I, my lover,
skirt the cottages,
the eternal hearths and gloom
to animate the ideal
with internal passion.

The bestial evening of alienation and insecurity of mysterious depths and longing. With that, I graduated in 1924 and reentered the world of work.

A grim prospect faced me. I had not prepared for either a profession or a trade and the moment of truth had come, as my father knew it would but could not persuade me. It gripped me in the gut. What was I going to do? Who would want me? The labor market was tight, and my folks had done as much as they could and as much as I had a right to expect. I was on my own. On my own! For the rest of my life? A great dread and a revulsion as from nausea swarmed up in me. This passed, subsumed in the ordinary business of figuring out what to do, inquiring of people, doing things.

Into this hopper dropped a rumor that social work was looking for people to train, men in particular. The American Association of Social Workers was interviewing applicants in Chicago. Social work? The term was new to me. As I didn't know anything about it, I didn't know whether I had anything to offer but it was the only opening and I was willing to try anything and went for the interview, without being able to prepare in any way for it. As it turned out, I didn't need any preparation.

The nature of social work immediately became apparent: I was treated with great respect as if I were a precious commodity. The interviewer asked me a few simple questions to sound out my feelings about people, conveying in his tone that this was not an intellectual activity in which I was expected to come up with the right answer. In that sense, there was no right answer. So nobody was going to criticize me. It was just that I had something important to say and he was eager to hear it. All I had to do was be myself and look inside and tell what I thought and felt. There was plenty of time. It was very quiet as I looked inside and spoke. Would I be willing to go through the two years it would take to finish my training? he asked. Would I be willing to go to Cleveland, where there was an opening with the Associated Charities? Sure. (I would have gone anywhere; it was a way to see the country.) I was hired on the spot. Thus, I did not have to return to Kenosha to live off my parents in shame, like a child, which for a while I was afraid might happen.

The Associated Charities needed a trainee right away, so I moved at once to Cleveland. This was 1924, before a professional postgraduate curriculum and faculty for social work had been developed in universities. One was just starting at Western Reserve in conjunction with the Associated Charities. Members of the agency's supervisory staff taught courses in theory part of the time and supervised and helped the trainees with their cases the rest of the time. The trainee was paid a modest salary. I found the courses rather dull but immediately became deeply involved with my clients, more deeply and disinterestedly than I had ever been involved with anyone before. And I discovered in myself a great urge to listen deeply to their distress, to understand it, my *whole* attention in it, and be helpful. In this I discovered a great excitement and a gay self-fulfillment unknown to me before.

However, I was still a writer and my heart was set on living in New York, there was no other place for a writer to be, that was the epicenter, where things would happen. With my brief Cleveland experience as a credential I was able to get a job in New York with the Jewish Board of Guardians, a psychiatric social service for disturbed and delinquent boys, and left the Associated Charities after a few months, to the dis-

appointment of the executive, who was the only man on the staff and had been looking forward to having another man to be with and talk to occasionally.

New York was all I expected and I learned a great deal of Freudian theory in my new agency, which had the best clinical reputation in the country at the time, but I had to give it up. It was too much of a good thing, too absorbing, too demanding, too rigorous. It was making it hard for me to write. I decided I would try something less demanding. I would study psychology and go into personnel work. And that's what I did. I went back to Madison and got an M. A. in educational psychology. I was unsure about this, however, and thought that if that didn't work out, I'd fall back on university teaching, and with that in mind, I changed my name legally to Callman Rawley. For one thing, Rakosi was forever being mispronounced and misspelled, but the main reason was that I didn't think anyone with a foreign name would be hired, the atmosphere was such in English departments in those days. I kept Rakosi as my pen name, however, and no one who knew me as one, knew me as the other. This suited my purpose, as I didn't want professional colleagues to know that I was a writer. It was not just that I wanted to keep that private: I thought it would color and contaminate their perception of my understanding and practice of the profession. I saw no point in their knowing in any case. In later years, after I had retired and was using Rakosi again in daily contacts, I forgot sometimes by which name I had introduced myself to a person and had to keep my mouth shut until I got a clue from the conversation as to which it was.

With my new degree I got a job with the Milwaukee Electric Railway and Light Company in their personnel department, testing motormen. Physical equipment was used, simulating the equipment on a streetcar, and a projector flashed street scenes on a screen, cars and people darting in and out unexpectedly. I checked the motorman's responses... his speed, accuracy, endurance, and the like, and made out a psychological profile from that. And on that the poor fellow's employment or future in the company depended.

This was not a function that interested me for long... neither did the city of Milwaukee... and I left after a year and picked up a job as psychologist in the personnel department of Bloomingdale's department store in New York. Here I was entirely on my own. Nobody paid the slightest attention to me. The store had never had a psychologist before and the store superintendent who had hired me assumed if I was a psychologist, I knew what a psychologist should be doing in a department store. He didn't know. He was a merchandiser. So I had to figure it out, and I was beginning to - starting with a plan to make a job analysis of every position in the store - when a poor Christmas season stopped it all, and the superintendent was fired right after Christmas, and I and a host of others along with him. That ended my career in industrial psychology.

Under the circumstances, I naturally fell back on what I knew, social work, this time in Boston with the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, a very old-fashioned name for a very fine children's protective agency which was a working adjunct of the juvenile court, of which I was an agent. As such, I had police

powers to force entry into a home where there was evidence of child neglect or abuse. I never had to use this power but I did threaten to use it once in a particularly egregious case and felt ashamed at what I had done because when the children's mother, a washed-out, copped-out young woman, finally opened the door to admit me when I threatened to call the police if she didn't, I found the father, a small, wiry Portuguese workingman cowering in a closet like a rat. I was agitated by the indignity I had forced on him but the children were in great peril and I had to remove them into the custody of the court, the mother standing by, weeping and drunk, the father glowering and threatening. There was nothing else I could have done. The situation was too far gone to be helped.

A calm, benign spirit presided over this court, the whitehaired, elegant judge Cabot, of the Boston Cabots. Everything about his person was aristocratic but when he was talking to a child, you didn't see that, you saw only how considerate and sensitive and sagely proportioned he was and glowing with kindness.

Again I felt the need to protect my time and resources for writing by work that was less compelling, less absorbing. I thought the other route, university teaching, would be easier and less demanding, so I left Boston and got myself a job as an instructor in English at the University of Texas, teaching freshman composition to engineering students, a cruel assignment, and taking graduate courses in the department towards a Ph.D.

But this didn't work out either. The work was easier, all right, and there was time for my writing, but now it was the young prigs in the department I couldn't stand. They acted as if they had brought Oxford to Austin, and unlike young professors these days, were so affected and British high-toned that I felt nauseated and was faced with having to spend the rest of my life with clones. I could see too that what I would be doing as a professor would be so specialized and of so little value except in English departments that I would be like Tom in the old English joke:

"What are you doing, Jack?"

"Oh, nothing."

"And what are you doing, Tom?"

"I'm busy helping him."

So I called it quits after a couple of years and entered law school, but I didn't go far there either, not because I didn't find it interesting... on the contrary, I was captivated by the insistent practical base of jurisprudence and found the logical and philosophical reasoning supporting it as clear and well-proportioned as the Parthenon... but because for me to stand up and speak in public was nerve-wracking then, an ordeal, and I realized too late that that's what a lawyer did. The sons of instant Southern oratory in the huge class in which I was called on to stand up and analyze a case and found myself tongue-tied, were waiting, rarin' to go to do just that the moment I sat down.

No contest. I wasn't going to throw myself into that pit of crocodiles. So again I had to change course. This time I decided to go for broke. Why not become a psychia-

trist? Wasn't the study of human nature and therapy what I was most interested in? Psychiatry would give me the best opportunity to keep my working hours down, plus a good income and prestige. So I took the required chemistry, biology, and physics in Austin and entered the medical school in Galveston. I was immediately engulfed in the maddest race in my life for facts, physical facts that were perfectly within my power to memorize but only if I slaved away at it every day, Sundays included, until one or two in the morning. I did it, along with the other students, and probably would have found the second year a little easier, but my money ran out and I had no one to borrow from. The dean was sympathetic and wanted me to continue but the medical school had no financial loans for needy students at that time, so at the end of the year I had to give up. I had only one tiny pleasure to remember the experience by: I had gotten the highest grade in the anatomy class, a 98. How tenacious the memory can be when it has to.

After teaching for two years in a high school in Houston and working in a settlement house with Mexicans, I rode back north to Chicago on freight cars, partly for the experience, partly to save money. It was during my worst feeling of debacle in Houston that I received an invitation from Louis Zukofsky to rush him my best poems for a special issue of *Poetry* which he was editing under the sponsorship of Ezra Pound. Here began my association with him and with two of the others in that issue and, later, in *An "Objectivists" Anthology*, George Oppen and Charles Reznikoff. Zukofsky called us Objectivists. We are still known by that name.

It is now 1932. The Great Depression has set in and I'm back in social work in Chicago, working for the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare. People are desperate. For example, one day I'm out making home visits and when I return to the office, I find that an agitated client waiting for word of his eligibility for financial assistance has stabbed a case worker to death in the waiting room. At the Depression's most desperate point, a million men a day, it was estimated, were on the move, going from city to city by freight cars, looking for work. My poem "New Orleans Transient Bureau" is drawn from my experience as case-work director in the New Orleans Transient Bureau in 1933, one of the transient bureaus set up by the federal government in large cities to try to deal with the problem.

In 1935 I left the South for good and spent the next five years in New York, working for the Brooklyn Jewish Family Welfare Society, which had a staff of brilliant practitioners and theoreticians then, among them Dr. M. Robert Gomberg. He and I were the first in our field and in psychiatry to conceptualize and practice family therapy, as against individual therapy. During this time, too, I pursued my graduate studies in social work seriously and received a Master of Social Work degree in 1940 from the University of Pennsylvania.

Living through the Great Depression I had become convinced by 1935 that capitalism was incapable of providing jobs and justice to people and that the system had to be changed, that there was no other way. Normally, this would have remained in my mind as just an idea, but I was seeing a lot of Leon Herald, my old friend, then. He was a starry-eyed Communist from way back, and prodded and cajoled me until I ven-

ured in, hesitantly. I found the best minds in my agency already in. After a couple of years, however, I stopped going to meetings, and that ended it. Nobody noticed because all I had ever done was listen, and march occasionally on picket lines with people I didn't know, and cheer and feel uplifted at mass rallies.

In 1938 I met Leah Jaffe. I liked her immediately. We were married in 1939. A few years ago, in a letter, Cid Corman had remarked that he couldn't visualize Leah or me without each other, and I, to confirm that there was a solid base to that, wrote back that ours must be one of the great marriages of all time. When I told Leah what I had written, she looked at me in disbelief. I was startled. Didn't she believe the same thing? I examined her face. It looked serious. But something told me she was going to lower the boom on me. With a straight face, after a moment of suspense, she said, "If you felt that way, why don't you bring me more presents?" We burst out laughing. She has a great spirit of fun. You can see why, in the words of young Mozart to his father, I hope she lives "till there is nothing more to be said in music".

By 1939 writing was coming harder and slower to me as more of me became involved in social work and in reading and writing professional articles... I wrote some sixty... and my evenings were swallowed up by the things that a man who is not a writer normally spends his time on in a big city: the theater, concerts, professional meetings, friends, girlfriends. It was impossible to pile on top of this daily regimen a night of writing. When I tried it, I turned into such a live wire that I could neither sleep afterward nor do my work right the next day. In addition, my Marxist thinking had made me lose respect for poetry itself. So there was nothing to hold me back from ending the problem by stopping to write. I did that. I also stopped reading poetry. I couldn't run the risk of being tempted.

When it came to me what I had done, that there would be no more writing in my life, I was stricken by what Kierkegaard, for a different reason, had called a "sickness unto death". Living became a dreadful existential state, something grey and purposeless between living and dying, and so physical that for a while I was sure I was going to die. This lasted about two years and then stopped, and I went on with my life as a social worker and therapist. This was 1940. The next year my first book, *Selected Poems*, was published.

In 1940 we moved to St. Louis, where my daughter, Barbara, was born. Here until 1943 I worked as case-work director of the Jewish Social Service Bureau. Then on to Cleveland as case-work director of Bellefaire, a residential treatment centre for disturbed children. My son, George, was born here. And finally on to Minneapolis where for twenty-three years I was executive director of the Jewish Family and Children's Service.

Towards the end of this period, in December 1965, I received an unexpected letter. As it changed the course of my life a second time, I quote it in full. It came from a young English poet studying under Charles Olson at the University of Buffalo.

Please excuse me if I make any intrusion upon your privacy but I would like to write to you about the poems you published under the name Carl Rakosi. I have your address from the Hennepin County Welfare Department, to which I wrote at the suggestion of Charles Reznikoff in New York.

I have been interested in your poems since I saw your name mentioned by Kenneth Rexroth some three years ago, but until I came here last autumn was only able to turn up "A Journey Away" printed in *Hound and Horn*. I have now been able to find about eighty poems of yours, published between 1924 and 1934, and what immediately strikes me is the discrepancy between that body of work and your *Selected Poems*. And the way, say, long poems like "The Beasts" and "A Journey Away" are chopped up into smaller units in that volume.

I wonder, too, why you have stopped publishing since 1941 and whether you have been writing since then or not.

Again, please excuse me if this letter is an impertinence, but I like and admire your poems very much and feel impelled to write to you now, my interest is so engaged with them.

Yours sincerely, Andrew Crozier.

I almost wept when I received this. It made me start writing again. I have been at it ever since.

Space now compels me to end. Looking back, it seems to me that three things in my life have made a man of me... humane, that is... the example of my father, social work, and Leah. Not poetry. I had to struggle to make a man of it. I see too that what I have related are mostly my difficulties and shortcomings, not my achievements and pleasures. My sense as a writer must have guided my hand in this.

THE HUNGARIAN ENTERPRISE: ISSUES OF SIZE AND OWNERSHIP

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The main goal of the Hungarian economic reform at its outset in 1968 was to abolish the central allocation of materials and products, and to introduce market forces into the economy. As a result, Hungarian enterprises now formulate their own plans in the context of the national plan, and inform the central authorities of their goals. In addition, profit, instead of output, has officially become the main success indicator in Hungarian firms.

In place of direct central planning, the economy is run according to a set of indirect planning instruments. These instruments of "economic regulators" include prices, wagesetting rules, interest rates, bank credits, exchange rates, taxes, subsidies and tariffs. Over the past two decades these economic regulators have been modified constantly in response to changes in world economic conditions and domestic economic problems. The result is a complicated, often confusing set of rules, with which the government attempts to introduce certain aspects of a market economy – in other words, to imitate a market mechanism. Significant market orientation has been achieved through the introduction of several forms of private economic activity, ranging from autonomous agricultural co-operatives to small private companies. Yet the majority of Hungary's industrial production is still carried out by large, centralized, monopolistic firms.

The Hungarian economy operates on two distinct levels; state-owned enterprises have one set of rules and constraints, and the non-state sector, which includes private and co-operative firms, has another. This paper describes the rules and constraints facing each type of enterprise, the policies of state authorities towards the various types of firms, and the responses of managers to the constantly changing economic environment.

In our examination of Hungary's dual economy, we will see that in spite of attempts to introduce market forces, much of Hungary's economic system still operates on the principles of a traditional centrally-planned economy. This legacy is most obvious in the structure and behaviour of large state-owned enterprises, but can also be seen in constraints and rules influencing private firms and co-operatives.

The paper is organized as follows: Parts I and II describe the various forms of state and non-state enterprises and the rules of the game for each. Part III covers the objectives and constraints of enterprise managers in each type of firm. Competition between

the state, cooperative and private sectors on Hungary's capital, labor and commodity markets are examined in Part IV. Finally, Part V describes some of the reforms recently undertaken to address Hungary's internal and external economic problems, and some solutions offered by Hungarian economists

I. The state-owned sector

Hungary's state-owned industrial sector is one of the most concentrated in the world. The large enterprises were the result of several waves of mergers which took place in the late 1940's, 1950's, and early 1960's. These mergers were intended to improve the central direction and control of the large enterprises. However, the centralized, monopolistic structure which emerged was, and remains extremely ill-suited to the needs of a market-reformed economy.¹ Large state firms occupy monopolistic positions in the domestic economy, and often rely on the government's financial support to stay afloat.

The relationship between the government and large enterprises is based on several obligations which firms are required to fulfill, in addition to the officially stressed goal of maximizing profit. Large firms must provide contractual deliveries to the CMEA markets, meet the government's convertible currency export goals, and supply the domestic market with inexpensive consumer goods. In addition, they must employ the less productive portions of Hungary's labor force. These tasks limit a large enterprise's flexibility and responsiveness to changing market conditions.

Large Hungarian enterprises are typically over-diversified, due to insufficient supply to the domestic market. Many workers are employed in side industries in order to fill their factory's supply gaps. In-house of direct and indirect inputs draw many workers away from the firm's main manufacturing activity.² Persistent shortage conditions make suppliers unresponsive to buyers' demands, an example of the "soft budget constraint".* Although new private and semi-private work groups fill some supply gaps, Hungary still has insufficient specialized subcontractors and small firms to provide the large firms with necessary inputs. The undependable delivery and quality of CMEA machinery imports has greatly contributed to supply problems. Because of lower CMEA costs and due to Hungary's hard currency constraint, however, large firms still prefer CMEA imports to those from the West.

Taxation and subsidization have become important instruments of indirect central control in the Hungarian economy. The constantly modified tax and subsidy laws directly influence enterprise incentives and long-term plans. About 90 percent of a firm's gross profit is taxed away, when all enterprise taxes are combined.³ In a survey conducted by Tardos between 1981 and 1985, of the 44 percent of *net* enterprise profits which was taxed away, 24 percent was redistributed in the form of subsidies. The gov-

* This refers to János Kornai's theory of cost pass-through of raw materials costs and capital costs in socialist economies. See also p. 4.

ernment's policy of equalizing revenues has amounted to taxing profits away from efficient enterprises and subsidizing less efficient firms.⁴

The problem lies in the tradition of informal bargaining between enterprise managers and government officials over taxes and subsidies, and the ambiguity of constantly changing financial regulations. According to Tardos, one-fourth of taxes and subsidies are allocated on the basis of bargaining between the government and the respective enterprises. Because the system is based on privileges, a firm's incentive to increase profits is considerably reduced. The confusing, changing rules also make it difficult for firms to adjust to long-term changes in demand.⁵

Hungary has a highly centralized monetary system. The allocation of investment funds and credit is largely under the control of central authorities. Large enterprises, because of their close bargaining relationships with government financial officials, enjoy preferential access to investment allocations. Based on the government's goals of increasing large enterprises' hard currency exports, maintaining certain levels of employment, and fulfilling CMEA export goals, large firms obtain credits and loans over small, private enterprises. The lack of market-determined criteria (i.e. profitability) in the government's allocation of investment and credits is one of the sources of what Kornai calls the "soft budget constraint". According to Kornai, "although there is a budget constraint that forces some financial discipline on the firm, it is not strictly binding, but can be 'stretched' at the will of the higher authorities."⁶

Another form of indirect regulation is the pricing system. Although in 1980 producer prices were directly linked to world market prices, there is still limited flexibility in both consumer and producer pricing.⁷ Prices continue to be heavily subsidized and taxed, distorting supply and demand conditions. On one hand, the government is gradually giving firms more freedom to determine prices on the basis of supply and demand; on the other, it limits this freedom in order to prevent large firms from taking advantage of their monopoly power on the domestic market.⁸

Wage regulation is another method used by central authorities to influence enterprises in the state sector. Since the abolishment of absolute ceilings on the total wage bill in 1968, wage regulations have changed frequently. Until recently, state enterprises were progressively taxed according to average wages, wage costs, or wage increases. The result was a highly restrictive wage system in which wage increases were not tied to increases in profitability. In spite of some liberalization in wage policy, there remain strong central pressures on firms to follow the wage policy guidelines.⁹ To get around the restrictions, firms compensate workers with non-monetary benefits, or they hire private or semi-private groups (described below) at a higher wage to carry out needed tasks.

