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STUDIES

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# HUNGARIAN STUDIES

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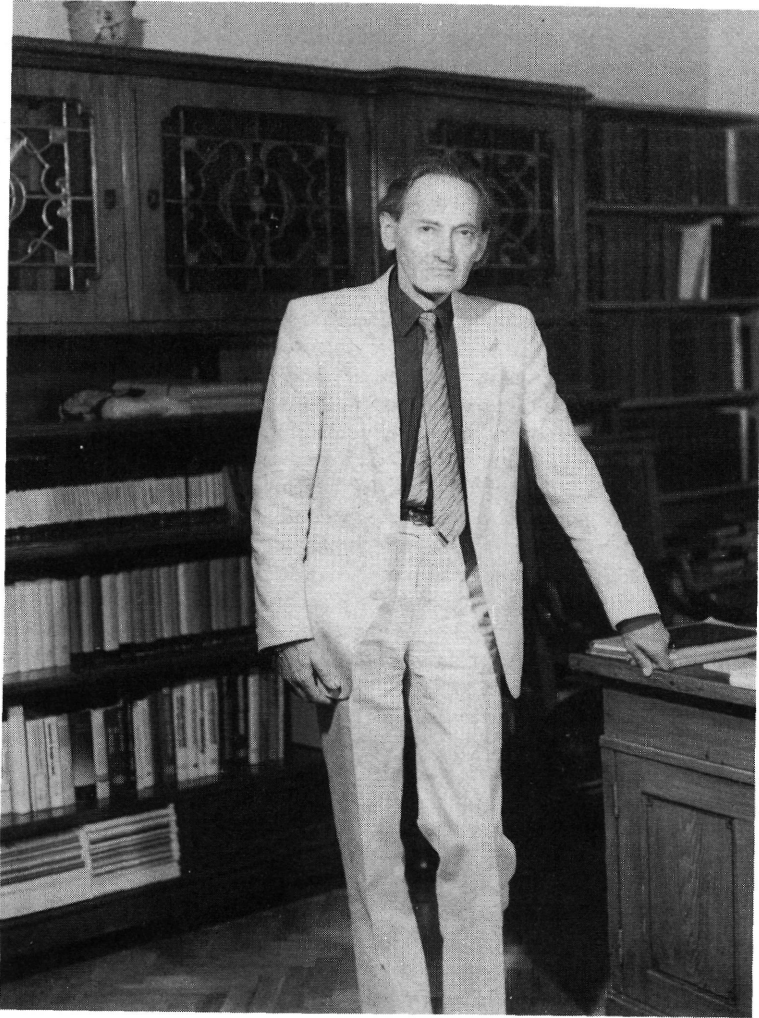
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**KLANICZAY TIBOR**  
**(1923-1992)**

**In memoriam**

My first meeting with Klaniczay Tibor lives very vividly in my mind. I am seated in his office at the Institute of Literary Studies on a morning in early November 1959, his rapid-fire Hungarian buffeting, sometimes befuddling my inexperienced ear as he, flanked by the staff, welcomes me as

the first American academic to appear at the Institute since the end of the war and, after painstakingly exploring my project and needs, assures me of complete cooperation during the three weeks I shall devote to reviewing sources in the Institute's library for inclusion in my introductory bibliography to the study of Hungarian literature, time taken from a Fulbright year in Vienna. Four years later, in September 1963, I returned to Ménesi út to launch research on my annotated bibliography of *Hungarian authors*, also to be published by Harvard University Press, and once again received his cooperation and benefited from his guidance, this time for a period of nine months. It was during these months that I came to know Klaniczay as a colleague and friend and saw that he would play a historical role in restoring relations between the intellectual world of Hungary and that of other countries, a scholar who would forge the links required to advance knowledge of the Hungarian language and literature beyond his country's borders at a troubled time, when political factors and economic considerations originating in the Cold War and the aftermath of the '56 uprising cast dark clouds over the prospects for the undertaking.