An important factor in determining both price and wage levels has been Hungary's hard currency debt status. Faced with the necessity to reduce this debt throughout the 1980's, the government's austerity measures resulted in the stagnation or decline of wage levels in state enterprises, which in turn has affected productivity and incentives.¹⁰

II. Non-state sector

Hungary's non-state sector consists of several different forms of economic activity, some legalized and others still operating outside of the official sphere. The legal or official non-state sphere includes co-operatives, small privately-owned operations, and groups of mixed ownership, which usually involve the use or leasing of state facilities. Table 1 shows the contribution to national income of the state versus non-state sector:

Table 1¹¹
Contribution to National Income

	1975	1980	1984
1. State sector	73.3	69.8	65.2
2. Non-state sector, consisting of:	26.7	30.2	34.8
A. Co-operatives	17.8	19.8	20.6
B. Private activities*	8.9	10.4	14.2

* Includes household farming, contract work associations, and the formal private sector.

As shown by the table, the non-state sector's contribution to Hungary's national income has grown steadily since the advent of reform. The legal or "formal" sphere of private activity includes small cooperatives, specialized industrial and service cooperative groups, and contract work associations.

A. Co-operatives

Non-state co-operatives are responsible for about one-half of Hungary's agricultural output. Since the agricultural reforms of the early 60's, these co-operatives have not only become much more attuned to market forces than the traditional Soviet-type cooperative farm, but they have diversified into non-agricultural activities such as food processing, the production of parts for state-owned industry, production of light industrial goods, construction, trade, and restaurants. Production from private household plots has also been quite successful in Hungary. A unique division of tasks has evolved between co-operatives and private household farming in which the co-operatives concentrate on efficient large-scale production of grain and fodder, while the private household farms carry out small-scale, more labor-intensive agricultural activities.¹²

In addition to their significant role in Hungary's agricultural sector, non-state, non-agricultural co-operatives have contributed substantially to the manufacturing, construction, commerce and service sectors.¹³ Co-operatives are restricted in size to 15 to 100 members. By keeping membership under 30, however, co-operatives can avoid many of the bureaucratic restrictions imposed on large co-operatives, such as the election of a supervisory committee. Small co-operatives elect a chairman to manage the operation, but the general assembly decides major issues such as approval of a change of statutes,

preliminary consent to major contracts, or the dismissal of members.¹⁴ Most importantly, small co-operatives are financially autonomous. They assume the same financial risks as do small private firms, that is, if they incur losses, the government will not bail them out. The inavailability of government subsidies, credits and loans to small co-operatives creates a "hard budget constraint". This accounts for the stronger profit motive and increased price-responsiveness among small co-operatives.¹⁵

According to Kornai, co-operative members prefer to work in this sector because "it combines the efficiency of a medium size firm with a certain degree of participation in managerial decision. The linkage between individual and collective performance and individual earning is more direct than in the state-owned firm."¹⁶

B. The Formal Private Sector and Contract Work Associations

Private activities have filled many of the gaps created by shortages in the consumer sector in Hungary, as demonstrated in the private agricultural and construction industries. In the absence of adequate public housing services, Hungary's private sector has virtually taken over the construction sector. In 1980 71.4% of the total housing was privately-owned, and 85.7% of all housing built in 1984 was privately-owned.¹⁷ Because of its stabilizing effect on the economy, especially in the area of social services, private economic activity continues to be supported by the government. Official encouragement of private enterprise is demonstrated by the new law which raises the limit on the number of employees in a private firm from 30 to 500.¹⁸

Some of the most significant new forms of private activity are the contract work associations (CWA's), legalized in 1982. These groups manufacture for the provide other services to enterprises, cooperatives, or the population at large. One type, the independent CWA, is not affiliated with a specific enterprise and is essentially privately-owned. Members invest their own capital or lease capital and facilities from the state sector, and work for market wages. Since their legalization in 1982, the number of ICWA's has grown rapidly, due to the easing of government licensing restrictions.¹⁹

A related form of private activity is the enterprise contract work association (ECWA). In 1982, after one year of legal status, there were 2,775 ECWA's; by the end of 1984 this number had grown to 17,337.²⁰ These groups contract with an enterprise to carry out tasks which cannot be done by the enterprise due to a shortage of labor, ECWA's can also carry out some tasks more cheaply than the state sector. They work after hours or on weekends, using the enterprise's tools and facilities. Highly productive workers prefer to work in ICWA's or ECWA's instead of working regular overtime in their factory, because they can earn two three times the regular factory wage.²¹ The purpose of creating these new forms is to give a legal framework for previously illegal activities, and yet to allow the employing firm some control over these groups. ECWA's are supported by many state enterprise managers because in this way they can get around the central wage regulation and still improve the operation of their firm. ECWA activity is carried out in the framework of a state-owned firm, so it provides

ambitious workers with an opportunity to earn a higher wage while avoiding the risk of working independently, as in the ICWA's. The ECWA is often commissioned by a state firm, or gets its from outside the firm with the consent of the firm manager.²²

Other forms of mixed ownership include leasing arrangements, in which a private individual leases fixed capital from the state, pays taxes, but keeps the profit or covers the deficit at his own risk. This form is very common in the foreign trade and restaurant sectors.²³ In addition, there are now 111 joint ventures in Hungary, and the government has recently legalized wholly-owned foreign firms.²⁴ Although foreign firms and joint ventures compose a relatively small sector of the Hungarian economy, recent liberalization of taxes and regulations has made Hungary more attractive to foreign investors. However, the limited convertibility of the forint remains an impediment in attracting foreign investors to Hungary.

Unlike the state-owned enterprises, the private sector rarely receives credit from state-owned banks, and therefore must rely on funds from private sources. This situation has been somewhat alleviated recently by the creation of several small new financial institutions (non-banks) which provide capital for new ventures in the form of credit and/or equity. These small institutions actively compete with each other in the market for financing small firms.²⁵

III. Large enterprise management

In Hungary's case, the transformation of the centrally-planned economy did not make state-owned firms autonomous. In spite of the abolishment of mandatory planning, these firms remained dependent on the center. In pre-reform Hungary, planning was not exclusively based on directives and central distribution, but was largely influenced by bargaining and negotiation between the central authorities and enterprise managers. Economic decision-making was made by government and party-appointed managers.

In spite of efforts to make firms more autonomous, the links between managers of large firms and Party and government officials have remained strong throughout the reform. Party organs directly or indirectly influence managers by persuasion, or discriminative practice of budget subsidization, tax relief, or credit-granting. According to Tardos' 1981-1985 survey, the primary interest of large enterprises managers is to establish good relationships with party and government financial officials.²⁶

This trend was especially evident in the state-owned foreign trade sector, where enterprise managers insisted that as long as the government remained socialist, their primary goal was not to maximize profit but to fulfill the authorities' expectations in meeting CMEA contractual goals, increasing exports and reducing imports. These managers perceived it their duty to pursue the interests of the "socialist national economy". They viewed the market essentially as an instrument to harmonize the details of supply and demand, but not to determine the survival or failure of their enterprise.²⁷

State enterprise managers are faced with a set of conflicting and confusing goals. They are expected to generate profits, satisfy the demand of the domestic market,

produce for exports, keep prices down, save on costs, and solve conflicts over wages and working conditions. In addition to this, they are expected to introduce technological innovation. The contradictions are clear: pursuing efficient, profitable management and technological innovation will necessitate lay-offs. Yet according to Tardos, most managers avoid the conflict brought about by the threat of lay-offs, and instead of insisting on profit and efficiency, choose to retain superfluous labor. All enterprise managers claimed that if they had the right to fire workers (which they do in theory), they could manage to continue operating (and to pay better) with one-half to-thirds of their current work force.²⁸

In Hungary, as in most industrialized countries, managers of large firms have often held high-ranking positions in the Party and/or government, and vice versa. The fluidity of movement in political and economic circles reinforces managers' internalization of the goals and attitudes of the central authorities. According to Ádám Angyal, manager of the Hungarian Ship and Crane Factory (a large state enterprise), "politically trusted and active individuals frequently move between positions in high [political] offices...and enterprise management..."²⁹ It should be stressed, however, that large enterprise managers maintain close ties with the authorities because of the underlying economic rewards inherent in these relationships.

In 1985 a new system of electing state enterprise managers was instigated. Now the top managers in most state-owned firms are no longer appointed by higher authority, but rather are elected by the employees of the firm.³⁰ This is the first step in loosening the links between party and government officials and large enterprise managers.

IV. Private and co-operative management

In contrast to the negotiable or "soft" constraints faced by large enterprise managers, private and co-operative firms face economic constraints enforced by the market, and legal constraints enforced by the government, i.e. they are both "hard". If the enterprise is not profitable, it goes bankrupt. These operations are more market oriented and price responsive than those carried out by state-owned firms. However, co-operatives and private entrepreneurs are limited in the size of their operations, type of activity, and level of profits. The lack of a capital market for these enterprises also contributes to the small size and scale of these activities. Constantly changing tax laws create an uncertain environment. For example, austerity measures introduced in January, 1988 included a progressive personal income tax and a value added tax (VAT) of 25%. Both the VAT and the income tax drain off capital which otherwise would go into much-needed private investment, and are therefore a disincentive to potential entrepreneurs.³¹

The new law allowing up to 500 employees in private companies could create more competition between private and state firms, but only if it is accompanied by changes in Hungary's capital market. Private and cooperative firms must have the opportunity to compete equally with state firms for loans and credits, and to be axed at compar-

able levels. Another measure to be introduced is 1989 in the so-called "association law", which will allow privately held share companies.³² This law should facilitate private firm's access to capital; however, the real issue remains the large enterprises' unfair advantages over small, private ventures and co-operatives in obtaining financing.

Private entrepreneurs have traditionally been afraid to invest too much in long-term fixed assets because of progressive taxes and uncertainty about future political and economic conditions. They fear the possibility of their assets being nationalized; without government assurance that their assets are secure, they are unwilling to take long-term risks.³³ Partly because of the experience of confiscation in the late 1940's, most people still have little confidence in the permanence of private enterprise in Hungary. The attitudes about entrepreneurship and risk-taking so common in free market economies will take longer to establish in Hungary, and will require stability of the laws effecting these enterprises.

V. Competition between state and non-state sectors

Competition between the state and non-state sectors in Hungary occurs mainly in the labor and capital markets. Large enterprises' wage systems are rigid and do not allow adequate compensation of worker initiative; as a result, ambitious workers turn to the private sector (ECWA's, ICWA's), while often keeping their state-sector job. The abundant opportunities in the private and co-operative sectors mean that many Hungarians sacrifice their leisure time to supplement their incomes. According to Kornai, one-third of the labor force's total work time is spent in the private sector.³⁴ Meanwhile, the state-owned sector sustains underemployment of its labor force.³⁵ Inflation, combined with the depressed level of state sector wages forces many Hungarians to take on second jobs; this results in conditions of stress and overwork. The situation is increasing the pressure for a freer wage system in state enterprises.

Whereas private and co-operative firms enjoy advantages over state firms in the labor market, the opposite is true in the market for capital in Hungary. Large state enterprises' strong ties to the central bureaucracy give them a definite advantage over small private firms and co-operatives in obtaining loans and credits. State firms have maintained ties with specific banks, and there are no hard and fast rules on refinancing limits, interest rates charged on refinancing credits, or reserve requirements.³⁶ The system of informal bargaining generates inefficient allocation of capital, and has even been shown to cause negative rates of return in some of Hungary's high priority industries.³⁷

Recent reforms have produced important changes in Hungary's financial system: Limited markets for stocks and bonds were set up, and new methods of inter-enterprise financing, which involve bills of exchange and inter-firm commercial credits, are allowed. In 1987 the monopoly of the central bank was officially curtailed and five new commercial banks were established. However, major financial decisions are still cen-

trally determined by negotiation between large state enterprises and the authorities rather than being based on uniform and binding laws.³⁸

VI. Summary and conclusions

The majority of state enterprises continue to depend mainly on the government authorities, and only to a lesser degree on market discipline. The lack of enterprise autonomy in Hungary's state sphere is a direct consequence of these firms' inability to adapt to market conditions. Under existing circumstances, bankruptcy is not a plausible threat for large state firms. These firms continue to occupy monopolistic positions, both on the commodity and capital markets. The situation is perpetuated by the privileged positions of managers in the government and Party hierarchy.³⁹

In Hungary there is an open and lively debate over the country's economic problems. A somewhat radical group of reformers has proposed the following measures to address the situation of large and small enterprises. This group proposes that control over allocation of financial regulators (taxes, subsidies) should be shifted from the branch ministries to the Central Bank. The intent of this change would be to base financial decisions on market performance of firms, rather than on negotiation, bargaining, and privileges. In addition, they propose that tax revenues no longer be used to subsidize inefficient enterprises, and taxation not be used as the primary means for controlling wages and allocating investment. State and private enterprises which produce the same commodities should have uniform tax rates.⁴⁰ This would reduce the unfair competition between state and private enterprises on the labor and capital markets.

Finally, new forms of ownership should be introduced. State-owned assets should be allowed to be collectively-owned, in the form of transferable property shares. State firms could also be converted into joint-stock companies, with their assets owned by individuals and institutions which would have a real interest in the value of the shares, and would buy and sell shares in their best interests.⁴¹

The probability that these measures would have political support in the near future is subject to question. In the eyes of the leadership, Hungary's immediate need is to reduce its convertible currency debt. The large state firms are perceived as the only ones who can carry out this task. Western observers and many Hungarian economists see reliance on state firms as the source of the problem, not the solution. So far, the market-oriented solutions proposed by Hungary's reformers appear to be outside the bounds of the leadership's views on economic policy.

Hungary has managed to actively pursue "market-oriented" reforms for the past 20 years, and will certainly continue to introduce new measures aimed at increasing economic efficiency and performance. The question remains, however, to what extent fundamental institutional change will occur, especially in regard to the status of the large firms. As long as these firms hold monopolies in the majority of manufacturing and production, real market competition is impossible. The success or failure of market re-

form in Hungary depends on the government's ability to adjust to the economic environment, while continuing to experiment with new forms of ownership and management.

Notes

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2. Leyla Woods: "Enterprise Size, Behavior and Performance in the Reformed Hungarian Economy", in Josef C. Brada and Istvan Dobozi (eds.) *The Hungarian Economy in the 1980's: Reforming the System and Adjusting to External Shocks*. (Greenwich, CT and London: JAI Press, 1988)
3. Enterprise taxes include: property tax, wage tax, special enterprise tax, urban and communal contribution turnover tax, general income tax, corporate tax, income tax on employees, profit moderation tax, tax on earnings, and social security contribution. György Varga, "Tax Reform in Hungary", Paper presented at 11th Annual Hungarian-American Roundtable, Bloomington, Indiana, Oct. 27-Nov. 3, 1987. The survey, conducted between 1981-1985, covered manufacturing, agriculture, construction, transportation and foreign and domestic trading firms. Márton Tardos, "The Behavior of Hungarian Firms Since the Abolishment of Mandatory Planning", 1987, p. 14.
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7. Paul Marer, "Economic Reform in Hungary: From Central Planning to Regulated Market", U.S. Congress, Joint Economic Committee, *East European Economies: Slow Growth in the 1980's*. vol. 3 - Country Studies, 99th Cong., 2nd Sess., 28 March 1986, p. 261
8. *Ibid.*, p. 260
9. Kornai, p. 1696.
10. Marer, p. 261.
11. Hungary, Central Statistical Office. Cited in Kornai, p. 1692.
12. Kornai, p. 1702.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 1703.
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16. *Ibid.*
17. *Ibid.*, p. 1708.
18. *New York Times*, 6 October 1988, p. 41.
19. Marer, p. 252.
20. Kornai, p.
21. Marer, p. 251
22. Kornai, p. 1709.
23. *Ibid.*
24. *New York Times*, 12 October, 1988.
25. Sokil, p. 13.
26. Tardos, pp. 6-7.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.
29. Ádám Angyal, "A nagyvállalat szindróma", *Közgazdasági Szemle*, 1984, no. 5.
30. Kornai, p. 1694.
31. *Business East Europe*, 22 August, 1988, p. 266.

32. *Ibid.*
33. Tardos, p. 23.
34. Kornai, p. 1707.
35. Sokil, p. 9.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
37. Mark Reiman, "Generalized Restricted Cost Functions for Hungarian Heavy Industry, a Translog Test of the Soft Budget Constraint Hypothesis", PhD Dissertation, University of Washington, 1988.
38. Tardos, pp. 17-18.
39. László Antal, et al., "Fordulat és reform", *Közgazdasági Szemle*, 1987, no. 6.
40. *Ibid.*
41. Tardos, pp. 23-24.

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HUNGARIAN LOBBYING EFFORTS FOR THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF MINORITIES IN RUMANIA: THE CHRR/HHRF AS A CASE STUDY

ANDREW LUDANYI

In April of 1988 Nicolae Ceausescu (General Secretary of the Rumanian Communist Party and President of the Socialist Republic of Rumania) unfolded a new policy for the "final solution" to the minority nationality question in Transylvania. He proposed a plan to bulldoze small village settlements in order to give social and economic "progress" a boost by forcing "backward" village inhabitants into newly constructed agro-industrial centers. In this way, by the year 2000, the roughly 13,000 village settlements of Rumania would be more than halved with the elimination of the 7,000 smaller settlements. As of the present writing about 20 villages have been destroyed in this fashion, but while the Ceausescu clan remains in power the prospects of a reprieve for the remainder remains dim. Behind this grand plan for "progress" is a hidden agenda nurtured by Ceausescu's personal chauvinism and his need to scapegoat the minorities of Transylvania. Of the 7,000 villages slated for destruction, at least 2,000 are Hungarian and Saxon or Swabian German settlements. The real objective is to break up their compact settlements and force them to depend solely on the social and cultural institutions of the majority Rumanian population.¹

This latest nightmare is but the most drastic plan that has been formulated to transform Rumania into a homogeneous nation-state. Ever since the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 the leadership of the Rumanian Socialist Worker's Party has been systematically undermining the institutions of the two and a half million Hungarians who inhabit the north-western and central regions of present-day Rumania (those areas which Rumania acquired from Hungary after World War I).² This policy has affected all areas of life, but has had the most adverse affect on the educational and cultural opportunities of the Hungarians and other minorities. Since Ceausescu came to power in 1965 conditions have deteriorated even further.

In response to the persecution of their cultural co-nationals, Hungarians living in dispersion throughout the West have attempted to intercede on their behalf by influencing the foreign policies of their adopted homelands toward the Bucharest administration. In the United States the most effective such lobbying group has been the Hungarian Human Rights Foundation (HHRF for short) headquartered in New York City. This organization and its activities will provide the focus for the present study.

The HHRF, in alliance with a number of other groups, was able to convince the U.S. Congress to "terminate" the MFN status of Rumania in 1987. This paper will

describe the role of HHRF as an example of an international pressure network which is able to influence American foreign policy in Eastern Europe. The activities of the group will be traced from the early 1970's to the end of 1988. By describing the tactics and strategies of the group over this time period, this study hopes to identify those situational factors and group traits which contributed to the success of 1987.

Method

The present analysis of the HHRF will depend on a variety of sources. First it will be based on the content analysis of the publications, correspondence and documents that reflect on the objectives and role of HHRF. It will also depend on an evaluation of published outside sources that have opposed or supported the work of HHRF. Finally, it is based on two different questionnaires, one that has tapped the commitments of certain sectors of the Hungarian-American public, and another which has tapped the commitments of HHRF activists, respectively. The former was a brief two-page questionnaire mailed out in January 1989 to the readership of *Itt-Ott* (Here-There) a quarterly publication of the Hungarian Communion of Friends (a politically prominent Hungarian-American organization). Of the 800 questionnaires mailed out to the U.S. and Canada readership of *Itt-Ott* 50 questionnaires (6.25%) were returned. The second was a more in-depth questionnaire (6 pages), meant for the activists of the HHRF to provide a self-evaluation, with ample opportunities for long open-ended responses. The latter questionnaire was mailed out during March 1989.

International Environment

The HHRF came into being to fight for human rights in Rumania in a time period that initially favored Ceausescu rather than the fate of Hungarians in Transylvania. Ceausescu had inherited the mantle of his predecessor as a "striver for independence" within the Soviet bloc. The foundations for this role had been laid by Rumania's rebellion against Comecon's tighter economic integration in 1964 and, more importantly, Ceausescu's refusal to break off relations with Israel in 1967 or to participate in the August 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia. The latter two commitments assured Rumania of American sympathies, which in concrete terms meant that President Johnson warned the Soviet Union "not to unleash the dogs of war" in Eastern Europe by expanding the interventionism of the Brezhnev doctrine to Yugoslavia and Rumania.³ This was followed by the Kissinger years of the Nixon and Ford administrations, which tried to expand the trend toward greater independence in the bloc. Rumania's Ceausescu was a direct beneficiary of these commitments. In 1968 Nixon selected Rumania to be the first Communist country to be visited by a U.S. president after World War II. In 1975 President Ford was also given an enthusiastic reception in Bucharest on his state visit. In the meantime Ceausescu visited the United States on

three occasions in 1970, 1973, and 1975. All this meant that Rumania had become the darling of Kissinger's own version of *Ostpolitik*.⁴ In concrete terms this meant trade benefits, finally including most-favored-nation status.

Domestic Environment

Against this kind of background Hungarian-American groups had very little impact on the State Department. The lack of Hungarian-American influence can be best explained by two other domestic considerations. One was internal to the Hungarian-American subculture, the other was the strength of competing interests that favored continued good relations with Rumania. The latter were mainly a limited number of business interests and some of the American Jewish groups affiliated with the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). The former saw advantages for gaining some untapped markets in Eastern Europe, while the latter wanted to maintain contacts with the only East European bloc country that had not severed its diplomatic relations with Israel following the 1967 Middle Eastern war. Also of more immediate concern, was the desire to maintain contact with the East European country—besides the USSR—from which some of the Jewish population wanted to emigrate. To replenish its population in the face of a higher birth rate among the Palestinians became an ever pressing concern for Israel.⁵

On the other hand, the Hungarian-American subculture was not capable of fielding an effectively organized human rights lobby until the early 1970's. Although the Hungarian-American community includes about one million seven hundred thousand people according to the 1980 census, it lacked effective lobbying organizations. Their fraternal and church organizations were well-established, but avoided politics because they associated it with the fratricidal struggles that the post-World War II and post-1956 new political emigres brought with them. Thus, those who had the most established roots were the least willing to participate in influencing the American posture in foreign policy.⁶ The new emigres, on the other hand, had all the desire to participate, but they initially lacked citizenship and for a long time did not acquire the know-how that would make them politically effective in their new environment.⁷ It was not until the second generation came of age that the "week-end" old country politics of the 1945-ers and 1956-ers was replaced by the political pragmatism of a new, Americanized, younger generation.

This younger generation became the backbone for the human rights activism of the 1970's and 1980's. They became involved with lobbying not as an *ad hoc* endeavor to salve their conscience, but as an activity that was supposed to achieve concrete results. This was a totally novel approach, and required that Hungarian-American society undergo a process of reeducation. Henceforth they would no longer be pacified by purely symbolic payoffs, the days of the verbose election-day speaker or the wordy memorandum "promising liberation" were now numbered.

Human Rights Moves to Center Stage

It was probably a combination of forces that led to the involvement of the younger generation. The 1960's witnessed both the black power movement and anti-Vietnam War activism. Coming to a head at about this same time via Rumania's new international prominence, from 1968 to about 1975, there was greater opportunity for prominent Hungarian artists and writers from Rumania to travel in the West, while more and more Hungarians from the West had the opportunity to visit their relatives in Transylvania. The intersection of these two developments convinced members of the younger generation, that the stillborn politics of their forefathers must be replaced with the kind of political involvement that actually changes adverse government policy.

Two other more specific events also set the stage for Hungarian-American human rights activism. One was the passage of the Trade Act of 1974, while the other was the signing of the Helsinki Final Act in August 1975. The first provided the framework within which Rumania acquired access to American markets for its products following President Ford's granting (in 1975) of MFN status to it. The second provided for a means of monitoring compliance with the human rights requirements of basket III of the Helsinki Final Act. The latter provided a standard of behavior for all 35 "Helsinki" signatory states and follow-up conferences which could check up on the progress for keeping the promised guarantees.⁸ These two policy commitments of the United States and of Rumania, established the two mechanisms by which human rights activists might bring pressure to bear on Rumania.

One other important change took place. The Carter administration made human rights the centerpiece of its foreign policy. Although the State Department did not immediately abandon its commitments to the "realism" of the Kissinger era, it began to pay more lip-service to human rights. This verbal commitment was an important symbolic shift for human rights activists trying to influence American foreign policy.

Committee for Human Rights in Rumania

The pressure was first applied already during the spring, summer and fall of 1976 by a newly formed organization called the Committee for Human Rights in Rumania (CHRR for short).⁹ This organization challenged the renewal of Rumania's MFN status by President Ford, just one year after the status had been granted. This Committee, representing the younger generation of Hungarian-Americans was able to mobilize a significant number of U.S. representatives to speak against renewal of most-favored-nation status. While in this first challenge to MFN status renewal the CHRR allied itself with many more traditional and long-established organizations (i.e., the American Hungarian Federation) it already played the most important role in mobilizing opposition. Although this first challenge to the State Department professionals and the Executive Office was unsuccessful, it brought together the core support for an enthusiastic and talented organization. Important organizers for the group at this time were col-

lege-age second generation activists like László Hámos, Kinga Koreh, Jenő Brogyányi, and Ágnes Bodnár as well as more recent young emigres like Bulcsu Veress and Zoltán Harkó.¹⁰ Their effectiveness was in large part a consequence of their familiarity with the American political landscape, their enthusiasm, their English fluency in both writing and speech, and their willingness to be workhorses rather than showhorses.

The latter trait immediately set them off from the more traditional emigre organizations, where political activity had become a "status" game carried out by a few veteran emigré leaders who had their own channels of influence. These were, for the most part, based on personal contact and utilized mainly for their high visibility on an *ad hoc* basis. The CHRR also used some of these channels, but it began to go beyond this symbolic level, by establishing a permanent organization whose main and primary concern would be to influence American foreign policy relative to Rumania. For this it has focused on the most pragmatic issue possible: trade.

The human rights of Hungarians in Rumania was linked to trade via the Jackson-Vanik amendment. As Edward I. Koch (D-N.Y.) pointed out in his statement of October 1, 1976: "Romania is the first and, thus far, only Communist country to receive most-favored-nation treatment and other trade privileges under the terms of section 402 of the Trade Act of 1974, the Jackson-Vanik amendment. That amendment prohibits MFN treatment for any nonmarket country which denies its citizens the right to emigrate. Section 402 authorizes the President annually to recommend the waiver of the free emigration requirements, if the President determines that continuing the waiver will 'substantially promote the objectives' of Section 402. The President has recently recommended extending for another year the existing waiver for Romania, but prior to October 15 either House of Congress may disapprove this extension and terminate Romania's most-favored-nation status".¹¹

From 1976 to 1977, on the American domestic scene the CHRR (after 1984-HHRF) utilized this annual review as the means to focus attention on Rumanian human rights violations, and the Helsinki follow-up conferences (Belgrade, Madrid, Ottawa, Budapest, Vienna) to keep world attention on this issue. The remainder of this study will be devoted to how the CHRR/HHRF has kept the spotlight on the fate of Transylvanian Hungarians and how it finally won the struggle in Congress with the House and Senate votes ending MFN status for Rumania in the summer of 1987.

CHRR/HHRF Activities and Methods

The young people who became the backbone of the Hungarian-American human rights movement were first activated by the romanticism of organizing a demonstration in front of the Rumanian UN-mission in New York.¹² This demonstration took place on May 8, 1976. In the "Press Release" that was composed for this occasion, Zoltán Harkó states: "The Committee for Human Rights in Rumania, sponsor of the demonstration, is an *ad hoc* organization supported by all major associations of Hungarians in America".¹³ The success of this demonstration in bringing together young

people who "wanted to do something", convinced a number of them that the *ad hoc* status was not enough. During the summer of 1976 the CHRR was transformed into a loose coalition of committed young lobbyists. This group worked hard to convince members of Congress to take a second look at Rumania's MFN status. They were able to mobilize 78 U.S. Senators and Representatives to sponsor resolutions "urging that Rumania's MFN status not be extended until concrete measures have been taken to ameliorate the situation of minorities in that country".¹⁴ For a young organization without a paid staff this was a commendable result.

From the experiences of this first year emerged a certain division of labor among the activists. Some focused more of their attention on the work on Capitol Hill while others were already thinking in terms of the next demonstration. This tactic was useful in mobilizing an entire generation for human rights activism. However, it had the potential for becoming an end in itself and for this reason it became a serious concern later.

All varieties of demonstrations were utilized by the CHRR after the success of the demonstration of May 8th, 1978. The next opportunity for this tactic arose on March 31st, 1977 at Columbia University when five visiting lecturers from Rumania were scheduled to appear at a "Symposium on Romania". This provided the CHRR with the opportunity to gain additional attention for its concerns. As László Hámos, the organizer of the demonstration pointed out: "Our protest is in no way directed against the University. The University is and should remain a free forum for the expression of all points of view. But we do wish to call attention to the fact that in addition to representing a grossly repressive, neo-Stalinist regime, at least two of the visiting speakers ... practice a highly refined and ... ruthless form of academic intolerance [by] ... joining Rumanian President Ceausescu's mad drive to forcefully assimilate his country's Hungarian and other minority peoples ..."¹⁵ The demonstration was successful in providing the organization and its concerns with additional publicity. However, the amount of energy consumed in planning and implementation, again raised the question of priorities for the CHRR.

Still, demonstrations as a tactic have not been abandoned, they have only been resorted to on a more selective basis—and linked primarily to the MFN review process in the U.S. Congress.

Three exceptions to the above, were the demonstrations organized in Plains, Georgia on January 9th, 1977, the demonstrations against Ceausescu in Washington and New York City during April 1978, and the demonstrations of November 15th, 1988. The first of these was an effort to focus the attention of the new President on the fate of the minorities in Rumania and to provide a link with the more overt commitments of the new administration for the role of human rights in foreign policy.¹⁶ Both the timing and the local publicity assured that the Carter administration would be aware of the problem. The lesson learned was that not the size and impressive organization of the demonstration, but the amount of media coverage received determines success.

On the occasion of Nicolae Ceausescu's state visit to the U.S.A. in April, 1978, media attention again became a major concern. However, the media probably would have

ignored the demonstrators, had Ceausescu himself not made a major issue out of their presence.¹⁷ Because the demonstrators caused him personal trauma and insecurity,¹⁸ he protested to the U.S. State Department. To pacify him the New York police chief and Mayor Ed Koch visited him in the Waldorf.¹⁹ These enhanced the "newsworthiness" of the demonstrations, and much more coverage was obtained than originally thought possible.

Finally, Ceausescu's village bulldozing plan led to the organization of a "global" sympathy demonstration for the victims. The demonstration was timed to coincide with the one year anniversary of the rioting and demonstrations that had swept through Transylvania, particularly the city of Brasov (Kronstadt, Brasso) on November 15th, 1987.²⁰ Since both the House and the Senate had already decided to suspend Rumania's MFN status, the objective of the demonstration in this case was educational. It sought world publicity for the human rights violations which were perpetrated by the Ceausescu regime. While media attention in the U.S.A. eluded the efforts of the demonstrators, they were generally more successful in obtaining Canadian and European coverage.

Access to Influence

The CHRR/HHRF has recognized that its major impact is not based on these demonstrations, but on access to influential policymakers. The demonstrations are merely supplemental to psychologically mobilize the committed support groups of CHRR/HHRF and to draw media attention to the problem. But the main objective is to get policymakers to pay serious attention to their concerns. To this end the HHRF has focused its activities on three major forums: the U.S. Congress, the Helsinki follow-up conferences, and the U.N. Human Rights Commission in Geneva. For the present analysis we only have time to consider the first of these forums. While the other two are also important in influencing the fate of minorities in present-day Rumania, only the activities in the U.S. Congress can enable us to measure the effectiveness of the HHRF as a lobbying group.

What standards can be used to reflect on the CHRR/HHRF in terms of lobbying effectiveness? We suggest that a number of factors should be considered. First, we should look at the actual results of the lobbying activities. Second, we should compare the activities and impact of this group to the activities and impact of its predecessors. And finally, we should compare its track record in influencing policymakers both in terms of the quality and the quantity of its efforts. All this can be brought together within the Congressional confrontations over Rumania's MFN status during the Spring and Summer of 1987.

From September 1976 until the Spring of 1987, the CHRR/HHRF consistently provided both the House and the Senate with extensive oral testimonies for their hearings on extending Rumania's MFN status. It became almost a ritual process for the administration (Ford, Carter, Reagan) to recommend renewal of MFN status, only to be chal-

lenged by CHRR/HHRF to show cause for such an extension. The Congressional Record consistently shows that the executive branch, through its State Department representatives, conveyed a relatively weak case with weak arguments.²¹ But they had the advantage of defending the *status quo* and apathy and inertia worked to their advantage for a while. However, the bulldog persistence of CHRR/HHRF is reflected in the number of their oral testimonies *and* in the number of the supplemental written statements that were provided both chambers of the legislature. During this time period more than 85 oral testimonies and 995 written statements were submitted by CHRR/HHRF to support suspension of Rumania's MFN status.²² The record shows that these testimonies and written statements were coherent, convincing and effectively documented.

Events and revelations also aided the human rights lobbyists. The Ceausescu administration continued to ignore the warning signals. It continued to abuse not just the Hungarian minority, but all minorities, both ethnic and religious. The personality cult combined with intensified repression continued relentlessly. After the signing of the Helsinki Final Act the existence of *all* inhabitants in Rumania deteriorated. Violence, brutality and persecution became an accepted pattern for dealing with any opposition whatsoever. The three events that brought this to the attention of the outside world, were the Károly Király revelations of 1978, the resignation of U.S. Ambassador Funderburk to Rumania in May, 1985 and the publication of Ion Mihai Pacepa's *Red Horizons* (1987).

Parallel to these developments, the CHRR/HHRF also targetted certain Congressmen and Senators for special support if they had been sympathetic to the quest for suspending Rumania's MFN status. The group also exerted pressure on those of their colleagues who consistently supported continuing the MFN status for Ceausescu's regime. The special support manifest itself in fund-raising dinners or invitations to speaking engagements during election years. It also included letter-writing campaigns and phonathons—and for key committee chairmen and the swing vote, it included meetings with delegations from their home constituencies. These tactics were particularly effective in campaigns which took place in Connecticut, New Jersey and Ohio, where the size of the Hungarian-American constituency is above the 100,000 mark.²³

The effective coordination of all these tactics, in combination with Ceausescu's own blunders, eventually led to the Senate's adoption in October 1986 of the Tribble-Dodd Resolution. This resolution warned Rumania of the consequences for ignoring the human rights concerns of the American Congress. Just six months later, on April 30, 1987, the House voted 232 : 183 (with a 49 vote majority) to pass the Wolf Amendment which suspended Rumania's MFN status for half a year. It cited as a specific reason for the suspension the oppression of the Hungarian minority and religious believers. On June 26, 1987 after 2 1/2 hours of debate the Senate followed suit and passed the Armstrong-Dodd Amendment by a vote of 57 : 36. This commitment to suspending MFN status was then reinforced by the rejection of the Danforth Amendment by 53 : 44 in the Senate on July 15, 1987.²⁴ All three of these votes were in part a reflection of the CHRR/HHRF's effective coordination of tactics and timing.

To save face, on February 26, 1988, Rumania announced that it did not need MFN status.²⁵ It rejected the Senate and the House votes as unacceptable "interference in the internal affairs" of Rumania. To underline this rejection it unleashed a new and even more ambitious anti-minority policy, the village-bulldozing program made public in April, 1988.²⁶ Thus, CHRR/HHRF has won a victory on the American political scene, but the desired international consequences have not taken place. However, perhaps the extreme nature of the Ceausescu reaction, may in the long-run bring the needed changes. What else is responsible for the above outlined successes? Perhaps organization!?

Organization

The organizational structure of the CHRR had built-in limitations. It was a loosely structured coalition of active young people. While decisions and activities were made on an *ad hoc* basis this was not an insurmountable problem—in fact in some ways it was an asset. However, as the support base of the group expanded and as the concerns and activities increased, there was a more pressing need to establish a formal structure. Since March 23, 1984, the CHRR has become a working committee of the newly created Hungarian Human Rights Foundation (HHRF).²⁷ The latter has expanded its mission to include the fate of Hungarians in other East European states besides Rumania. It has adopted a formal governance structure and become a New York state chartered corporation, that "is an independent, not-for-profit, non-governmental organization".²⁸

The HHRF's organization is not based on its potential support constituency. It is action oriented and prefers to define itself as a "task-force".²⁹ In its own self-definition it stipulates that it is *not* a membership organization.³⁰ People affiliate with it simply on the basis of accepting its objectives and supporting its work. The leadership is composed of the activist core that had founded the CHRR in 1976. Although there has been some change in the membership of the "Board of Directors", the change has been minimal. The continuity of the leadership is ensured not just by the bylaws of the organization, which enables the present leadership to maintain control, but by the more practical consideration that only those people are continued in leadership positions who pull their own weight in doing the work of the organization.

This also holds for the executive post of the organization, which has been occupied in an unofficial or a formal capacity since 1976 by the same individual, László Hámos. His role has been particularly important in keeping the organization together as an effective "task-force". Although the organization has "aged", because the core activists have remained the same, the organization has systematically sought to maintain its youthful elan by recruiting younger activists for its work force. It has done this in two ways. First, by committing the organization to including younger members in its policy-making body,³¹ and second, by instituting an "intern" program which enables college-

age young people to gain lobbying experience by working for the HHRF for a set time period.³²

Besides this "central" organizational core, the HHRF has attempted to set up local support groups on an *ad hoc* basis. These have acquired a more or less permanent character in Washington, D.C. and Ottawa, Canada. In most other cities within the U.S.A. the local support is linked to key individuals rather than actual groups that claim affiliation with the HHRF in New York City. Demonstrations and lobbying activities create these linkages, again based on the practical objective of sharing in the performance of the defined tasks.

The other major linkage is fundraising. Throughout the 1970's and early 1980's the CHRR/HHRF depended almost totally on contributions from the Hungarian-American community to meet its ongoing operational expenses. Even the President of the organization worked at a variety of jobs with legal firms to make ends meet. Only in 1985 did the organization acquire a base of funding that has enabled one individual, László Hámos, to become a full-time and "overtime" employee of the CHRR/HHRF. In that year Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza, the steel-millionaire from Switzerland, offered to support the human rights work of CHRR (later HHRF) by providing a major support grant to cover the costs of its ongoing operations. This grant is based on matching contributions that are designated for the work of HHRF. Any contribution of \$1,000 or more is automatically matched by an equal contribution from the Thyssen-Bornemisza grant. This means that at least the basic financial needs of the organization are assured for the next five years.³³

Activists and Supporters

Two questionnaires have been disseminated during the past few months to measure the involvement of the Hungarian-American community in human rights campaigns. The first questionnaire was sent out to the potential support constituency of the HHRF. It was a brief two-page questionnaire, the purpose of which was to identify the people who were most likely to support the activities of HHRF either financially or by their involvement in its campaigns. As has been noted above, of the 800 questionnaires mailed out only 50 (6.25%) were filled out and returned. Although it had been sent out to a group that is more involved and concerned about Hungarian-related developments, the return shows that only a small minority is politically active—at least in the human rights struggles for the Hungarian minorities. One could argue that the Hungarian language wording of the questionnaire may have been responsible for the low return. This is not the likely explanation, because the *Itt-Ott* readership is itself bilingual and is interested in following events in both English and Hungarian. The more likely explanation is that those people responded who had something to report. That, of course, confirms an otherwise well-established observation, that active minorities are the movers and the shakers—and this is also true for the readership of *Itt-Ott*.

The demographic profile of this activist core provides a number of additional in-

sights. Two-thirds of the respondents are above fifty years of age and one third of these are above sixty-five, most of whom already have retired. While almost 10% of the respondents were in their 80's only one respondent was under thirty. Most of the respondents (70%) were born in Hungary, while 16% were born in other neighboring East European states, and 14% were born in the U.S.A., Canada or some other "Western" country. Most of the respondents left Hungary or Eastern Europe between 1945 and 1957 (56%), while only six percent emigrated prior to 1945, and 14% have emigrated since 1957. (The remainder of the respondents were either born in the West [14%] or failed to indicate the time of their emigration.) Finally, 78% of the respondents were male and only 22% were female. Almost all were married (92%), with only 4% single, 2% widowed, and 2% divorced.