But as bleak as the outlook was that fall for initiating steps in that direction, some signs of western interest in Hungarian culture and of cooperation on the part of Hungarian agencies were beginning to appear. Personages, some under the sponsorship of the U.S. Department of State and the assistance of the Institute of Cultural Relations were seen in the Gellért lobby: Edward Albee came to address a group of Hungarian writers, John Steinbeck to discover authors for possible publication in America, Edmund Wilson to scrutinize Hungarian translations of Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin* for his review of Nabakov's own recently published version, and C. P. Snow and Walter Lippmann together to observe the political scene. As a less glamorous portent of the changing climate but one more pertinent to future exchanges of scholars, two other academics were at work for the year at institutes in Budapest – Thomas Mark on his translation of Katona's *Bánk bán*, Richard Allen on his doctoral dissertation – both, like myself, under the joint auspices of the Inter-University Committee of Travel Grants and the Institute of Cultural Relations, the first Americans given this opportunity since the end of the war. And a representative of the Ford Foundation, Shepard Stone, came in November to prepare the way for a committee of distinguished scholars, headed by John Lotz, who were scheduled to arrive in February to refine the details of the Foundation's fellowship program for Hungarian scholars seeking to conduct research in the United States, and to interview prospective applicants. All these stirrings represented a striking change in the climate I found in November 1959, when the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party was holding its first session since 1956, and a reporter from *Magyar Nemzet* was interviewing guests breakfasting at the Gellért so he could inform readers that foreigners were again coming to Hungary.

The need to expand relations between academics of East and West entered our conversations independently of these harbingers of improved circumstances very early that fall. By December we were discussing the major barriers hampering the growth of the knowledge of the Hungarian language and literature in the United States, barriers encountered to varying degrees in other nations of the world: the lack of supportive curricula at universities, the inadequacy of Hungarian holdings in libraries, even at such prime institutions as Columbia and Harvard and the New York Public Library, and the shortage of funds supporting research in Hungarian studies. These realities did not dampen Klaniczay's determination to act. He found hope in the fact that, despite these formidable obstacles, serious activity in Hungarian studies was stirring among determined, dedicated scholars outside Hungary, and that the Hungarian language and literature and subjects related to their study were beginning to attract increasing numbers of academics as fields to which they were ready to commit their energies even though they had only a limited opportunity, if fortunate to have any at all, to teach the subject of their research.

Determined to break ground, Klaniczay, sifting through the options at hand for viable action, went to the heart of the matter: The implementation of the efforts of this growing band of

academics trying to expand knowledge of Hungarian culture abroad. Hungary, he concluded, was unable, in its current circumstances, to contribute to the development of university programs (an initiative to come much later with the establishment of the Hungarian chair at Indiana University by the Academy, in which he played a major role), or to build Hungarian holdings in libraries, or to fund research, but, he believed, steps, however gradual they had to be, could and must be taken to create a formal community of academics engaged in the study of Hungarian language, literature, and ethnography abroad and in Hungary as a forum in which to exchange ideas and share work in progress. His prodigious energy, perseverance, and administrative skill buttressed by the great esteem in which he was held by scholars at home and abroad, he soon began to lay the foundation for the International Association of Hungarian Studies: recruiting like-minded supporters, securing financial backing from the Academy, setting up a competent staff, compiling lists of potential members in various countries, organizing an international working committee to draft a constitution – all this while tending to his many other responsibilities and scholarly pursuits. The achievement of his aim required many years, but his energy, persistence, and persuasiveness produced results. It was, indeed, a moment of celebration experienced by all who had shared this genesis with him when the draft constitution, proposals for two journals, and other matters essential to activating the Association were presented for action at the first session of the Executive Committee, representing seventeen countries, September 18–19, 1977, and again when the Association held its first congress August 10–14, 1981, at the Academy with members from twenty-five countries present.

In the time since those formative years, members of the Association have reaped the benefits of his vision. Once scattered over the world, accustomed to working in isolation, in silence, we have witnessed the development of Hungarian holdings, the growth in financial support, and the increase in the number of those seriously engaged in Hungarian studies abroad, including students. We now know what is transpiring in the areas of our professional interests. And Klaniczay's ultimate aim has been achieved: we are now no longer strangers, names and works now have faces and voices, for we have met, talked, argued, and broken bread together. To him we owe this enrichment of our personal and professional lives, and to him we pledge the perpetuation of his vision.

My last visit with Klaniczay also lives vividly in my memory. I was in Budapest to conclude a project and begin another and to mark the thirtieth anniversary of my first days at the Institute. Since that visit so long ago, the bell had tolled for many of my colleagues at the Institute who had helped me, born of immigrant Hungarian peasants from the Bánát, to find my legs in Hungarian literature. As I summoned them up in the stillness of the night, the litany of their names so tightened my throat that I could not continue them: Gerézdi Rabán, Kemény G. Gábor, Sótér István, Vargha Kálmán, V. Kovács Sándor... I made my pilgrimage to Ménesi út, to the library where I had spent so many days, months on end digging, exploring, discovering, to be surrounded once again by the works of authors who had become such an intimate part of my existence and to sit at that large table I kept piled high with books for annotation. But I went there above all to express my deepest gratitude to Klaniczay for having opened the way for me three decades ago by putting on his desk a copy of every work I had published since then. I did that, but I bade him farewell with an apprehensive heart, fearful that his presence would never grace my life again.

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# LOST OPPORTUNITIES: LAJOS KOSSUTH, THE BALKAN NATIONALITIES, AND THE DANUBIAN CONFEDERATION

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In 1923, while an émigré in Vienna, Oszkár Jászi wrote the following dedication to Lajos Kossuth in his book *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Hungary*:

To the Manes of Louis Kossuth the most farseeing of Hungarians who predicted his country's disaster and clearly discerned the path to her recovery.<sup>1</sup>

Jászi was also describing himself in this dedication. He wrote it in retrospect, after the failure of the Károlyi Revolution in January 1919. Like Kossuth, Jászi became an exile following the failure of a revolution in which he had played a significant role. Also like Kossuth, with the passing of time, Jászi became more mature and objective in his perspective of Hungarian affairs, especially on Hungary's role in the Danubian basin and its relationship to the various nationalities that lived within and outside its borders.

The first ten years following the Hungarian War of Independence were the most significant ones for Kossuth. During this brief and chaotic decade he was at the pinnacle of his influence in European affairs. It was during the latter half of the 1850's that his movements were scrutinized by the English Parliament for fear he might be able to formulate an alliance with Hungary's Danubian and Balkan neighbors, under the auspices of Napoleon III's France, and later, Cavour's Italy, against Austria, which would upset the delicate balance of power on the continent.<sup>2</sup> From 1849, when he became the focus of an eastern crisis as a prisoner of Turkey, until 10 November 1859, when France and Austria signed the Treaty of Zurich, ending the War of Austria with France and Piedmont, Kossuth remained the leader of the Hungarian nation even as an exile. The Hungarians waited for the opportunity to regain the constitutional rights and privileges they had won during the April days of 1848 and subsequently lost with their surrender at Világos in August 1849.

After 1859, Kossuth's influence in European affairs rapidly diminished. More important, in the spring of 1862, he publicly announced his ideas

concerning Hungary's future within a Danubian confederation that included Romania and Serbia.<sup>3</sup> This plan lost him what was left of his support among the landowning classes in Hungary. Moreover, it diminished his importance among those individuals who mattered politically, and assisted them, under the guidance of Ferenc Deák, to come to an agreement with the Habsburgs,<sup>4</sup> using the legality of the Pragmatic Sanction and the April Laws of 1848 as a basis for their negotiations. Kossuth's rejection of a compromise with the Habsburgs was of valuable assistance to both parties—to Francis Joseph and the Hungarian Diet—in reaching a final settlement.<sup>5</sup>