Overall, this small sample of respondents produced or participated in a phenomenally large number of activities to influence American and Canadian policy relative to the treatment of Hungarians in Rumania. In the two years (1987-88) for which the questions were asked, they tried to influence both public officials and the general attitudes of Americans and Canadians. To influence public officials (Congressmen/Representatives, State Department Officials, the President/Prime Minister, etc.) these fifty individuals wrote 349 letters, made 226 telephone calls, had 67 personal meetings with their public representatives, participated in 55 meetings of groups of delegations with representatives, sent more than 1728 documents to public officials, and contributed funds to the cause 154 times ranging in donations from \$1.-\$2000. per donation, with \$50.00 being the average amount.

This same group of fifty people also tried to influence public opinion, by reaching American/Canadian society through the mass media, through demonstrations, and through mass meetings. To this end they produced about eight articles for newspapers, gave ten interviews, wrote 283 letters to the editor, placed four advertisements and proclamations, made over 2000 telephone calls, and participated on five occasions in demonstrations by themselves and on 96 occasions in demonstrations with others. They were also responsible for delivering twenty lectures, disseminating written documentation on 121 occasions, and for organizing six charitable collections for Transylvanian refugees. In addition to the above (on thirteen occasions), some were able to draw attention to this question on TV or by some other form of exposure in the media.

This activism, and its relative success is undoubtedly a reflection of the social and educational background of the respondents. Of the sample who responded, practically every educational degree was mentioned, including five M.D.'s, six Ph.D.'s, sixteen MA's, MS's, MBA's or legal or engineering professional degrees, and nineteen other college/university degrees. Only four of the respondents had a high school education or less.

While a large (and growing) number are retired (26%), those who were still active in the workforce include seven educators at the University level, seven managers and directors in government or business employment, two psychiatrists, three physicians, one architect, twelve engineers, as well as one newspaper editor, one minister, one geographer, one pharmacist, two social workers, and two librarians. Only three of the res-

pondents indicated that their primary activity or occupation was "homemaking". In terms of their political affiliation, the impact of social class is also evident as most American respondents claimed to be Republican (44%), while only a minority (14%) claimed to be Democrats and (22%) claimed that they were independents. Among the Canadian respondents only four claimed Conservative or Liberal affiliation, while most of the others (nine) claimed to belong to no party at all.

The profile of the HHRF "leader activists" is different in a number of significant ways. Their profile has been obtained from a second questionnaire that had different overall objectives. Instead of measuring activism alone, it was also an attempt at evaluating organizational cohesion and effectiveness. Unfortunately some respondents misunderstood the intent, and thereby the "organizational assessment" objectives of the questionnaire have not been achieved. Still, the responses allow us to draw some conclusions. Of the fifty questionnaires sent out to past and present leader activists of HHRF, thirteen (26%) sent back the completed (or partially completed) forms.

The most obvious difference between the HHRF leader activists and their supporters is that the former are much younger. Of the thirteen respondents the oldest was sixty-four while the youngest was twenty-three. However, the core members of the organization are in their 40's (46%), with twenty-three percent younger and thirty percent older. On the basis of the responses, we could also ascertain that there are two categories of activist leaders. One category provides the core of the "task force", which included/includes about a dozen names. These individuals provide(d) the heart and the brains of the organization, they are all in their thirties or forties. The second category of activist leaders is made-up of the network of local associates who work for/with the HHRF New York office. This second category of activists provides the "task force" with an extended presence, that enables it to exert pressure on various vulnerable legislators in their home constituencies. (The identification of this two layered *core* is based on question 6 of the questionnaire. This question requested a listing of up to *ten* other activists/leaders who should be provided with a questionnaire. The numbers of name *mentions* in the returned responses *and* the higher visibility of activists in Washington D.C. and New York City is the basis for the twofold classification.)

Inevitably, the second category of activists responded to the questionnaire—almost as if they were oblivious to the "central" organization and as if the requested responses related only to their own work locally. The first category of activists responded by focusing mainly on the HHRF's activities, without responding—aside from some sarcastic commentary—to the questions relative to the resources and governance of the organization. The latter may portend internal future difficulties within the HHRF, but at present this does not concern us. Toward the outside world the two categories of activists complemented each other's roles well in the struggles to deny Rumanian MFN status. The two categories of activists also tended to evaluate the success of the organization, relative to its major activities, in a surprisingly similar way (however, most of the second category activists left the evaluation question unanswered!).

On a scale of 1 to 10 (ten being the best), the activist leaders rated the HHRF as "very good" in two areas ("c. editing/writing informative materials" and "g. preparing

for hearings”) with a score average of 8.2 and 8.6, respectively. They rated HHRF as “good” in two areas (“e. contacting legislators” and “k. organizing demonstrations”) with a score average of 7.1 and 7, respectively. They rated HHRF as “satisfactory” in two areas (“f. contacting State Department officials” and “h. contacting other interest groups”) with a score average of 6.8 for both. They rated HHRF as “weak” or “unsatisfactory” in three areas (“a. fund raising”, “d. correspondence”, and “j. speaking engagements”) with a score average of 4.1, 4.2, and 5, in that order. Finally, they rated HHRF as totally inadequate in two areas (“b. membership drive” and “i. organizing lobby workshops”) with a score average of 2.4 and 3.8, respectively.

Conclusion

On the basis of the above review we can conclude that the 1987 successes are a consequence of changing international circumstances, domestic political re-alignments, the HHRF's ability to utilize the changed environment to press Congress to take its concerns more seriously. Effective organization of the group's limited financial resources, the mobilization of a committed support group in the Hungarian-American community, and the leadership talents of a young and enthusiastic staff, have enabled HHRF to maintain the sustained drive that culminated in the House and Senate votes against MFN in 1987.

With the successes of 1987 behind them, the activities of HHRF have also produced some contradictory results which should lead its leaders and activists to sit down to do a thorough soul searching *and* self-evaluation for the organization, its activities, and its contacts with its actual and potential support groups. The organization is definitely at the cross-roads and under pressure to reevaluate its goals and methods. The American and Canadian environmental conditions are also changing, mainly in HHRF's favor. Yet the challenges and dangers to the human rights of Hungarian minorities are more serious than ever before. In the last decade of the 20th century these challenges and dangers cannot be confronted on a shoe-string operation. The aging of the HHRF support group should in particular become a high-priority concern. If HHRF is to continue as an effective force it must be able to attract younger generations of supporters and find more effective organizational and communications links between the “leader activists” and the support constituencies.

Notes

1. “Romania Set to Eliminate 7,000 Villages by Year 2000”, *The Washington Times*, April 6, 1988; Peter Keresztes, “The Time Bomb in Romania's War on Its Hungarians”, *The Wall Street Journal*, July 18, 1988, p. 17; “7,000 Transylvanian Villages Appear Doomed”, *The (Cleveland) Plain Dealer*, Sept. 2, 1988, p. 5-A.
2. Present-day Transylvania comprises all the territory inside the arc of the Carpathian Mountains to the east of Hungary. It includes such other formerly separate provinces as Satu Mare (Szatmár, Sathmar) in the

- north, Crisana (Körösvidék or Pátrium) in the west, the Banat (Bánság) in the southwest, along the Yugoslav border north of the Danube, and historical Transylvania, in the easternmost part of the arc of the Carpathian Mountains, west of the Eastern Carpathians and north of the Transylvanian Alps.
3. Sidney Weiland, "Ceausescu Newsfeature". Reuters Wire Service Report reprinted in *Rumanian President Ceausescu's U.S. Visit and Human Rights* (CHRR; May 12, 1978), pp. 13-16.
 4. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.
 5. Susan F. Rasky, "Senate Suspends Special Trade Status for Rumania as Protest on Human Rights and Emigration Issues", *New York Times*, June 27, 1987, p. 5; Stephen Engelberg, "Rumanian Recalls Deal for Emigres", *New York Times*, October 14, 1987, p. 5.
 6. Steven Béla Vardy, *The Hungarian-Americans* (Boston, 1985), pp. 141-150.
 7. *Ibid.*, pp. 144-150.
 8. Janet Fleischman, *Destroying Ethnic Identity: The Hungarians of Romania* A Helsinki Watch Report (Human Rights Watch, 1989), pp. 59-64.
 9. "Erdély védelmében: évvégi beszámoló 1976 eredményeiről" (In Defense of Transylvania: Year-end Review of the Achievements of 1976) CHRR Brochure November 15, 1976.
 10. Interview with László Hámos on March 22, 1989 in New York City.
 11. Edward E. Koch, "Human Rights and Emigration Policy in the Republic of Romania", *Congressional Record-House*, October 1, 1976, p. H 12231.
 12. László Hámos interview
 13. "Demonstration to Protest the Oppression of Hungarians in Rumania", CHRR Press Release, May 8, 1976, p. 2.
 14. "Hungarian-Americans to Picket 'Symposium on Rumania' at Columbia University", CHRR Announcement, March, 1977, p. 2.
 15. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
 16. "Hungarians to Demonstrate in Plains, Georgia on January 9, 1977", CHRR Press Release.
 17. Jerry Schmetterer and Owen Moritz, "Ceausescu is Piqued by Pickets Here", *New York Daily News*, April 18, 1978, p. 3.
 18. *Ibid.*; Ion Mihai Pacepa, *Red Horizons: Chronicles of a Communist Spy Chief* (Washington, D.C., 1987), pp. 316-329.
 19. *Ibid.*
 20. "Fogjunk össze a végveszély óráiban" (Let's stand together to face the final threat) HHRF Announcement, November, 1988.
 21. For example see Jimmy Carter, "Recommendation for Extension of Waiver Authority", The White House, June 2, 1977, pp. 1-2.
 22. "CHRR Testimony at Congressional Hearings", CHRR/HHRF file on Congressional Hearings.
 23. László Hámos interview
 24. László Hámos, "U.S. Foreign Policy, Human Rights and Trade Sanctions: Rumania and Its Persecution of Europe's Largest National Minority", Lecture presented at Cornell University, March 16, 1988, pp. 11-12.
 25. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
 26. "Romanian 'Territorial Settlements' Program Noted" *FBIS Daily Report: East Europe*, FBIS-EEU-88-089 (May 9, 1988), p. 30; "FRG Worried by Romanian Village Reduction Plans", *FBIS Daily Report: East Europe*, FBIS-EEU-88-103 (May 27, 1988), p. 25.
 27. "Megalakult a Hungarian Human Rights Foundation" (The Hungarian Human Rights Foundation has been incorporated) CHRR/HHRF Press Release, March, 1984, pp. 1-5.
 28. *Hungarian Human Rights Foundation By-Laws*, Art. I, Sec. 1.
 29. László Hámos interview
 30. *By-Laws*, Art. I, Sec. 2.
 31. *By-Laws*, Art. II, Sec. 3.
 32. László Hámos interview
 33. "Közös ügyünk: HHRF Bornemisza Alap", (Our Common Concern: The HHRF Bornemisza Grant) *III-OIT (Here-There)*, Vol. XX, No. 4 (1987), pp. 46-47.

MÁRAI'S NOVEL OF THE HUNGARIAN BOURGEOISIE

MIHÁLY SZEGEDY-MASZÁK
Indiana University, Bloomington
USA

On February 27, 1989 I received the following letter:

"Dear Mr. Mihály Szegedy-Maszák,

I would like to apologize for not having responded to your letter of last December. I have been ill, and so I could not carry on my correspondence.

It would be a pleasure to me to see you at my place. May I ask you to call me as soon as possible? My non-listed number is (619) 276-1072, and you can reach me any evening.

With kindest regards,

Sándor Márai"

Several stamps can be seen on the envelope. First the letter was sent to Lanesville in New York state, and later to South Bend. "Your mail delayed due to incorrect zip code", reads one inscription. "Always use zip code", reads another.

The letter reached me three days after the publication of an obituary in the San Diego Union which had been dictated by me on the phone, one day after Márai committed suicide – an end he predicted in *The Blood of San Gennaro* (1965), an autobiographical work which identified a writer's death with the beginning of his exile.

Time is irreversible, and sometimes a message may reach the addressee too late. The concluding part of Márai's *roman à fleuve* was due to appear in the spring of 1948, but it was not published until 1988, when Stephen Vörösváry-Weller, the author's closest friend, made the whole work available. On the dust-jacket of the two volumes, printed and bound with great perfection, an engraving can be seen by a Dutch master, showing Kassa in the 16th century.

Since the author made very few alterations to the text in the last forty years, *The Work of the Garrens* can be viewed as a novel written between the late '20s and 1946. Still it is impossible to forget about the political changes of the last decades when reading Márai's longest work of fiction. At the time it was completed, the Hungarian bourgeoisie had been undergoing a deep crisis. Four decades later, the same class could be described as belonging to a closed chapter of history. Because of this changed perspective, Márai's novel has become a memento of the irreparable loss caused by political persecution. It reminds us of the sad fact that after World War II a substantial part of Hungarian society had disappeared: some were killed, others died in pri-

son or in deportation, still others were forced to flee the country, and the nation could never recover from the effects of this tragedy.

In the Introduction, written in 1988, Márai suggested two possible starting-points for the interpreters of his novel. On the one hand, he argued that political dictatorship remained the same in the 20th century, despite superficial changes; on the other hand, he pointed out that a creative bourgeoisie had been replaced by a consumer middle class. Although it could be maintained that the value of these conclusions was questionable, since they were formulated four decades after the novel had been completed, it is worth remembering that self-interpretation plays a major role in *The Work of the Garrens*. Being a strongly confessional writer and influenced by Nietzsche's idea of eternal recurrence, Márai took a firm stand against those who insisted on the primary importance of plot in 20th-century fiction. For him the secret of writing novels lay not in inventing an action full of surprises but in the art of variation. Accordingly, the five later parts of *The Work of the Garrens* can be regarded as different interpretations of the opening section, "The Rebels", first published in 1930.

On one level, this introductory part is about growing up. Márai's analysis of the process leading from intimacy to homelessness has superficial resemblances with Musil's *Törless* and with *Les enfants terribles*, a short novel written by Cocteau the same year "The Rebels" was composed. More useful could be a comparison with *Kornél Esti*, since Kosztolányi and Márai were close friends and shared intellectual values and interests. Both could be called nihilists in the sense that they questioned the relevance of Christianity. Yet the difference between their attitudes is significant: far from accepting Kosztolányi's irrationalism, Márai's belief was firm in the power of reason. His adolescents' rebellion is a mirror image of the aimless war fought by their fathers. What is more, the young boys' "action gratuite" is self-destructive and becomes manipulated by an actor whose character foreshadows the portrayal of the "Führer" in the later parts of the novel.

Unlike action, point of view is a crucial element of Márai's art. Its variability can make a character complex – as in *Peace in Ithaca* (1952), the first novel Márai wrote after he had completed *The Work of the Garrens*. Yet the changing perspective never suggests the relativism of all values, which is undeniably characteristic of *Kornél Esti*. Despite all reservations expressed about Ulysses by his wife and two sons, the mythical hero is made a representative of secular reason, self-irony, and freedom of will, just as Julius Caesar remains a ruthless dictator, notwithstanding the petty selfishness of all Roman citizens, in *Something Has Happened in Rome* (1971), a parable which contains a criticism of the political compromises made by Gyula Illyés and László Németh, in the decades following 1948.

Márai fully understands the psychology of not only adolescence but also unreasoning enthusiasm – in this sense the opening section of *The Work of the Garrens* anticipates the highly imaginative, yet brilliantly controlled presentation of collective madness in *Judgement in Canudos* (1970) – but he associates irrationalism with the loss of personality and the danger of despotism. The rebels' target is the law formulated by the fathers. The anarchism of the younger generation is considered a *sine qua*

non of growing up. In other words, *The Work of the Garrens* starts as a novel of spiritual education. Yet the continuity characteristic of *Bildungsroman* is soon broken. There are twenty years between the last events narrated in "The Rebels" and the first episode of "The Jealous". At the age of 37 Péter Garren is still confronted with the dilemma of his early years, a period in which he was associated with a group of rebellious adolescents. To distance himself from the anarchism of his youth, he decides to become a businessman and settles down in Germany. Yet he cannot forget about his past. He has a strong desire to become an artist, and is aware of the connection between creativity and the demonic forces of destruction. Learning about the fatal illness of his father, he must return to his home town. His German mistress warns him that those who have left their homes are destined to be alien in this world: "For you there are two seasons, two homes and two worlds. You will miss both and you are destined to become an eternal wanderer. Never can you unpack your things."

These words, written around 1937, are of crucial importance. While the first part of *The Work of the Garrens* ends with the return of the parents from World War I, symbolizing the restoration of a "grown-up" world, the second part speaks about the final disintegration of order. "What will happen if father dies?" The question asked by one of the Garren brothers is about the possible loss of all end-values.

Part III, "The Aliens", is a flashback which makes the reader aware of the deeper significance of the father's approaching death. No historical or geographical names are mentioned, but it is obvious that the father is the last representative of an organic bourgeois culture, and the aliens are foreigners whose aim is to convince the original population of the city that occupation should be viewed as liberation. The oppressor tries to justify his act by maintaining the superiority of his values. The oppressed has a limited choice. Tamás Garren becomes a traitor by joining a movement led by a "Führer", his sister Anna turns her back on the world and sinks deeper and deeper into provincialism, and Péter decides to settle down in another country. "We all die because of Trianon", said Kosztolányi on his deathbed, as reported by Márai in a newspaper article published on September 4, 1938. When writing "The Aliens", the author drew upon his memories of Kassa under Czechoslovak rule, but his intention was to characterize the creator and the destroyer of a culture in a general sense.

For Márai foreign occupation is a state of mind, a form of collective consciousness. In his novel the oppressor's aim is to obliterate the memory of the past. In the central episode of "The Aliens", a piece of sculpture is swept away from the top of the cathedral by a tornado. The cathedral, built in the 13th century, is a powerful symbol of the continuity of the bourgeois culture of the city. When it is hit by a storm, the new rulers of the country fail to restore it. The degradation of the traditional centre of the city starts simultaneously with the illness of the head of the Garren family. By the time Péter Garren has left his adopted country for his fatherland, his father is almost dead.

Márai regards the fatherland as a chronotope. From his perspective Hungary is not only a spatial but also a temporal configuration. The message comes too late for Péter Garren: by the time it reaches him, the fatherland has ceased to exist. Realizing

this, he sets himself a difficult, perhaps even impossible task. His desire is to reconstruct the past sunk into oblivion, restore the sense of continuity, and create a work of art which would give some idea of the culture of old Hungarian towns to future generations.

In his attempt to reach his goal, he is confronted with a dilemma. Remembering his rebellious youth, he realizes that the bourgeois and the artist live in incompatible worlds. The former belongs to an organic community which has specific laws and duties, whereas the latter seeks originality and prefers anarchy to order. The fourth part of Márai's novel is written in the first person singular; it is the tortured confession of a man with a double identity. The memory of the scene in which an actor forced his will upon young boys reminds the hero of the demonic element in art. Péter Garren is aware that creation involves a dangerous game with irrational forces. What is more, he knows the difference between culture and art, craftsman and genius. His aim is a synthesis of bourgeois morality and artistic creation. Drawing inspiration from such bourgeois artists as Goethe and Thomas Mann, he rejects the view that writing is a mission, a form of salvation or prophecy. For him creation is a mere life style and mode of existence. Some may find his conception of art limited, but he feels justified in view of the political implications of irrationalism.

These implications are emphasized in the fifth part of the novel, which contains two long scenes. The first is a visionary presentation of a "Führer" talking to the participants of a mass demonstration, whereas the second is about the visit Péter Garren pays to the famous writer Berten, who is held in house-arrest by the authorities. Both are based on private experience: in January 1933 Márai attended the meeting held in the Berlin Sport Palace, where Hitler made a speech, and later he interviewed Gerhart Hauptmann about his attitude towards the Third Reich. Both incidents had been reported by Márai in articles published in newspapers before they were transformed into parts of his novel. In their fictionalized versions they have a secondary meaning which goes beyond their original historical context. Hitler's name is not even mentioned in the novel, and the scene in which he succeeds in manipulating his audience is a variation upon the chapter in "The Rebels" in which an actor mesmerizes a group of adolescents. Fanatics lose their personality, and are controlled by "the centre", that is, a small group which has power and is alienated from the people. The meeting of the two writers has also a general import: Berten's hypothesis is that only those communities whose memory is discontinuous can be manipulated from above. In other words, despotism is based on the destruction of historical consciousness, the distortion of collective memory.