The basis for Kossuth's confederation was first established in his letter of 15 June 1850 to László Teleki and in the *Kiutahia* Constitution of 1851. These sources, particularly the constitution, created an internal federation, not a confederated system. The democratic ideas Kossuth used in creating this constitution formed the basis of his plans for the Danubian Basin during the remainder of his life. Naturally his ideas would change throughout the years, the result of the realities of great power politics and the need to compromise with the other national groups. To succeed, Kossuth needed to be flexible in his negotiations with the leaders of the Danubian Principalities and Serbia, on whose cooperation his eventual success would depend.

The Constitution of *Kiutahia* was one of the most farsighted plans ever devised to develop democracy in Hungary. District borders were to be changed according to the national composition of the districts. A two-chamber parliament would be created with its participants chosen through democratic elections. The upper house, or Senate, would be composed of members from each county. Each district would elect its own senator; therefore, a Slovak county would naturally send a Slovak representative to parliament. Since almost one-half of Hungary's population was composed of minorities, the district elections would send the equivalent number of minority senators to parliament. Each county would decide its own language; Magyar however, would be the language of the parliament because of the need for all the members to use a common language.<sup>6</sup>

Kossuth's ideas went further in attempting to accommodate the different nations within the region than anything developed during this period, including the works of Deák and József Eötvös.<sup>7</sup> Kossuth's ideas show a general development that started just before his resignation in August 1849. He continued to work with the idea of granting autonomous and democratic rights and failed to realize that more was needed to create an independent Hungary. Time was a major problem with the realization of Kossuth's ideas. The opportunity to reach a possible accommodation with the nationalities was during the revolution, which disillusioned and forced them to side with the

monarchy.<sup>8</sup> As the Romanians talked about joint cooperation through a Danubian Confederation, Kossuth continued to develop democracy for Hungary with the purpose of keeping the historic kingdom intact.

Regardless of Kossuth's democratic plans for Hungary, it was difficult for him to abandon his nationalist outlook. His confederation would be dominated by the Hungarians, the crown lands would remain intact, and the monarchy would experience the modernization processes of bourgeois democratization.<sup>9</sup> The semifeudal structure of Hungary would be abandoned. Even as early as September 1848, Kossuth offered to resign as long as the April Laws and national self government were guaranteed.<sup>10</sup> These were his real objectives, and his confederation was one of the ways of achieving them. Early in his emigration Kossuth reached the conclusion that the monarchy was obsolete, and that change was necessary if it was to survive. The emergence of a democratic Hungary required a give and take, but as long as Kossuth had power within the emigration, compromise with the Habsburgs was out of the question. Kossuth was left with two other alternatives. The first was to seek assistance from the West to keeping Russia from intervening in Hungary's future struggle for independence. This was a solution that would exclude the Danubian Principalities and Serbia from participation in the struggle, although their assistance would be considered quite valuable to the Hungarian cause. The support of the national minorities within Hungary would be awarded with the creation of a federated democratic state that would welcome their participation in its processes. The Croats, because of their historic constitution and tradition of statehood, would be given the opportunity for independence if they so desired. But Fiume with a corridor to the sea had to be given to Hungary as a price for this independence. Kossuth's second alternative was to reach an accommodation with the other nations in the Danubian basin for joint cooperation in creating a confederation for the mutual protection and benefit of each national group. It took Kossuth time to realize that he had to look beyond the Hungarian problem and include the other nations in a solution that could guarantee an independent and democratic Hungary. He needed to broaden his horizon and realize that the issues involved the whole basin and not just Hungary. More important, both of these solutions could only be successful if they were supported by England and France.