One of the clichés of Marxist historiography is that Hungary has never had a bourgeois culture. Márai's aim is to prove that precisely the opposite is true. The ultimate irony of his novel is that it is the shocking portrayal of the decline and fall of this bourgeoisie in "The Survivors", the conclusion of *The Work of the Garrens*, which must convince the reader that one of the worst consequences of political oppression has been the transformation of Hungary into a country with a history of backwardness.

For forty years the works of Márai have been inaccessible in Hungary. No other Hungarian writer has ever had such a fate. The reason for this distortion of the past is quite obvious: those critics and historians who identified Hungarian culture with the traditions of the gentry could not find a place for a writer whose works were in sharp contradiction to their sweeping generalizations. As far as I remember, in recent years Péter Esterházy was the only major writer to draw inspiration from Márai. Although I regard Márai's absence from Hungarian cultural life as an irreparable loss to the nation, it gives me some consolation that the writer who may be the most important living Hungarian author carries on Márai's tradition in both a moral and an artistic sense, by making no political compromises and by dedicating himself to the Hungarian language.

REVIEWS

Romanticism in National Context Roy Porter and Mikulaš Teich eds. (Cambridge University Press, 1988. 353 pp.)

The avowed purpose of the volume's editors was to find a middle-ground between a generalized and unifying philosophical-historical concept of Romanticism on the one hand, and the nominalist view of Romanticism as arising out of the "life experiences and activities of isolated individuals". The national context was thought to provide a framework both concrete and broad enough for discussing Romantic events. Despite some disclaimers in the introduction, a certain anticomparatist animus seemed to have been at work here. If so, the volume is (*felix culpa!*) a miscarriage. Comparatism is rampant among the contributors: Széchenyi is compared to Kierkegaard, Bilderdijk to his German contemporaries, the Welsh revival to Eastern European phenomena, to name only a few among the abundant examples of highly original comparative initiatives. At the same time the parallels between Romantic science and literature recurring in article after article strengthen the impression of a comparatism venturing in virtually uncharted territories. The very cover illustration ("Lord Byron in Albanian costume" by Thomas Phillips) nicely deconstructs the national theme and adds to the conquering vegetal anarchy of pluridialectical comparatist links and tendrils.

The volume of Porter and Teich deserves praise for trying to cover most of Europe, including some usually neglected linguistic and cultural areas (Wales for instance). It does, however, regrettably, omit Italian and Portuguese literatures from the West, Czech, Romanian, Serbo-Croatian (and Baltic) literatures from the East, and above all it ignores entirely both North- and South-American writing and culture, curiously so, because the latter would have been fruitful ground for the national-historical approach. Some of the volume's essays tended to take this approach a little too literally. Roderick Beaton's "Romanticism in Greece" (92-108) is informative and useful, but dull. "Romanticism in Russia" by John Mersereau and David Lapeza (284-316) is conceived as little more than an extended encyclopedia article; true, one that is exceptionally precise and complete, tight, well-organized and with clear characterizations. Tom Dunne's "Haunted by History: Irish Romantic Writing 1800-1850" (68-91) makes brave efforts to rise above the merely expository and, indeed, its setting up of the colonial dimension as a distinguishing feature is not without some merit (the parallel with Polish literature is striking). Including Maturin, Moore, Edgeworth among "Irish" writers is, of course, quite problematic: how many of us are willing to assign Joseph Conrad to Polish literature?

The weakest contributions to the volume - Donald Pirie on Polish Romanticism (317-344) and in particular Susan Kirkpatrick on Spanish Romanticism (260-283) - are those that were unable to avoid the mechanical temptations of a hoary kind of ideological reductionism and socioeconomic determinism. At least the (awkwardly written) article of Pirie is partly redeemed by some strong conclusions on "Polishness" as a subversive literary strategy, but it is distressing to read Kirkpatrick's presentation which seems blissfully ignorant of the debate over the existence of a Spanish Enlightenment, omits even a single mention of the name of Jovellanos and dismisses *costumbrismo* as a mere nonradical stumbling block. By contrast G. A. Williams, although he glides along some of the same paleo-Marxist discourse lines, shows, in his description of the literary and ideological situation in Wales (9-36), a learned comparatism for which the complex process of modernization is not limited just to industrialization: ultimately I find outlined in Williams' essay a useful theory of "small groups" as participants in general literary history, one that might be usefully applied to, say, *Plattdeutsch*, Catalan, *Romansch*, Baltic and other (numerically) small linguistic and ethnic groups.

Nevertheless, an approach that acknowledges a better mix between material and ideal interests (in the tradition of Max Weber rather than that of Karl Marx) has from the outset better chances of grasping the cultural

morphologies that are the natural context of any literary event. In this sense Dietrich von Engelhardt's "Romanticism in Germany" (103–133) is a little *tour de force* – an elegant, spare and lean piece managing to control with ease an overcrowded and overwritten field of study. Engelhardt assumes that his readers know much about German Romanticism but need to have their knowledge put in perspective. He does so by, among other things, bringing in a sound and refreshing acquaintance with the scientific concerns of the time and their connections with Romantic imagination and thought. (Others in the volume who do this with equally good results are G. Eriksson, N. A. Rupke and Clarissa Campbell Orr.) My only objection to Engelhardt's article is that neither the translator nor the editors bothered to reinstate the original German titles of the works cited. Gunar Eriksson's article on Scandinavian Romanticism (172–190) provides informative reading and is very strong on the influence of H. Steffens, Herder and Schelling, but is virtually reduced to the history of ideas and of science, with literature barely intruding. Stephen Bann's "Romanticism in France" (240–259) is marred by a superfluous attempt to coopt some recent critical jargons. However, his essay has the great merit of placing Chateaubriand, Mme. de Staël and Benjamin Constant at the center of French Romanticism (and not the epigones Vigny, Lamartine or Hugo). One would have liked to hear about the rhetoric of Jacobinism and about the abundant mystical (Ballanche, Saint-Martin) or Kakotopian (Sade) discourses of the time as forms of Romanticism. Still Bann's essay makes good use of Philippe Muray's path-breaking insights into the connections between socialist and occultist visions in the early nineteenth century, offers important parallels between Chateaubriand and Scott (247) and reaches some excellent conclusions on the reinvention of the past and the conflation of otherness and familiarity in French Romanticism.

Clarissa Campbell Orr has one of the most original essays in the collection. She argues convincingly (134–171) that Swiss writers (and above all the Coppet circle) served as the hub of changes in European Romanticism, while at the same time fulfilling a mediating and transitional role; moreover her combination of tough analysis, probings of political and scientific theorizing and an awareness of the role of sensibility in cultural affairs leads to a particularly rounded and nuanced image.

Szegedy-Maszák's "Romanticism in Hungary" (217–239) begins with the enunciation of four distinguishing characteristics of Hungarian Romanticism (no religious revival, weak connection between philosophy and literature, preservation of Cartesian dualism, no critique of urban civilization) that are highly interesting because they apply, I believe, to the Danubian basin as a whole. The survey of the Hungarian literature of the time is competent and crisp, with some judicious canonical revisions (Vörösmarty is placed above Arany or Petöfi), but perhaps the most exciting section of the essay for the Western reader is the detailed analysis of the life and work of István Széchenyi who is declared "the central figure of Hungarian Romanticism" (232).

An even more "monographic" approach is taken by N. A. Rupke in dealing with "Romanticism in the Netherlands" (191–216) who focuses his essay on the fascinating figure of Willem Bilderdijk and his circle of companions and disciples. Rupke builds a persuasive case for the recognition of the Dutch poet, scholar and philosopher as a towering figure and as one characteristically incorporating European Romanticism in its entirety.

The essay of Marilyn Butler, summarizing as it does her theory of the evolution of English Romanticism (37–67), is one of the most challenging in the volume. There are, to begin with, a number of dubious assumptions, above all that genetic and causative research must be privileged over the (less glamorous?) examination of outcomes and results. This kind of proposition leads Marilyn Butler to overlook the amazing correspondence or analogy of cultural developments in European areas with vastly different social-political circumstances, which seriously limits their value as exclusive genetic and determining factors. Beside, Marilyn Butler's three-phase evolutionary model ("the country movement" from James Thomson to Blake, the patriotic Romanticism of Crabbe, Scott, Coleridge and Burke, and finally the internationalist progressivism of what she called elsewhere "the Marlow group" of Shelley, Peacock, Byron and their friends) majestically disregards any matters related to style, form, imagery and aesthetic slant (i.e., the very substance of poetry). With a little more attention to literariness it becomes obvious that Professor Butler's "liberal" country Romantics are in fact staunch traditionalists, much opposed to the modernizing pressures of the political-economic powers of the day. (It is perhaps more than pure chance that the parallel prose writers – a Fielding and a Smollett – or that the quintessential "country party" figure of Goldsmith are sedulously suppressed in this presentation). I am equally intrigued by Marilyn Butler's insistence that mythological Northernism stemmed from progressive or radical impulses in

as far as it symbolized "resistances to Southern empires – ancient Rome, and its successor, the Catholic Church" (p. 45). The alternative view, widely accepted by scholars after World War II, holds that post-Herderian localisms and Germanisms were potentially (and increasingly) malignant as carriers of national-racial glorifications. Perhaps the truth lies somewhere in the middle, and late- or mid-eighteenth-century mythological localizing carried, intermeshed in its center, possibilities (and intentions) for both human opening and refusal. This last example well illustrates the manner in which Marilyn Butler's propositions, even when puzzling or controversial, are informed by an immediacy and lack of inhibition that make them attractive, fresh, and stimulating. She remains the leading British scholar in Romanticism.

Taken as a whole, the collection of Porter and Teich is a strong and original contribution to our knowledge of the Romantic age. Despite its title, it is a worthwhile comparatist enterprise. Moreover, it is a step forward towards the treatment of Romanticism as a coherent historical process, in the spirit of cultural morphology.

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Jörg K. Hoensch
A History of Modern Hungary, 1867–1986
(Longman, London, 1988. 320 pp.)

No one can blame the author of this history of modern Hungary for failing to foresee the momentous events that were about to occur in Eastern Europe as his book was published. Jörg Hoensch, the author of previous studies in Slovak and Hungarian history of the interwar period, is Professor of East European History at the University of the Saarland. This book is an expanded and updated English edition of a work first published in German in 1983. It appeared in 1988 at a time when Hungary was, of course, on the threshold of major political and economic reforms. Yet virtually all political observers would at that time have shared Hoensch's view that it was "wishful thinking" to suggest that "a parliamentary system along Western democratic lines will eventually establish itself in Hungary." (p. 283) Though many of Hoensch's observations in the final pages of the book will thus seem to readers in the 1990's as completely outdated and irrelevant, the book as a whole will be a valuable source of information for a general public whose curiosity about the countries of Eastern Europe will have been piqued by the historic events occurring there.

The great merit of Hoensch's book is the clear and organized way in which he presents the basic facts of Hungarian history since the *Ausgleich* of 1867. The book contains remarkably few factual or typographical errors. Hoensch's emphasis is almost entirely on political and economic affairs. He is particularly skillful in presenting the intricacies of shifting party politics in the Dualist era and in the immediate post-World War I period. True to his statement of purpose in the book's preface, Hoensch's explication of political events is quite "free of ideological or apologetic tendencies". His judgments on controversial issues are judicious and for the most part reflect a consensus of recent historical work. Thus, in discussing Hungary's historical development from 1867 to 1918, he cites certain economic problems Hungary encountered because of the close relationship with Austria, but concludes that overall the *Ausgleich* was a benefit to Hungary and that "Hungary was by no means an economically exploited country held in a condition of dependence on Austria (p. 43). He is particularly effective and persuasive in describing the nature of the anti-Communist and anti-Russian attitudes in Hungary in the decade leading to uprising of 1956. For the most part, however, Hoensch eschews analysis and prefers to offer a straightforward narrative of historical events. Seldom does he step back from his recitation of facts to offer a personal opinion or analytical speculation.

Preferring to focus on political parties and movements, Hoensch for the most part offers only thumbnail sketches of the key political figures in modern Hungarian history. Even so his coverage is uneven. Relatively

little attention is paid to such fascinating figures as Béla Kun and Miklós Horthy, and the reader is left unaware of some of the historical controversies surrounding their activities. Hoensch offers a more extensive discussion of the career of István Tisza, citing his political acumen but concluding that "he lacked the stature of a great statesman". (p. 52) Hoensch's portrait of Tisza, however, would have been more convincing, and his analysis of liberalism in Dualist Hungary more probing, had he made better use of Gábor Vermes's work on Tisza that is cited in the bibliography. In a similar way Hoensch's discussion of the place of István Bethlen in modern Hungarian history would have been enhanced by a recognition of the interpretations and conclusions of Ignác Romsics in his important study of the Bethlen era.

If the author is reasonably even-handed in his treatment of the major statesmen in modern Hungarian history, he does perhaps allow a certain bias to enter his depiction of János Kádár, who receives extensive coverage. Kádár is described as the "affable pioneer of liberalization" (p. 221) whose realistic, purposeful, and pragmatic policies won him "the respect, indeed the adulation, of his fellow countrymen". (256) The pluralism that Kádár allowed to develop is described by Hoensch as offering the Magyars the "maximum possible benefits at the least possible risk". (p. 284) Many observers of East European politics will share this view of Kádár, but given the rapid decline of Kádár's political fortunes in 1989 and the severe criticism of his policies that suddenly surfaced, one may question whether Hoensch presents too rosy a picture of the Hungarian political and social scene in the 1980's. Perhaps he should have paid greater heed to the warning signs of malaise (high suicide rate, drunkenness, etc.) that István Völgyes has focussed on in his various studies of contemporary Hungary.

Even if one might question some of Hoensch's emphasis or wish that he had offered more than fleeting references to some of the important current historical debates among historians of Hungary, his book nonetheless deserves recognition as a valuable reference work and the most up-to-date and authoritative study of modern Hungary. Still, specialists in Hungarian history will probably be disappointed on two counts. Firstly, while Hoensch's writing style (both in the original German and in the excellent English translation) is clear and well-organized, it is also quite colorless and pedestrian. His detailed, and quite valuable, discussions of economic problems are presented with monotonous precision. The effect in such cases is that of an encyclopedia rather than of well-crafted history. Perhaps it is unfair to make comparisons with John Lukacs, whose recent book, *Budapest, 1900*, is written with great flair and in compellingly evocative language. Yet Hoensch could have enlivened his work considerably with at least a few of the kind of telling anecdotes or provocative details that Lukacs employs so skillfully. He could, for example, have described Béla Kun's hasty (some would say ignominious) departure for Vienna upon the collapse of the Soviet Republic; Miklós Horthy's poignant letter to Stalin in 1944 pleading for an armistice; or János Kádár's fateful visit to Rajk's jail cell in 1949. Lacking a colorful and gripping writing style, Hoensch's book will not easily hold the attention of the general reader.

For the Hungarian specialist a second problem may be more serious. As Hoensch admits in his preface, "owing to lack of space" he had to neglect most of Hungary's cultural history. The results are dismaying. Endre Ady is here dismissed in half a sentence as a poet who (along with Zsigmond Móricz) set "new standards in literature". The treatment of Béla Bartók, Attila József, and György Konrád is equally brief and superficial. The uninitiated reader of Hoensch's book will have no inkling of the profound influence that these artists and others had on Hungarian society. Hoensch's book thus should not be seen as a comprehensive history of modern Hungary. Perhaps it should be read in conjunction with Pál Ignóty's *Hungary*, published in 1971, which deals with roughly the same time period. Ignóty deemphasizes political history and has almost nothing to say about economic development. But his discussions of cultural affairs are rich and provocative, and his writing style is idiosyncratic and entertaining. The works of Ignóty and Hoensch are in many ways complementary and deserve a place along-side each other on the library shelf of the Hungarian.

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Mario D. Fenyo
Literature and Political Change: Budapest, 1908–1918
 (Philadelphia, The American Philosophical Society, 1987. 156 pp.)

This well-documented study concerns itself with the literary review *Nyugat* and its association with the whole modern movement in Hungarian arts and letters (particularly, of course, the latter) which, because of the review's leading role in it as both sponsor and propagator, is referred to by Fenyo – not originally – as the *Nyugat* movement. (Following Mr. Fenyo's usage, I will italicize "Nyugat" only when it stands for the periodical itself.) The subject alone would make the book interesting, but it is made doubly interesting by the fact that the author is, as he himself is quick to tell us, the son of one of *Nyugat's* founders and editors, Miksa Fenyo.

As can be gleaned from the title, the study concentrates on the decade 1908–1918, or the first decade of the journal's existence – a momentous period in Hungarian history by any reckoning. Fenyo states as his dual objective "to", on the one hand, "formulate a methodology, a theory of the political function of literature", and, on the other, to present a "case study" of literature as agent of political change. Hence, presumably, the emphasis on the *Nyugat* which, despite its on the average small circulation, is generally acknowledged as the most important and influential literary review of the period.

The case study, fail though it ultimately does to demonstrate the connection which is posited between literature and political change, does meet with partial success. Unfortunately, not much light is shed on the larger issue of the political function of literature, a failing which Fenyo himself acknowledges. It must be added, however, that, the impressive results of the sociology of literature notwithstanding, the common-sense notion that literature must generally have some impact upon political events has the appeal (if not the self-evidential quality) of an axiom; and like an axiom, it is not really susceptible of proof. There can be no harder task than to explain how and through what channels literature exercises its political function, when the reality of that function, let alone its nature, has yet to be established.

Insofar as literature does have a political function, it can only be inferred, never proven. The literary statement, even one which is exhortatory and overtly political, is inert and basically a phenomenon of the printed page. By the time this peculiarly literary phenomenon can have any impact on the world of affairs and politics, it has crossed boundaries and become something other than what it was; it has, so to speak, metastasized. György Bölöni, a Socialist and contemporary of Ady, is quoted by Fenyo as saying that it was "to the *Nyugat* that Hungarians owed the renaissance of their literature, but it had nothing to do with the fermentation of Hungarian political life. What's more, it even kept aloof from the revolutions the sources of which it actually fed..." Fenyo, characteristically, is puzzled how Bölöni can deny that the *Nyugat* had any political significance when, at the same time, he credits it with having fed the sources of the revolution (presumably the 1918 bourgeois – "Chrysanthemum" – revolution, without which, however, there would scarcely have been the "proletarian" revolution which followed). This evidently self-contradictory analysis, though not the paragon of logic we might wish for, does derive from an altogether likable quality: an undogmatic approach in which both intuition and the critical eye are interjected. Based on no mean circumstantial evidence, Bölöni makes the plausible assumption that the *Nyugat* did have political clout, but upon closer examination we cannot see how the revolutions (or for that matter any of the political events ensuing) necessarily followed from the *Nyugat's* literary endeavors. The metastasis which transforms the written word into action, assuming of course there is such a thing, escapes his attention, as indeed it must everybody's.

The language of literature – the various ways in which it manifests itself – is different in kind from the visible and audible deeds of politics. Fenyo himself points out that Ady's poetic landscape, revolutionary though he calls it, may or may not have anything to do with the unrest and revolutions that followed. Indeed, exhort or even incite though a poem may, neither in its aural nor visual form can it have any immediate effect upon the political landscape. Before it can operate there it must undergo any number of transformations. It must, in a word, become what Leonard Mayer calls the "scuttlebutt" of the age, distilled and integrated in a prevailing

The fact is, Fenyo's approach is too earthbound and reads too much like a chronical to have any real chance of illuminating a subject so difficult as the political function of literature. Fortunately, however, this turns out to be only a pretext for his "case study", which, fail though it must in its primary aim, is nevertheless well worth the reader's trouble. It is, essentially, a political profile of the *Nyugat* editors and writers: their political beliefs, their affiliation with radical or progressive organizations whose existence largely coincided with that of the *Nyugat*, and their somewhat ambiguous place in the social hierarchy of the Hungary of 1908-1918. It offers a portrait of the *Nyugat* that rightly emphasises the review's central role in the Second Reform Age, and it does so with gusto and in abundant detail.

Given the brevity of the period with which he deals, Fenyo has quite rightly organized the book around certain dominant themes or aspects of the journal cum movement. For example, one chapter is devoted to situating the *Nyugat* in time and space ("The Historical Context"), another to the journal's literary precedents, yet another to its finances, and so on. Each chapter in turn reads chronologically. However, while the portrait is remarkable for its considerable breadth, it is not particularly deep, offering relatively few insights or penetrating analyses.

The study naturally contains a discussion of the cultural inheritance of the *Nyugat*. The picture it paints is not only detailed, it is for the most part also accurate. The importance of foreign influences, those of "Zola, Nietzsche, Anatole France, Baudelaire, Freud, the symbolists, the naturalists, the impressionists" is rightly emphasized. (Personally I would leave out the so-called impressionists, who upon closer examination turn out to be essentially the same figures who are generally and best regarded as symbolists; indeed, impressionism in literature turns out to be rather a phantom category.) The phenomenon of "combined development", in which Hungary, like Central and Eastern European countries in general, ventured to "catch up" with the West by adopting - belatedly and out of sequence - middle and late nineteenth-century artistic currents, is concisely and vividly depicted. On the other hand, the retarding influence of the patriotic or "folk-national" style, by which I mean not only such uninspired poets as Lajos Pósa and Mihály Szabolcska but also critics like Pál Gyulai and Zsolt Beöthy (particularly the latter), wedded to and supported by such conservative organizations as the Kisfaludy Society and the Academy of Sciences, is not given the consideration it deserves.

For all its audaciousness and originality, the *Nyugat* was not without its forerunners. Fenyo mentions quite a few, including of course the seminal *A Hét*, launched in 1890 under the editorship of József Kiss. The emphasis, however, falls on a few reviews in which Osvát, one of the chief architects of the *Nyugat* in its middle as well as early years, played a principal role. One such review was *Magyar Gênioz* edited only for a brief term by Osvát. Of much greater importance was the *Figyelő*, launched on January 1, 1905, again under the editorship of Osvát. It had a meager lifespan of eleven issues, but during that time it had concentrated the same talents which would make up the shortly-to-emerge *Nyugat* movement. Indeed, the very first issue of the *Nyugat* (which appeared on the stands in late December 1907) bore the inscription "the new series of the *Figyelő*".

Given the study's emphasis on the *Nyugat's* political function, it should be no surprise that Fenyo has situated the periodical, and the writers and artists loosely associated with it, in the socio-economic hierarchy of Hungary in 1908-1918. The Jewish connection has of course long been known, but Fenyo's discussion of it is all the same impressive for its many-sidedness and comprehensiveness. The great triumvirate of Ignóty, Osvát, and Fenyo was Jewish, as was Lajos Hatvany, whose early contribution to the journal as writer and particularly as financier was absolutely essential.

The *Nyugat* was by no means unique. Fenyo offers a profile of virtually every organization and movement "to which the progressive intellectuals belonged", and which was active during all or at least some of the first decade of the *Nyugat's* existence. There were the review *Huszadik Század* and the group that would adopt it as its official organ, the Society of Social Scientists (founded in January 1900 and January 1901, respectively); the Free School (established by the Society for the benefit of workers); the Thália dramatic company, the Martinovics Lodge of the Freemasons; the Galilei Circle of the University of Budapest; the Endre Nagy cabaret; the Bourgeois Radical Party; the Free Union of Teachers in Hungary; the Sunday Circle; and many others.

According to Fenyo, an examination of the rosters of these organizations "reveals that their membership was likewise predominantly Jewish..." Fenyo, who amply shows the "interdependence and interassociations between the *Nyugat* and the above listed organizations", supposes, plausibly, that, "by and large, the subscribers and readers of the periodical came from their ranks". Circumstantial evidence for this claim is provided by Ala-

dár Schöpflin's recollection, cited by Fenyo, namely that the *Nyugat* was read mostly by Jews. Echoing this assertion is Miksa Fenyo, who as part-time bookkeeper and fundraiser "knew his constituents very well", and who asserted that two-thirds of the *Nyugat's* readers were Jewish.

These Jewish intellectuals were for the most part petty bourgeois (a celebrated exception to this being the Sunday Circle's György Lukács). They – and of course the outnumbered non-Jews who filled out the rosters of these organizations – were radical and, in one way or another, modernists. But the *Nyugat* also had the support of the big bourgeoisie (also in the main Jews). Among those investing in the Nyugat Literary and Printing Co. (a book publishing venture begun by the founders of the periodical) were Leó Lánczy, the Director of the Hungarian Bank of Commerce, and powerful industrialists like Ferenc Chorin and Moritz Kornfeld.

It is unlikely, Fenyo argues, that such experienced businessmen joined the venture in expectation of a profit. Their financial (and occasionally even "literary") involvement probably owed itself instead to their wish in general to "promote assimilation, integration, pro-Semitism". This wish, Fenyo might have added, was by this time peculiarly Jewish upper and upper-middle class, a remnant of the relatively liberal climate in the Hungary of the early dual Monarchy, and was yet another thing that distinguished them from such young Jewish intellectuals as Béla Balázs, Karl Mannheim, and (despite his upper class background) György Lukács, for whom such optimism seemed hopelessly anachronistic.

The prominent role of Jews in the intellectual (and professional) life of Hungary was, of course, symptomatic of a more general tendency. In all three centers of the Monarchy – Vienna, Prague, and Budapest – it was Jews who by the *fin-de-siècle* controlled the levers of culture. It was they who ran the press, they who bought and sold paintings, they who put on and attended concerts. But this tendency was given to variations which distinguished the imperial centers one from the other. In the Bohemian capital, the German Jews had a culture all their own and were very far indeed from relinquishing their distinctive identity; moreover, their impact on Czech culture was negligible. In Vienna (where the supremacy of German culture was of course undisputed), not only the intellectuals and entrepreneurs, but the writers and artists also came from the ranks of Jews. Budapest, meanwhile, differed from Prague in that it was essentially the home of a single culture – Magyar – in which Jews, only recently assimilated, not merely participated but played the predominant role. Budapest also differed from Vienna in that, for reasons not entirely clear, Jews there did not abound in the sphere of imaginative writing; indeed, if anything, they were underrepresented. The *Nyugat*, with its Jewish financiers and editors on the one hand, and its gentile literary artists on the other, not only mirrored the trend but was an extreme example of it.

According to Mihály Babits, historically speaking as important a figure as any in the *Nyugat*, the early years of the review could be summarized as the story of the gentry and bourgeoisie in revolt against itself. This rather straightforward interpretation is taken exception to by Fenyo, who insists that most of the *Nyugat* writers were in fact either petty-bourgeois or working-class. This objection seems rather off the mark for at least two reasons. In the first place, "bourgeois", in everyday parlance, does not necessarily mean the modern-day upper class, let alone the sub-class of capitalist moguls; the petite-bourgeoisie is not only not excluded, it may be the very group the word is (however, imprecisely) intended to denote. Second, the comparatively minor role of the working class is here decidedly overemphasized.

It is probably not of much significance that Mr. Fenyo does not mention – in this context at least – the gentry. After all, it is largely a matter of point of view whether one in early twentieth-century Hungary is considered gentry or bourgeois, because the specific situation of the gentry (as opposed to that of the landed noble) owed not a little to the process of bourgeois transformation. Also, the middle class was comprised of petty-bourgeois and gentry elements alike, the former more often than not acculturating to the latter. On the other hand, the important role which Fenyo assigns to the working class is puzzling and misleading. The sole writer discussed at any length with a proletarian "pedigree" is Lajos Kassák, and he of course was not primarily a *Nyugat* writer.

Moreover, according to this scenario one might suppose that the *Nyugat* had a fairly sizable proletarian constituency, yet Fenyo himself begins his chapter "The *Nyugat* and the Working Class" with the words "It should be clear from what precedes that the *Nyugat* was not designed for the 'working-class'..." Aiming as he does to demonstrate that the review prepared the way for the 1918 and 1919 revolution – and assuming, too, as he

does, that revolutions are the culmination of genuine popular sentiment, not the result of manipulation and demagoguery – Fenyo must have come to this conclusion with some reluctance.

But, understandably, he is loath to ignore his data after such painstaking work in gathering it. To begin with, there is the simple fact that the periodical was expensive, costing in the beginning one crown, by the decade's end two – “the equivalent of two balcony tickets to the theater”, Fenyo quotes Gyula Juhász. It was, in other words, an extravagance that the average workingman can hardly have allowed himself (in the unlikely event that he would have liked to purchase a copy). Also, the *Nyugat*, even at the height of its popularity, had relatively few readers. In its first decade the review had no better years than 1917 and 1918, when, according to Fenyo's own figures, it had a readership of 4000. This number, dwarf though it does the figure of 500 given by Fenyo for the *Nyugat's* readership in 1908 – accounts mostly for the industrialist and banker subscribers, and the members of those radical organizations already mentioned, who presumably either subscribed or purchased issues as they came out. In brief, only a very few workers can ever have read the *Nyugat*.

It is clear from the foregoing that the *Nyugat* occupied a unique place in the social and cultural map of Hungary. Jewish and gentile, *l'art pour l'art* and (in the person at least of Ady) *engagé*, it was comprised mainly of petty-bourgeois and gentry elements, while also representing, if marginally, the proletariat and (still less) the peasantry. Aladár Schöpflin characterized this political and cultural eclecticism (or pluralism) as proof of the *Nyugat's* essentially classless and universal nature. After Ágnes Heller, Fenyo brands this and all such sentiments as typically bourgeois; reflecting as it does the bourgeoisie's belief that it is the “party of humanity”. Of course, there is a great deal of truth in this, but surely Fenyo does not want to deny the possibility of altruism. Granted that one cannot escape entirely class-bound influences, it is nevertheless true that people, in a vast array of circumstances – class is not the sole determining factor – can and do adopt deliefs which have little in common with those of other members, perhaps even the majority, of their own class. For how else to distinguish the *Nyugat* writers and their constituency from much of the bourgeoisie who certainly did not share their radical-liberal ideology?

Though the *Nyugat* served as a kind of bridge spanning the gulf between the Right and the Left, it was nevertheless generally regarded as being squarely on one side or the other. As Fenyo notes, the *Nyugat* was for the first several years popularly identified with Ady. Indeed, adds the author, “A monograph similar in theme and scope to this one might have been written with Ady as the protagonist: the political function of Ady”. A slight exaggeration though this may be, it is a fact that the criticism heaped upon the *Nyugat* had already been heard many times over in the excoriation of Ady. Fenyo lists the faults which were commonly attributed to both, as summarized by Dezső Szabó. These were 1) cosmopolitanism (at the expense of characteristically Hungarian traditions); 2) moral decadence (an import from the West); 3) serving as a “front” for the “subversive activities of the Jews”; and 4) freedom of form and language and the concomitant neglect of “healthy Hungarian traditions”. This general perception tended to flatten out and minimize differences, so that even a distinctive stylist like Babits could be, and was, taken for an Ady-disciple. Ironically, this lack of discrimination eventually itself became a contributing factor in the real and actual melting away of some, though by no means all, of those differences.

The attacks from the Left, meanwhile, tended to overemphasize the breach separating Ady, the *engagé*, and those popularly (and to some extent justly) regarded as aestheticists and scribes of the ivory tower. The Socialist Ernő Bresztovszky, an early contributor of the *Nyugat*, came increasingly to criticize the periodical for its *l'art pour l'art* stuffiness and reluctance to deal with social issues. At the same time, he had mostly praise for Ady – in the *Nyugat*, perhaps, but not of it – for his indefatigable advocacy of progressive and even radical views. On the other hand there was also, as Fenyo reminds us, the curious case of Sándor Csizmadia, a working-class poet and Socialist of high standing, who claimed, in a series of writings in the Social Democrats' own *Népszava*, that Ady's poetry labored too much after aesthetic effects to be considered genuinely radical. A few years later, Ady, while singled out as the worthiest of all the *Nyugat* writers, was again criticized by a group which at least considered itself to be much to his left. Kassák and his group of self-proclaimed avant-gardists, which gathered itself around the periodical *Tett* (and after its demise, the *Ma*), found Ady much too romantic to be anything like the revolutionary he was sometimes touted as. (It might be noted that Ady thought even less of Kassák.)

Although I can only re-emphasise the value of Mr. Fenyo's study, I must reluctantly add that it is strewn

with facile or skewed judgments, and even some inconsistencies and errors. At the end, Fenyo sums up the achievements of the *Nyugat*. Besides undermining the prevailing ideology of conservative nationalism and helping to disseminate notions of democracy and civil liberty – two achievements had to dispute – Fenyo goes on to credit the *Nyugat* with still one more, namely its persistent and unswerving support of Ady. But, surely, this “achievement” is not on the same order as the others. It would make more sense to regard it as an outgrowth, or a manifestation, of the other listed – one cannot help but add, “genuine” – achievements.

But the author's evident fondness for Ady more than once leads him astray. Though he may not overestimate Ady's historical significance, which appears impregnable, he most certainly does his present-day popularity. “Today Ady is still among the three most popular Hungarian poets, although he is most appreciated, as he was in his lifetime, by the urban professional stratum.” If Fenyo means by “the urban professional stratum” those academics who turn out more volumes on Ady than anyone can possibly, or cares to read, then he is probably half right. Otherwise, however, he could not be further from the truth. Ady is not among today's favorite poets; in fact, so far has his popularity declined that it is fast becoming problematic to speak of him as a “living poet”.

Fenyo's neo- or semi-Marxist approach has both its advantages and drawbacks. Among its drawbacks is the tendency to caricature conservative groups and spokesmen. It seems to me questionable to exclude all those affiliated with the university from the intelligentsia simply because they do not qualify as “progressive”. What is more, Fenyo's “proof” of the university's conservatism, namely that “It was unusual for professors in the Hungarian Department even to refer to contemporary literature”, is not very compelling. Not of course because the failure to deal with contemporary literature is not conservative. Rather, because universities in modern times are by their very nature conservative. There has always been, and always will be, a certain lag between the time a literary work appears and the time it is incorporated – if it is incorporated – in the curriculum of a university. Moreover, this is as it should be. A work that marks a departure from the norm, aesthetically or otherwise, or distinguishes itself as iconoclastic or rebellious, loses any or all of those qualities – and with them the ability to change society – if it is immediately coopted, absorbed at once into the mainstream of institutionalized learning.

Fenyo rues the fact that the average English-speaking reader is not likely to be familiar with the celebrated names of the *Nyugat*, and therefore he would like “to bring these worthwhile writers, if not their writings, into the mainstream of international consciousness”. But certainly a prerequisite for familiarizing readers with new names is to present them as they are in fact spelled. There are a number of misprints, annoyingly conspicuous, which somehow escaped the proof reader's attention. To name only two: “Kariuthy” for “Karinthy” (on the “List of illustrations”), and “Igestus” for “Ignotus” (on the “List of illustrations” and on Figure 12).

There are other curiosities. It is difficult to understand why the author, who had access to much archival material and old periodicals by no means easy to come by, had to settle for the German translation of Zoltán Horváth's *Magyar századforduló (Die Jahrhundertwege in Ungarn)*, not the original Hungarian version. Next perhaps a more serious complaint. In one of his footnotes, Fenyo refers to an as yet unpublished manuscript of Ferenc Kiss, but it soon becomes apparent that the work in question is Kiss's *Az érett Kosztolányi*, which was published as early as 1979, a good ten years before Fenyo's study. One cannot help but ponder how old Fenyo's text is, in full or in part, not to mention his research.

But for all its faults, this is a fabulously detailed, well-documented account of the *Nyugat*, and of the modern movement in literature it helped to generate. It is well-structured; each chapter covers a relatively discrete theme or subject, but with just enough overlap to allow for illuminative resonance. It is, in short, a most valuable addition to the growing literature on the *Nyugat*.

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Epstein, Irene R.

Gyula Szekfű: A Study in the Political Basis of Hungarian Historiography

(Garland Publishing, Inc., New York and London, 1987. 375 pp.)

According to Irene R. Epstein's book, *Gyula Szekfű: A Study in the Political Basis of Hungarian Historiography*, no historian has had a greater impact on Hungarian historiography in the twentieth century than Gyula Szekfű. During his fifty-one year career Szekfű experienced the most traumatic and turbulent years in Hungarian history. His career began as a pro-Habsburg Dualist from 1904 until the end of the First World War. Later, he went through an anti-liberal and nationalistic phase until the 1930's, when he recognized the threat of Hungary's pro-German policy. Fearing the rise of fascism and the "domestic degradation of the Hungarian state", Szekfű became involved in the anti-German resistance movement during the Second World War and supported and justified the Communist regime that followed Hungary's liberation. It is during these chaotic times that Szekfű "traveled from the far right to the far left of the political spectrum, appearing sincere at every stage of his life".

Epstein writes that the theme of her book is to "explore the connection between politics and historical scholarship in the case of Szekfű". In this regard she has shown that Szekfű's historiography was conditioned by the changing Hungarian political realities of the twentieth century. In the early years Szekfű was a pioneer of the new historic spirit championed by the Germans Ranke, Meinecke, and Naumann. Szekfű thought that the writing of history "rested on the twin pillars of politics and psychology". His *Der Staat Ungarn*, "intended to treat the history of Hungary as an organic process that emphasized those factors which influenced its political and cultural development". According to Szekfű, it was modeled on Meinecke's *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat*.

Szekfű's second book, *A száműzött Rákóczi* (The Exiled Rákóczi), "constituted [an] important landmark in Hungarian historiography and in the development of [his] career". This book is significant for a variety of reasons. First, it challenged the present school of historical scholarship of Kálmán Thaly; second, its theme supported the *Labanc*, or pro-Habsburg approach to Hungarian history over the more popular *Kuruc*, or pro-Hungarian independence approach. Szekfű, a deeply religious individual, saw the "great-Magyars" as those "who remained and undertook the difficult work of the 'double task': to retain domestic independence while being part of German politics and German culture". Hungary's future was tied to a *Mitteuropa* under German hegemony. For Szekfű, history showed that disaster came to Hungary whenever it was connected with the East, and prosperity whenever Hungary was associated with the German West. Naturally, the "great" Hungarians included Széchenyi and Deák, who worked towards compromising with the King while attempting to achieve a greater degree of domestic independence for their nation. Kossuth and Rákóczi, heroes of the *Kuruc* school, undermined Hungary's development by ignoring the political and geographical reality by fighting to achieve Hungary's independence.

This study is organized into three sections: early pro-Habsburg, the inter-war period, and Szekfű's post-war change to socialism. As Epstein points out, Szekfű needed "to adjust to new political circumstances rather than cling to old principles". She uses Szekfű's early works as an excellent spring board into the most important and influential phase of his life: the inter-war years. During this period Szekfű's writings, specifically his book *Három Nemzedék* (Three Generations), a book that explains Hungarian history over the course of three generations, describes the reasons for Hungary's recent debacle. Széchenyi was Szekfű's model for Hungarians to emulate: the *Labanc* school that supported constitutional change within the monarchy while maintaining a *Kaisertreu* approach to Austria. But as Epstein points out, "*Három nemzedék* reveals more about Szekfű in the 1920's than about Széchenyi in the 1830's".

Három Nemzedék was an attack on the sins of liberalism, and the role of the Jews in Hungarian history. Szekfű believed the establishment of a "Christian national estate state" was to be the basis of Hungary's future. Political liberalism in cultural and economic affairs was disastrous for Hungary, especially for the lesser nobles. It was the foremost cause of disorder and moral decline in society. The liberal policies of Kálmán Tisza represented the threat of liberalism. Liberalism exacerbated the nationality conflict with the rise of integral na-

tionalism. Liberal governments allowed the spread of socialist ideas. It was an anti-Christian, un-Hungarian system of ideas "whose basic principles were the apotheosis of human selfishness". The greatest crime of liberalism was its attack on the Church. For the Christian Szekff, the church was the fundamental basis of society. "Doctrinaire liberalism" eventually led to radicalism and revolution.