In retrospect Kossuth made two major mistakes as governor of Hungary. The first and most catastrophic miscue was not granting democratic and autonomous concessions to the minorities once he assumed power. Ironically, in the years before the war, Kossuth advocated independence for Croatia.<sup>11</sup> Had he followed the example of another Hungarian revolutionary, Ferenc Rákóczi II (1676-1735), and granted the minorities an equal place within the

kingdom they would have been useful allies against the Habsburgs during the war. Kossuth's second mistake was the dethronement of the Habsburgs on 14 April 1849. Although this act was constitutionally legal, it turned the conservatives in Hungary against his cause.<sup>12</sup> His actions lost him the support of the most important and influential group that respected and supported this monarchical system. It changed the struggle from a revolution to a war of independence. Also, it made the conservatives seek a re-alignment with the monarchy. This is clearly explained by György Szabad:

Two main factors enabled the aristocracy to regain their position – shaken during the 1840's – as leaders of Hungary's public life: the immense income they continued to derive from their estates; and their close ties with the Imperial aristocracy through whom, by the early 1860's, they were again drawn to the court.<sup>13</sup>

Some historians<sup>14</sup> maintain that Kossuth's influence in Hungarian affairs lasted until Austria's defeat in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866. His long exile, however, left him out of touch with the moderate trends, championed by Deák, Eötvös, and the recently returned Count Gyula Andrassy,<sup>15</sup> that were beginning to grow in influence within Hungary. Hungarians were neither prepared nor able to fulfill the Danubian designs that Kossuth had set for them. This realization caused Kossuth to change his views concerning the role of an independent Hungary. If Hungary was not powerful enough to secure her own independence without foreign assistance, then she would not be powerful enough to withstand the pressures of great power politics; therefore, she needed to be a member of a confederated system of Danubian states, which Hungary would naturally dominate, thus fulfilling her great power aspirations. Since the inclusion of Austria in any association with Hungary was anathema to Kossuth, he had to find a way for Hungary to replace Austria so the other powers, particularly Britain, would find it acceptable. More important, such a confederation would cause a drastic change between the Magyars and the nationalities living within and outside the lands of historic Hungary that the Hungarian landowning classes would never accept.

It is imperative to point out that political leaders, regardless of nationality or time period, in advocating a confederated or federated system as a possible solution to the nationality problem within the Danubian Basin, have always advocated this solution from a position of political weakness. This was the case with the Polish émigré, Adam Czartoryski, the Serbian minister of the Interior, Ilija Garašanin,<sup>16</sup> the Czech leader Palacký,<sup>17</sup> the Romanian leader Nicolae Bălcescu, Kossuth, Jászi, and even the Belvedere policy of Archduke Francis Ferdinand. They all advocated federation at times when they were not in a

position to implement such a policy. The proponents of federation schemes are not in the position to realize them. More often than not, then, they advocate such solutions when they are not faced with the political responsibilities for their projects.

Even if the Hungarians had been willing to accept Kossuth's advice, Great Britain opposed the idea of a Danubian confederation. The British, particularly Palmerston and Russell, were opposed to both Kossuth and his liberation movements because they feared that if successful they "would endanger the existence of Austria, considered indispensable in the given system of the balance of power."<sup>18</sup> British policy regarding the Eastern Question and the issue of the Straits revolved around the continued existence of the Ottoman Empire and the use of Austria as a bulwark against Russian expansion into the Balkans.<sup>19</sup> Without Hungary, Austria would lose its great power status, thereby creating an imbalance in the Balkans that could lead to the dissolution of Turkey, and would entail Russian control of the Straits. The Balkans, and possibly Central Europe, would become another appendage of the Russian Empire. Palmerston and Russell were both successful in undermining Kossuth's position while maintaining the status quo with little change in the balance of power.

After the revolution Britain continued to pressure Vienna to find a workable solution to its Hungarian problem. This policy will be discussed later in this work. Suffice it to say that Austria's defeat in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 created the need to save the House of Habsburg's place in the European balance of power. Britain needed Austria to find some workable solution to the nationality problem that would allow the Habsburgs to concentrate on their role in the Eastern Question."<sup>20</sup> The Austrian solution was in the Compromise in 1867, which joined the once rebellious Hungarians in a partnership with the House of Habsburg. The Compromise was abhorrent to Kossuth,<sup>21</sup> and yet, ironically, the publication of his ideas concerning a Danubian confederation was a seminal event in the background of the agreement.