The immigration and assimilation of the Jews was equally as destructive as liberalism. Epstein does an admirable job in explaining the importance of Szekff's prejudices towards the Jews. Jews were predominant in the intellectual fields, and were able to prosper with the economic freedom they enjoyed. Szekff wanted to reduce the economic and intellectual importance of the Jews in Hungarian society. This was one of the ways of establishing the basis of this Christian national program. But anti-Semitism became part of Szekff's ideas because Jews were associated with liberalism and the failed revolutions, Károlyi and Kun, that had just recently taken place in 1919. Szekff is especially critical of Oszkár Jászi, because of his demagogic practice amongst the Bourgeois Radicals. Szekff used the inter-war practice of putting the original family name in parenthesis when writing about Jászi, so he wrote Jászi's name as "Oszkár Jászi (Jakubovics)". Epstein exposes Szekff's rationalization for limiting the rights of Jews in Hungarian society. Also, the reader can see the importance of Szekff's writings on the historiography of the inter-war period and, more important, on the establishment of the Horthy regime. As pointed out by László Bóka, Szekff's *Három Nemzedék* made it possible for many in intellectual to find their way to Horthy.

The major accomplishment of this book is Hungarian historiography is made understandable for non-Hungarian readers. The lack of work in English on Hungarian historiography makes this work essential for students of East European history. Also, since the vast majority of Szekff's works are not translated into English, Epstein's work is indispensable to the reader who wants to comprehend the merits of Szekff's scholarship in the context of Hungarian History. Naturally, Epstein's book has much to offer to Hungarian readers as well. It is one of the first such books on Szekff to appear in print, however, why was there a delay of thirteen years to reach publication? The source material is well established and organized. Epstein has left no stone unturned in this study. She has shown Szekff to be sincere in each stage of his life. Szekff's writings do show that he fears the rise of fascism in Europe. His deep religious feelings made him fear what will become of Hungary in a world dominated by Nazi Germany. Nazism was an evil he could not deal with because it meant the destruction of the moral order he saw necessary for Hungary's future. Also, Szekff's disenchantment with Horthy's policy towards agrarian reform becomes apparent. He viewed Horthy's government as a house of cards that was morally corrupt. Szekff's movement towards resistance illustrates the sincerity of his motives.

Szekff's move towards supporting the communist government is fascinating. He saw in the socialist system the order that was necessary for his Hungary to function and survive. Although he may have compromised himself and not seen the reality of what was happening around him, this was also the case during the early inter-war years. This book could have used more historical development on this period, but this is only necessary to clarify the events that are taking place. As ambassador to the Soviet Union, Szekff's life in Moscow deserves to be the subject of a separate work. Coming out of the destruction of the two world wars Szekff saw only those things that needed to be seen. Hungary needed to be associated with a larger power, and Soviet Russia seemed to be a state that exhibited a more humanistic approach towards its citizens than the liberal West or Nazi Germany. After the failures of the latter systems to solve Hungary's domestic problems, Szekff, who "emphasized the primacy of external factors: the deciding influence of foreign policy, and the overriding interest of the state within the domestic realm", moved to the East and left. Also, age was an additional factor that had to be considered in his choice. But the swift manner in which the new regime solved the agrarian problem by the distribution of land to the peasants showed the intent of the new government to rescue Hungary from her past.

In conclusion, Epstein has written a book that not only illustrates excellent scholarship, but also a well-developed analysis of her subject. To fully understand Hungarian history during this period it is necessary to know the works of Szekff and the effect he had on the development of historiography in Hungary. Epstein has made this possible for both those who are familiar and unfamiliar with Szekff and Hungary.

Judith Marcus
Georg Lukács and Thomas Mann. A Study in the Sociology of Literature
 (Amherst, The University of Massachusetts Press, 1987. 235 pp.)

Der Titel des Buches verspricht dem Leser sehr viel, man müßte dazu zwei umfangreiche Lebenswerke durchstudieren, in diesem Falle in zwei Sprachen, deutsch und ungarisch. Die Sprache konnte bei Judith Marcus kein Hindernis sein. Die Freude des Lesers wird aber schnell getrübt, sobald man merkt, daß dieses Buch die englische Version eines sehr ähnlichen, 1982 deutsch veröffentlichten Buches ist (gemeinsame Ausgabe des Böhlau Verlags Köln/Wien und des Budapester Corvina Verlags), noch dazu mit dem selben Umschlag. Die Tatsache der früheren Ausgabe wird aber nur in der Bibliographie und in einem flüchtigen Dank im „Acknowledgements“ vermerkt.

Judith Marcus(-Tar) hat seit der deutschsprachigen Ausgabe tatsächlich am Thema weitergearbeitet, manche Stellen richtiggestellt, es ist ihr aber nicht gelungen, die grundsätzlichen Fehler des Buches zu beseitigen. Wie Tibor Hanák schon 1984 in seiner umsichtigen Besprechung der deutschsprachigen Ausgabe des Buches bemerkte (Új Látóhatár 1984/4, S. 560–563), kann Marcus nicht bedeutend mehr über die „Beziehung“ zwischen Thomas Mann und Georg Lukács sagen als Karl Kerényi im einem Zeitungsartikel (Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 8. Juni 1963, S. 20–21). Dieses Thema könnte nur dann für ein ganzes Buch ausreichen, wenn die Autorin sich tatsächlich mit allen Beziehungen zwischen Th. Mann und Lukács kritisch beschäftigen würde, so auch mit dem Inhalt der Äußerungen von Lukács über den deutschen Schriftsteller, die ja nicht alle und nicht immer positiv gesinnt waren. Sie beschäftigt sich überhaupt sehr wenig mit dem Inhalt der Lukács-Aufsätze, und es ist unverständlich, wieso sie die inhaltlich nicht immer schmeichelnden Bemerkungen von Lukács außer Acht lassen konnte (z. B. in *Thomas Mann über das literarische Erbe* oder im erst 1979 veröffentlichten *Grand Hotel „Abgrund“*). Sie grenzt nicht einmal die verschiedenen Perioden in Lukács' Einstellung dem deutschen Schriftsteller gegenüber voneinander ab.

Der tatsächliche Kontakt zwischen Thomas Mann und Georg Lukács reicht für ein ganzes Buch nicht aus, man kann aber auch zusätzliche Themen finden, besonders wenn für das Fehlen des Kontakts der eine (diesmal Thomas Mann) verantwortlich gemacht werden soll (S. 39); man kann z. B. über die Frage schreiben, warum Th. Mann Ernst Bertram zum Freund gewählt hat und nicht den Kommunisten Georg Lukács (S. 49); darüber, wie das Fehlen eines Kontakts zwischen dem Schriftsteller und dem Essayisten/Philosophen mit den Zwickigkeiten der Mann-Brüder erklärt werden kann (S. 41–42) usw. Zur Bestätigung ihres Themas zitiert Judith Marcus mehrmals das eigene, kurz vor Lukács' Tod gemachte Interview. Es klingt nicht sehr überzeugend, als sie den todkranken Lukács zitiert: „Warum ist zwischen uns nie eine solche Beziehung entstanden [wie zwischen Mann und Bertram], nachdem ja *ich* den ersten Schritt getan habe?“ (S. 41) Es ist kaum vorstellbar, daß Lukács vor seinem Tode die folgenden Tatsachen vergessen hätte: als er die ersten Besprechungen veröffentlichte, war Thomas Mann, zehn Jahre älter als Lukács, schon ein international anerkannter Schriftsteller, z. Z. ihrer ersten persönlichen Begegnung war die weltanschauliche Kluft zwischen ihnen unermesslich und sie blieb für Jahrzehnte unüberbrückbar; zwischen 1920 und Th. Manns Tod 1955 war es kaum vorstellbar, den persönlichen Kontakt mit Lukács aufrechtzuerhalten. Es ist auch kaum denkbar, daß Lukács sich so kindisch beleidigt gefühlt hätte, er konnte ja die Interventionen von Th. Mann auf die „Forderung des Tages“ kaum vergessen – zuerst um Lukács vor der Auslieferung an die ungarischen Behörden zu retten (1922), dann um ihn vor der Ausweisung aus Österreich zu retten, und auf Lukács' Bitte im Interesse der Kommunisten Sallai und Fürst (1932). Lukács schrieb ja 1949: „Th. Mann drückt, meinem Empfinden nach, die Schroftheit der damaligen [1922] Gegensätzlichkeit allzu höflich und zartfühlend aus...“ Und dazu können noch die anerkennenden Sätze in „*Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen*“ gezählt werden. Es muß nicht erwogen werden, eine wie große Rolle bei diesen Interventionen die Persönlichkeit von Josef Lukács bzw. die Erinnerung an den „guten weisen alten Herren von Lukács“ spielen konnte, die Tatsachen scheinen aber für mich eindeutig zu beweisen, daß der „Hofrat“ Josef Lukács viel näher zum deutschen Schriftsteller stehen konnte als sein Sohn. Und es ist höchst ungerade, daß J. Marcus in ihrem Buch nie versäumt, vor dem Namen von Josef Lukács im englischen Text deutsch und in Anführungszeichen das Wort „Hofrat“ zu setzen – und sie erklärt nicht, warum ihrer Meinung nach diese Ironie hier berechtigt sein könnte.

Marcus wirft Th. Mann auch vor, in Naphtas Gestalt eine „Fremdheit“ gezeichnet zu haben, und diese Fremdheit, dieser Distanz wird an mehreren Stellen, z. B. im Zusammenhang mit Franz Baumgarten (S. 49–50) sozusagen als eine „antisemitische Attitüde“ des Schriftstellers dargestellt. In der zweiten Hälfte unseres Jahrhunderts ist jede persönliche Sensibilität in Fragen des Rassismus verständlich, in einem wissenschaftlichen Werk ist es aber unzulässig, persönliche Leiden mit den wissenschaftlichen Argumenten zu verwechseln. Niemand kann sich berechtigt beleidigt fühlen, wenn ein norddeutscher Patriziersohn in den zwanziger Jahren in einem Roman oder Brief feststellt, daß er mit einem Juden aus der Monarchie (oder mit einem Indianer usw.) nicht identisch ist. Bei Thomas Mann ist es ja meines Erachtens immer eindeutig, daß er den Distanz nicht als die Minderwertigkeit des Anderen versteht und er betrachtet die für ihn fremden Menschen und Erscheinungen mit unermeßlichem Verständnis. Das ist der Grund jener Tatsache, daß Manns Romane, besonders die Joseph-Trilogie (worüber Lukács kein einziges Wort geschrieben hat) als Chrestomatie der ewige menschlichen Erscheinungen und Eigenschaften funktionieren können. Der kulturelle Distanz zwischen Deutschland und der Monarchie ist ähnlicherweise in der Rezeption der frühen Lukács-Werke zu finden. Den Gedankengang von „*Die Theorie des Romans*“ haben ja die aus der Monarchie stammenden Kritiker (von Kracauer bis Mannheim) ganz anders verstanden als z. B. von Grolman aus Gießen am Lahn.

Ähnlich ist der Fall mit der kritischen Einstellung von Marcus zu Karl Kerényi. Ungeachtet dessen, daß sie Kerényis Verdienste in der Klärung der Frage Th. Mann und Lukács fast verschweigt, wirft sie ihm vor nicht beachtet zu haben, daß sich die Budapester Juden nach dem zweiten Weltkrieg von der deutschen Kultur (angeblich) abgewendet haben (S. 175), darüber hinaus versucht sie auch die heikle Frage des ungarischen Patriotismus hierherzuholen. Kerényi schreibt aber nur so viel: „...warum wählte er [Lukács] zur Zielscheibe seines theoretischen Hasses einen Franzosen und nicht einen Deutschen, etwa den damals noch sehr spielerischen Künstler – Thomas Mann? ...es hatte auch Familiäre Gründe: im verhängnisvollen Hang des Budapester Bürgertums zum Deutschen, im Gegensatz zum französischen Hang der ungarischen Dichter und Schriftsteller.“ Im Interesse ihrer Präkonzeption vergißt Marcus, daß der Hang zur deutschen Kultur auf die Ganzheit der Budapester Lutheraner, auf einen Großteil der Katholiken usw. auch zutrifft. Budapest war ja bis zur Jahrhundertwende überwiegend von deutsch sprechenden Bürgern bewohnt – und die deutsche Sprache kann nicht einmal in Mitteleuropa mit den Juden identifiziert werden.

Noch eine methodologisch zutiefst verfehlt Fragestellung: Marcus scheint die Eigentümlichkeit der schriftstellerischen Schöpfung nicht zu beachten. Sie zergliedert die äußeren und inneren Eigenschaften und vergleicht diese mit dem ebenfalls zergliederten Lukács – ohne dabei zu beachten, aus welcher Periode des Philosophen die betreffende Eigenschaft hergeholt werden kann. Könnte der Vergleich der beiden Figuren so gelingen, wäre Th. Manns Naphta im Roman keinesfalls eine lebendige Figur. Sie läßt auch gänzlich außer Acht, daß am Anfang des Jahrhunderts in der sich schnell wandelnden Gesellschaft sehr viele Schicksale ähnliche Beiträge für einen Schriftsteller liefern konnten.

Zum Schluß noch einige Bemerkungen: Über das Thema Th. Mann und G. Lukács schreibend ist es unverzeihlich außer Acht zu lassen, daß 1977 deutsch und 1980 ungarisch in der Zusammenstellung von Antal Mádl und Judit Györi ein dickes Buch erschienen ist, wo die Dokumente über diese Frage zu finden sind (A. Mádl, J. Györi, *Thomas Mann und Ungarn*. Essays, Dokumente, Bibliographie, Böhlau Verlag Köln/Wien 1977).

Auf Seite 132–133 vermengt Marcus innerhalb von drei Sätzen mit der Wendung „zu dieser Zeit“ vier Jahre. Das wäre auch prinzipiell unerlaubt, wer aber die Entwicklung von Lukács zwischen 1911 und 1914 kennt, hat eine Ahnung davon, wie große Wandlungen in seinem Denken innerhalb dieser Periode vor sich gegangen sind.

Den ungarischen Kenntnissen der Autorin ist es zu verdanken, daß sie im Appendix des Buches zwei kurze, ursprünglich ungarische Schriften von Lukács (und zwei von Th. Mann) englisch veröffentlicht. Es kann aber kaum erklärt werden, warum gerade diese Schriften von Lukács speziell zu diesem Thema, zu dieses Buch gehören.

Die Bemerkungen von Tibor Hanák zu der früheren Ausgabe des Buches treffen auch auf die englische Version zu: über eine „geistige Symbiose“, über eine (frustrierte) „Liebesaffäre“ zwischen Th. Mann und G. Lukács kann man keinesfalls sprechen – J. Marcus tut aber dies. Die meisten Parallelitäten der Werke und der

Gedanken von Mann und Lukács sind „einfach“ auf die Zeit zurückzuführen. In einem „Literatursoziologischen“ Werk ist es unzulässig, die Umstände, die kulturelle Umgebung, die Zeit in solchem Maße außer Acht zu lassen.

MTA
Filozófiai Intézet
Budapest

Júlia Bendl

Aurélien Sauvageot
Souvenirs de ma vie hongroise
(Corvina, Budapest, 1988.)

En commençant à lire les *Souvenirs de ma vie hongroise* d'Aurélien Sauvageot – parus en 1988, juste avant la mort de l'auteur – la première question qu'on doit se poser concerne certainement l'identité du destinataire. Pour qui écrit-il ? Qui sont censés de s'intéresser au récit de la période budapestoise (1923–1933) du mémorialiste ? Si nous prenons en considération l'écriture de Sauvageot – écriture de linguiste, c'est-à-dire composant le récit d'unités brèves et choisissant le plus souvent des expressions bien faciles à saisir –, nous sommes obligés de convenir que ce livre s'adresse avant tout à un public hongrois, et au petit nombre de Français ayant quelque rapport avec la Hongrie.

Car le livre de Sauvageot – quoique l'auteur le commence par une épisode de sa petite enfance – n'est point *Une vie*, au sens où l'on entendait au XVIII^e siècle, c'est-à-dire relatant les étapes d'une vie humaine pour en faire profiter les contemporains. Ces *Souvenirs* sont plutôt l'histoire d'une passion, celle qui a saisi le jeune linguiste au début des années 1920 et qui lui fait terminer son livre – à l'âge de 90 ans – par ce mot pathétique, un mot de l'écrivain István Csurka – „Il est difficile, bien des fois même mortel, d'être Hongrois, mais cela le vaut.”

Arrivant à Budapest en novembre 1923, ne sachant pratiquement rien de la Hongrie, mais ayant, grâce à une vieille histoire, mille fois racontée par sa mère, une opinion plutôt favorable des autochtones, le nouveau lecteur de français du Collège Eötvös va bientôt tomber littéralement amoureux de la Hongrie. Mais il raconte tout cela sur un ton tellement distant et détaché que le lecteur ne s'en rend compte que petit à petit.

D'où l'étrange force de ces *Souvenirs*. On sait que Sauvageot a déjà écrit une *Découverte de la Hongrie*, parue à Paris, chez Félix Alcan, en 1937. Cette *Découverte* est une description minutieuse et plutôt impersonnelle de la réalité hongroise : de la géographie, de l'histoire, de la race, de la langue, des coutumes etc. Mais ce travail d'entomologiste nous paraît aujourd'hui bien dépassé, il n'est révélateur ni de la Hongrie, ni du personnage de l'écrivain. Le point de vue choisi dans les *Souvenirs* est, par contre, autrement fructueux. Il nous donne tout d'abord un autoportrait hautement intéressant d'un personnage typique de la troisième et de la quatrième républiques. D'où l'intérêt de l'image de la Hongrie des années 1920–1930, et surtout du personnage du hungarophile, ouvrier des rapports entre la France et la Hongrie.

De l'autoportrait, aussi intéressant qu'il soit, il n'y a pas grand'chose à dire, si ce n'est qu'en rapport avec le sujet qui nous préoccupe : le rôle de l'intermédiaire. Il faut rappeler, en tout cas, que Sauvageot est un personnage typique de la République : normalien, socialiste, franc-maçon, croyant ferme à la supériorité des vertus de la France républicaine et démocratique, il est de la race ceux qui composent l'élite intellectuelle et politique de la France. Il partage la conviction rationaliste de cette élite, d'où, certainement, sa réserve quant à sa vie privée ; nous n'en apprenons que ce qui est indispensable à savoir pour suivre sa carrière de linguiste finno-ougrienne.

Mais cette carrière est déjà, en elle-même, fort intéressante. C'est Antoine Meillet – souverain incontesté des linguistes français et bête noire, à cause d'un livre sur les langues, déconsidérant la langue hongroise, de Dezső Kosztolányi – qui aiguille le jeune Aurélien Sauvageot, dès 1917, dans la direction des langues finno-ougriennes. Robert Gauthiot, désigné à étudier ce domaine, étant mort à la guerre, Meillet annonce au tout jeune

germaniste qu'est Sauvageot, qu'il devrait apprendre le finnois et le hongrois pour pouvoir occuper, dans un futur incertain, la Chaire de finno-ougrienne qu'on devrait créer à l'École des Langues Orientales. Sauvageot mettra dix-huit ans à remplir les conditions nécessaires, mais Maillat tiendra parole : la Chaire est créée en 1935, Sauvageot est nommé professeur.

Pour arriver là il devait tout d'abord apprendre le finnois et le hongrois, puis présenter et soutenir une thèse. Son séjour budapestois devait donc servir à cela ; tout en occupant un poste de lecteur de français au Collège Eötvös, il avait à perfectionner son hongrois et à rédiger ses deux thèses (car à l'époque la thèse principale devait être accompagnée par une deuxième thèse, de moindre importance). Tout allait pour le mieux dans le meilleur des mondes, sauf quelques imprévus : d'une part des obstacles, rencontrés en la personne de Louis Eisenmann, dans la carrière académique, d'autre part la passion, tout à fait imprévisible, du jeune professeur pour la langue, la littérature, l'histoire hongroises. Mais les deux ne sont pas tout à fait indépendants l'un de l'autre.

On sait la superbe ignorance des Français par rapport à l'Europe centrale. A part quelques spécialistes (comme l'était Louis Eisenmann) ils ne savent pratiquement rien ni de la géographie, ni de l'histoire, ni de la culture. C'était le cas de Sauvageot, celui de François Gachot (arrivé un an après son collègue) ou alors celui de Jean Mistler, futur député, ministre, romancier et secrétaire perpétuel de l'Académie Française, attaché culturel à Budapest entre 1920 et 1924. Mistler n'était jamais réparti de son ignorance : il nous fait savoir dans ses souvenirs tardifs (*Le jeune homme qui rôde*, Paris, 1984) qu'il s'ennuyait beaucoup à Budapest où il n'y avait ni vie musicale, ni vie littéraire dignes de ce nom. Pour Mistler la Hongrie – quoi qu'elle ne soit pas anthropatique – a bien mérité son sort pour avoir choisi, lors de la Grande Guerre, le mauvais camp.

Le cas d'Aurélien Sauvageot est tout différent. Est-ce l'influence du Collège Eötvös, institution très francophile encore à cette époque ? Est-ce sa sympathie pour Albert Gyergyai qui lui sert d'introduitateur dans les hautes sphères culturelles du pays ? Est-ce son engouement en sa qualité de linguiste pour les beautés de la langue hongroise ? Ce qui est certain, c'est que le jeune lecteur va sympathiser bien vite avec la Hongrie et les hongrois. Sa curiosité est sans bornes, il fera ainsi connaissance d'une part avec l'histoire, la langue et la littérature, d'autre part avec de différentes couches de la société de l'époque : des universitaires, comme Gombocz, Melich ou Eckhardt, des écrivains, comme Babits, Kosztolányi, Móricz, Illyés, de bourgeois budapestois, d'aristocrates, de nobles appauvris, de fonctionnaires etc.

Sauvageot voit clairement les tares de cette société, et s'insurge, en bon républicain, contre les inégalités qu'il rencontre un peu partout. Pour le Français qu'il est, imbibé des grands thèmes de la Révolution, c'est-à-dire de la liberté et l'égalité, le manque de libertés et le manque d'égalité sont proprement révoltants. Mais, contrairement à Jean Mistler et contrairement à tous ceux qui constituaient cette élite intellectuelle qui était l'inspirateur des traités de Versailles, Sauvageot ne porte pas une condamnation globale sur la Hongrie, mais nuance, dès le début, sa pensée.

La rencontre des plus grands esprits de l'époque – suivie par la découverte de leurs textes – y est pour beaucoup. Touché par le rayonnement d'un Babits ou d'un Illyés, bien guidé par Gyergyai, ébloui par la poésie d'Endre Ady, Sauvageot épouse tout naturellement les préoccupations de ses interlocuteurs et de ses amis, comprend parfaitement l'importance de la langue, et sera bientôt conscient du poids de l'histoire. Tandis que la plupart de ses compatriotes se cantonnent dans une pensée théorique et condamnent automatiquement et sans l'analyser tout ce qui apparaît comme un écart, Aurélien Sauvageot, tout en gardant ses convictions, devient peu à peu un fervent de la cause hongroise.

Il y a, bien sûr, des moments difficiles, surtout l'affaire de la falsification de francs français en 1926. Mais ceci n'empêche pas l'action de Sauvageot qui se développe sur plusieurs plans. L'aspect diplomatique est le moins important : l'ambassade le consulte parfois, et en 1928 il essaie de servir d'intermédiaire à Paris lors de la visite d'une délégation ministérielle hongroise, dirigée par le conseiller Zoltán Magyar.

A part la préparation et la soutenance de sa thèse, condition sine qua non de sa nomination, Sauvageot élargit, dès le début de son séjour, le champ de ses activités. D'une part il devient traducteur, et réussit ainsi à faire publier en France des livres qu'il considère comme importants – citons *Le fils de Virgile Tumar* de Mihály Babits chez Stock, en 1930 –, d'autre part il commence vers la fin des années 1920 un énorme travail, la rédaction d'un grand dictionnaire franco-hongrois, et plus tard de son pendant hungaro-français. Ce travail qui

prendra de longues années, est une vraie réussite, on ne peut donc que regretter que la deuxième édition de 1942 a été en même temps la dernière, et que Sauvageot n'a jamais eu l'occasion de revoir et de mettre à jour son dictionnaire que beaucoup de Hongrois, comme p. ex. Illyés, considèrent comme plus utilisable que celui de Sándor Eckhardt.

Cela nous montre que la Hongrie, plus exactement la Hongrie officielle, n'a pas su toujours profiter de la présence et du travail de Sauvageot. Malgré quelques gestes dans les années 1960 (quand il est reçu docteur honoris causa à l'Université de Budapest), il n'a jamais été vraiment admis par les officiels (ni les anciens, ni les nouveaux) restant ainsi l'interlocuteur privilégié des représentants de la Hongrie spirituelle.

Mais il faut y ajouter tout de suite que cet interlocuteur privilégié qui comprenait si bien les Hongrois („le destin, mon destin m'avait plus particulièrement attaché au destin hongrois, le beau, le grand, le tragique destin hongrois") ne faisait pas le poids en France contre les indifférents et encore moins contre les propagandistes de la Petite Entente. Linguiste dans un pays où les historiens et les littéraires avaient toujours eu beaucoup plus d'importance, professeur à l'École des Langues orientales, institution qui n'a jamais réussi à être intégré dans l'Université, Aurélien Sauvageot n'a pas fait partie du groupe qui était capable d'influencer les décisions des décideurs.

Homme intègre, linguiste de renom, grande figure des relations franco-hongroises, Aurélien Sauvageot est finalement à l'image des rapports qui étaient en cours (jusqu'au moment de sa mort) entre les deux pays, curieux mélange de passions et d'indifférence. Et c'est ainsi qu'il nous apparaît aujourd'hui, homme du siècle des lumières, touché par le destin hongrois, et métamorphosé ainsi en personnage tragique.

Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem
Budapest

János Szávai

Ordass Lajos Önéletrajzi írások

(Válogatta, sajtó alá rendezte: Szépfalusi István)
(Európai Protestáns Magyar Szabadegyetem, Bern, 1985–87. 1040 lap)

Lajos Ordass served as a Lutheran bishop in Hungary in 1945 and 1948, as well as between 1956 and 1958. The membership of the Hungarian Evangelical Lutheran Church was not numerous – during Ordass's ministry only about 4% of the country's total population belonged to that church; its great historical legacy, however, was created by the fact that this church gave the nation substantially more writers, poets, scholars, and intellectuals than that small percentage would imply. Ordass was a leading ecclesiastical bishop when the Communist Party waged its most severe ideological and political assaults against churches.

In 1948 Ordass was arrested and sentenced to prison for two years on a false accusation stemming from his visit to the United States and Western Europe, during which time he received financial assistance for his church, funds which he was accused of misappropriating. By the summer of 1956, the social-political situation had deteriorated to such a degree, and the state appointed church leaders had become morally bankrupt to such an extent, that the Communist State officials themselves responsible for church affairs initiated the bishop's total rehabilitation, including his financial affairs. Interestingly, all this happened before October 23, 1956 – prior to the outbreak of the Hungarian uprising. In the following months, Ordass was reinstated as bishop and recognized throughout all of Hungary. Both in Hungary and abroad, he tried to reconstruct his church, which had been annihilated by the Stalinist regime.

Nevertheless, he soon found himself face to face with a revived Stalinistic State-Church policy which ostracized him, partially by using outside force and blackmail, partially by persuading his congregation to act against him. His international reputation as First Vice President in the World Association of Lutherans failed to save him. In the two decades that followed, until his death, he was prohibited from openly conducting church services and from traveling abroad. Some of his enemies, under the leadership of his successor Zoltán Káldy, with whom the State-Church policy makers enjoyed complete and reciprocal trust, wanted to isol-

ate him – at which they were more or less successful. Those who tried to defend or maintain a close relationship with Ordass were harassed, forced to retire, demoted, or dismissed from their positions.

Lajos Ordass did not augment his academic theological work. Rather, he buried himself in the most worthy activities of clerical service: organizing the church, pastoring, and preaching. He completed additional theological studies in Germany and Sweden in the 1920's where he aligned himself with the church's moderately conservative orientation of the time. He never accepted a political role; in fact, the deliberate distance he maintained between himself and the church's political activity was one of the primary reasons why he was neglected.

But his disagreements were not only with Communist church policies. Ordass was born in 1901 of German speaking parents in the Southern Hungarian Protestant village of Torzsa. (Its Serbo-Croatian name is Torza, and today it belongs to Yugoslavia.) The villagers, like his parents, were predominantly German speaking. Ordass was the first in his family to consider himself Hungarian. Acting on this conviction, he changed his surname (Wolf) to its Hungarian equivalent (Ordass) when the troops of Hitler's Third Reich occupied Hungary in March, 1944. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that Ordass actively helped and gave refuge to persecuted Jews. Additionally, he protested against the inhumanity of the forced removal of Hungarian families which was carried out in the Hungarian-Slovak region of Czechoslovakia.

A large part of his memoirs written after his retirement from active life in 1958 demonstrates the voice of an understandably bitter and suspicious person. His attitude, nevertheless, is not that of complete resignation; rather it illustrates an extraordinarily deep and intellectual religious faith. The reader recognizes a spark of life within a truly consistent personality.

Ordass had an outstanding memory. Returning home, he would immediately make notes of his significant conversations and debates. The main text of his autobiography is supplemented with this "pro-memoria", which is maintained with additional sources: conversations, letters, newspaper clippings; all of which complete his work.

Events in the author's life make the book a significant document reflecting his age; and more importantly, a crucial historical document of the Church. The first section of the text reads fluently; the second section, which deals with post-1956 events, is more fragmented and sketchy, more diarylike. (The notes to himself can, in fact, be thought of as a diary.) Occasionally, the accounts are too detailed. The aging author, almost completely isolated from his colleagues, believed one of his most important tasks was to preserve events in detail. The chronicle nevertheless presents an authentic portrayal of the politics, techniques, and methods of dictatorial church leadership of the period. As an elderly bishop, Ordass was slandered and harassed until his death in 1978 in Budapest.

The task of preparing Ordass's manuscript for publication was completed by István Szépfalusi, a Viennese Lutheran minister. Szépfalusi wrote an epilogue for both volumes, but refrained from making judgments and analyses. At the same time, he gave an account of the methodology for textual editing, and an explanation of the circumstances under which various sections of the text came to be written. Because Lajos Ordass had left his texts uncompleted, Szépfalusi's exhausting philological work is to be considered a serious accomplishment.

Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem
Budapest

László Kósa

Nemes Nagy Ágnes
Szőke bikkfák
(Budapest, 1988. 114 lap)

Jedes Gedicht, in dem eine wesentliche Aussage enthalten ist, hat die Eigenschaft, ein Übermass von überflüssigen Wissen an sich zu ziehen. Bei jedem Menschen, der sich der nationalen Tradition zugehörend versteht, entsteht unvermeidlich ein Traditionsstar, der das persönliche Erkennen dieser Tradition versperrt. Der Anfangsmoment, der einem Werk zur Bedeutsamkeit verholfen hat, bedeutet gleichzeitig die sofortige Entwicklung der innersten Gehalte dieses Werkes. Die bedeutet wohl auch, dass nunmehr die existenzielle An-

näherung jedes Einzelnen nur durch eigene Auseinandersetzung mit dem Werk möglich ist. Kurz gesagt: es ist niemals die Rückführung des Geschaffenen zu irgendwelchen eigenen Wurzeln die Aufgabe, sondern die fortwährende, lebendige Aneignung der Tradition. Mit einem jeden fängt sie an, mit einem jeden endet sie, wenn man bereit ist, sie in unentrückbarer Absicht kennenzulernen und in persönlicher Weite zu ergünden. Die Materie ist gegeben, die Bedeutung kennt aber nur jener, der zum Hinzufügen fähig ist, und die Form bleibt für die allermeisten ein dauerndes Geheimnis.

In den Gedichtanalysen von Ágnes Nemes Nagy spüren wir gleich, bereits im ersten Augenblick eine solche Festigkeit und Begründetheit der Traditionskenntnis, denen wir nur selten begegnen können. Während sie uns aus der dauerhaften Ordnung ihrer Gedichterfahrungen manches mitteilt, ist sie in einem bestrebt, sich dorthin, in diesen Erkenntniszustand zurückzuziehen: ihre Bestrebung ist es nicht, auf Biegen und Brechen hinter eine Gedichtsfassade blicken zu wollen, sondern dass sie sich im Raum einer Gedichtesevidenz, in starker Aufmerksamkeit, eine Weile aufhalten kann. Ihr Wollen ist nicht auf die bedingungslose und unbarmherzige Entdeckung und vernichtende Durchleuchtung der Gedichte ausgerichtet, sondern auf ihre – uns selber auch geheure – Erwärmung und Erschliessung. Ihr gesteigertes Hörerlebnis und ihre bislang gesammelte Gesangerfahrung dulden es nicht, dass sie – nunmehr als Gesanglehrerin – an Details haften bleibt, sondern lassen sie jenen Blickwinkel suchen, von dem sich irgendwie eine breitere Aussicht in die Mitte der Gedichte öffnen kann. Dieser Aussichtspunkt – gleich eine Chance zu Einsichten – ist manchmal an ungewöhnlichen Stellen zu suchen, und es ist doch ohne Zweifel, dass der ganze Gedichtskörper, das heisst, sein hineingeheimnister Sinn, nur von da beobachtbar sein möchte. Ein jeder wusste bislang, dass das Gedicht von Dániel Berzsenyi unter dem Titel *Osztyályszerem* (Mein Anteil) die ungarische „Pflanze“ des horazschen Ideals von gefestigter Zufriedenheit und der *aurea mediocritas* sein soll. Es möge aber von heute ab ein jeder in Erinnerung behalten, dass dieses Idyllium bei weitem nicht eine wolkenlose und zur Untätigkeit hinneigende Schwermut darstellen will, sondern ein schwer erkämpftes und zu Bewahrung bestimmtes Gleichgewicht eines ungebändigten Geistes: das beweist nämlich Ágnes Nemes Nagy bei der Analyse der 6. Strophe des Gedichts. Da sticht ihr nämlich ins Auge – nun, zugegeben, auch uns – das Wörtchen *wildartig*, dieser nicht hineinpassende und auch von der wesentlichen Aussage des Werks stark abweichende Ausdruck. Und siehe da, wirklich: wenn wir langsamer wie er von der Analytikerin treffend bezeichnet wird – neben das Schwarzweiss der Daseinslage von Berzsenyi auch andere Töne hinzuzeichnet. Es kann allgemein gesagt werden: die grosse Erfahrung und elementare Aufforderung des Buches besteht darin, dass wir langsam lesen müssen, immer langsam, gleicherweise heute und vor Jahren, gar Jahrhunderten Entstandenes.

Das schmale Bändchen beinhaltet die Analysen einiger ungarischer und zweier – meisterhaft übersetzter – Gedichte ausländischer Dichter. Darunter sind zu finden beispielsweise *A Magánossághoz* (An die Einsamkeit) von Csokonai, *A Tisza* (Die Theiss) von Petőfi, *V. László* (Ladislaus V.) von János Arany, *Előszó* (Vorwort) von Vörösmarty und „*Költőnk és Kora*“ („Unser Dichter und sein Zeitalter“) von Attila József. Neben sie gesellt sich der Archaische Torso *Apollo* von Rainer Maria Rilke und *Colhique* (Zeitlose) von Apollinaire: es sind also alle – einige vermutlich, andere beweisbar – mehrere Male von der Autorin geprüfte Lieblingswerke. Es gibt zwar in den Erläuterungen einen gewissen mitreissenden Strom, ein etwas kapriolenhaftes Hantieren, aber wir sind uns immer sicher, dass es einen Grundstock einer jeden Feststellung gibt, einen starken, unerschütterlichen. Hie und da wird es ausdrücklich erwähnt, dass dieses oder jenes Gedicht der Autorin vor Jahren, sogar vor Jahrzehnten begegnet ist. Es vermittelt eben dies: Dieses Langereiftheitsein, dieses Spätschriftlichfassen, dieses bestärkende Zurückgehaltenheit ein Erlebnis, ein glaubwürdiges und ursprüngliches. In der Fähigkeit von Ágnes Nemes Nagy, von einem Gedicht weit abrücken zu können, die es uns erlaubt, in die reservatenartig geschlossenen Bedeutungsräume der Werke einzutreten, gibt es auch eine mit Finger zeigende Geste, die nicht unbedingt ins Gedicht einfallen will, sondern nur ihm einen Schritt näher stehen möchte. Ja, die Autorin steht immer einen Schritt näher dem Gedicht, als wir arglose Leser. Sie sucht aber doch nicht die Tür der Werke, sondern ihre Fenster: sie möchte nicht in ihnen herumspazieren, sondern nur sich in ihnen umsehen. Unzählbar! Und was bemerkt dieser taktvolle, sich schüchtern bewegende Blick beispielsweise in dem Gedicht *Die Theiss* von Petőfi? Wie empfängt sie – in persönlicher, dinglicher Annäherung – die Kurzwellen dieses Werks, die bislang nicht bemerkt werden konnten? Sie bemerkt, dass dieses Gedicht nicht nur eine Naturdarstellung ist, geschrieben in den Gegensatzspielen der Romantik, sondern auch eine Zeichnung der seelisch-geistigen inneren Anlage von Petőfi, in der Maske einer Naturdar-

stellung. An dem Beispiel können wir gleich einige Merkmale dieser Analytikerkunst feststellen: ihre Neigung zum Persönlichen, das im Unpersönlichen verborgen liegt, ihre hungrige Beutelust beim Auslegen unbewusster künstlerischer Äusserungen, ihre dialektische, in Gegensätzen wahrheitsuchende Verfahrensweise, ihre auf grosser technischer Kenntnis beruhende Fähigkeit, wirkliche Inhalte zu erreichen.

Und was bemerkt sie noch? Sie bemerkt zum Beispiel, dass das in der 6. Strophe des Gedichts erblickte Türmchen – dadurch, dass es von einem zur Seite neigenden Strauss sozusagen eingerahmt wird – diesem von vornherein panoramaartig gestalteten Bild eine doppelte, uneinsehbare Perspektive gewährt. Nur das gewährt ihm ein solches, und in erster Linie nicht die Gebirge von Máramaros. Und es ist wieder klar, dass diese Betrachtungsweise ganz winzige Wirklichkeiten braucht, um einen verborgenen, unter der Haut des Werks existierenden Zusammenhang begreifen zu können. Es scheint so, dass in dem Anspruch der Autorin, wesentliches zu Tage zu fördern, Energien tätig sind, die nur in elementaren menschlichen Regungen, in einem grundsätzlichen Besitznahmewillen und Aneignungsbedarf beobachtet werden können. Und die Glaubwürdigkeit, gar mehr: die Gültigkeit der Analysen besteht darin, dass wir in diesem Fall einem organischen Mitwachsen mit den Gedichten gegenüberstehen, welches überhaupt Voraussetzung war für die allgemeine Daseinsrettung und Daseinserweiterung der Autorin. Das bedeutet, dass für Ágnes Nemes Nagy das Verständnis und die fortdauernde Instandhaltung dieses Verständnisses nicht bloss erkenntniserweiternder Natur gewesen sein dürfte, sondern Stoff und Sicherung für eine – nicht nur dichterische – allgemein menschliche Entwicklung. Der Zornsmerz, der eine Zeile, eine Strophe schärfer sehen half, und der heutzutage – vielleicht – mehr geworden ist, also Zorn und Schmerz, ohne dass Nemes Nagy die persönlichen-historischen Schichten eines Falles des Verstehens preisgeben würde, ist in den Erläuterungen eingeschlossen und aufgehoben. Es ist für uns nicht hergezeigt, aber doch vermittelt worden.

Es ist selten, dass Nemes Nagy persönliche Erfahrungen zur Sprache bringt, aber diese Zurückhaltung scheint noch stärker, was – bei der Zerlegung des Vorwortes (Előszó) von Vörösmarty – beiläufig erwähnt wird: nämlich die lebensspendende Wirkung der „pessimistischen“ Kunst gleich welcher Begründung. Und eben in der Weise, wie sich die „verregneten“ Dichter der fünfziger Jahre Lebenselixiere und Vitamine aus diesem traurigen Gedicht herausdestillieren konnten, können auch die Leser der späten achtziger Jahre in den Analysen die Botschaft der gewählten Gedichte empfangen, die für sie bisher – mit freiem Auge, freiem Ohr – nicht perzipierbar gewesen ist. Sie können sie empfangen: vernünftig vorgetragen, aus beiden Händen einer echten Dichterin, leutselig empfohlen.

Csaba Báthori

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