It was those years immediately before and after the war of 1859 when Kossuth began the process of becoming the "most farseeing Hungarian" that Jászi referred to in his introduction. Following the First World War and the dismemberment of Hungary at Trianon, Jászi wrote about Kossuth's predictions concerning the nationalities' problems and the need for a Danubian Confederation as their solution. Jászi maintained that if Kossuth's warning had been heeded to during the lean years of his exile, especially those years he was advocating the confederation, the dismemberment of Hungary could have been avoided, and more importantly, the First World War could have been

prevented. It is a quite remarkable concept that the historian István Deák has also shared. For Jászi, the war was the result of the failure of the monarchy to solve its nationality problems. Had the monarchy implemented a federated or confederated solution,<sup>22</sup> similar to what Kossuth advocated, the monarchy could possibly have survived up to now. It is then possible to believe that the monarchy's nationality problems were the major force in perpetrating the war. It was these problems that threatened to change the balance of power in the Balkans.

Interestingly enough, Kossuth's predictions had their roots in the first decade of his years in exile. One might argue that they go back even further. Possibly the Revolution of 1848 had the greatest impact upon him? It cannot be denied that the revolution helped to influence and mold Kossuth as a statesman; however, it was his first ten years in exile that educated him. These years gave him the experience, knowledge, and understanding of European political affairs. It was during these years that he became familiar with the problems of the balance of power and the importance of Great Britain's role in it. Thus, at this point, it becomes essential to trace Kossuth's trail in 1849 Turkey, where his real education begins.

### **Kossuth in Turkey**

On 11 August 1849, in the city of Arad, located east of Szeged on the Maros River in south-central Hungary, Kossuth, after having granted concessions to the Hungarian nationalities just days before, informed both the nation,<sup>23</sup> and General Artúr Görgey, that he was resigning and handing over both civil and military control to Görgey, for the benefit and well being of the nation.<sup>24</sup> He then left Hungary for self-imposed exile in Turkey.

As mentioned above, the presence of Kossuth and the other émigrés in Turkey caused an immediate problem for the great powers once Austria secured its control over Hungary. Both Russia and Austria regarded democratic principles as revolutionary and detrimental to their respective states. More than once, with the consent of Nicholas I, Metternich had suppressed liberal movements in Italy. Both had problems with the Polish émigrés of Paris, led by Czartoryski, and within their Polish possessions. In 1846, the Galician Poles had attempted to overthrow Austrian rule. Also, many Poles, including Joseph Bem, had given the Hungarians valuable assistance in their recent revolution. Both Russia and Austria knew that the émigrés could cause considerable problems among their fellow nationals at home. The Polish experience had taught them that émigrés would be willing to join in any

revolutionary movement if it could in some way benefit their cause. Kossuth's popularity in the West was viewed with much apprehension in Vienna. There was the possibility that the Poles and Magyars could join together to form a common front against both their oppressors. With this understanding in mind, Austria and Russia put as much pressure as possible upon the Turkish Sultan Abdul Mejid to return Kossuth and the Hungarians to Austria, and the Poles to Russia,<sup>25</sup> so they could stand trial.<sup>26</sup>

Although the defeat of the Hungarians was more likely to help the established British policy in East Central Europe, Great Britain and France could not sit by idly while Russia and Austria forced the sultan to hand Kossuth over to "hangman Haynau."<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, they were putting a great deal of pressure upon Vienna because the former Hungarian leaders, who had been captured or elected to stay in Hungary, were being imprisoned or executed. During the revolution France and England virtually ignored Kossuth's appeals for recognition and aid and only voiced minimum opposition when Russian troops entered Hungary.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, Russian assistance to Austria was watched with great concern by the British. Always fearful of Russian encroachment into the Balkans, Britain kept a watchful eye on the camaraderie between Vienna and St. Petersburg. Therefore, along with the French, Britain put diplomatic pressure on the sultan not to hand the émigrés over to the Russians and Austrians. Also, a joint Anglo-French fleet was sent to the Straits as a show of strength against the absolutist powers.<sup>29</sup>

Early on, Kossuth was faced with the prospect of extradition or the adoption of Islam,<sup>30</sup> as some Hungarians actually did convert. Instead, thanks to the persistence of Britain's ambassador to the Porte, Stratford Canning, Kossuth was relegated to the position of a prisoner of the Turkish sultan.<sup>31</sup> On 20 September 1849, Kossuth sent a letter to Palmerston that prompted Canning and Palmerston to intercede on behalf of the émigrés. In the letter he asked the following question:

are 5000 Christians set in the dreadful alternative to be sent to the scaffold, or to buy their life by abandoning their religion.<sup>32</sup>

With British and French support for the émigrés, the absolutist powers found it necessary to withdraw their demands for extradition.<sup>33</sup>

Meanwhile, Kossuth had not abandoned the revolution or doubted its eventual success. On 12 September, from Vidin, he sent a letter to the Hungarian envoys and agents in England and France.<sup>34</sup> In it he analyzed the revolution, paying particular attention to Görgey's role in the latter days of the rebellion.<sup>34</sup> Görgey may have surrendered, he may have taken his thirty

pieces of silver, but Kossuth emphasized the fact that he himself was continuing the struggle.

Kossuth would languish in Turkey for over two years. Although international pressure had cooled somewhat regarding his presence within Turkey, the problem remained for all the powers involved. The Porte, regardless of its promises, wanted Kossuth out and the situation resolved. The Russian chancellor, Nesselrode, had already reached an agreement with Fuad Effendi, the Sultan's Representative in St. Petersburg, regarding the Polish émigrés. Under the agreement all the Poles were expelled from Ottoman territory, except for the leaders, whose positions were negotiated separately.<sup>36</sup> Palmerston had hoped that the Austrian prime minister, Prince Felix Schwarzenberg, would have negotiated a similar agreement with the Porte.<sup>37</sup> However, Austria still wanted the return of the émigrés, particularly the leaders, both political and military.<sup>38</sup> Negotiations with the Porte had broken down, but Schwarzenberg reached an understanding with Constantinople that the refugees had to be detained until internal order was restored to Hungary.<sup>39</sup> Kossuth's internment was worked out separately. It was eventually agreed to detain him for only one year, but under further Austrian pressure, he was confined for over a year and a half after arriving at Kiutahia on 12 April 1850.<sup>40</sup>

Kossuth's activities had not helped the international situation. Tireless worker that he was, he continued to carry on discussions with the West and Danubian peoples through the emigration in Paris and through officials in Constantinople. These activities, aimed to secure Hungarian independence, led to extending Kossuth's internment longer than would have been necessary.

Much to the displeasure of László Teleki, Kossuth's agent in Paris, Kossuth attempted to control the émigré movement himself.<sup>41</sup> Strong leadership was a prerequisite for keeping the émigré community together because if needed to be under a unified political leadership if it was going to be successful. There are many examples in which emigrations have fallen apart when strong leadership was lacking; schisms develop within emigrations that lack such leadership, and more time is spent on useless internal squabbles than attempting to achieve their objectives. This was evident with the Polish emigration led by Czartoryski's Hôtel Lambert group and the Democratic Society of Joachim Lelewel.<sup>42</sup> Immediately after Világos, Kossuth began to analyze the failure of the rebellion. He believed defeat was the result of a failure in leadership. Görgey had not followed orders and undermined his authority.<sup>43</sup> In order for the next revolution to be successful both military and political control needed to be under one leader, namely himself.<sup>44</sup> For this view the other émigrés, particularly Teleki, Andrassy, and later Bertalan Szemere, criticized Kossuth.



Some of Kossuth's most important contacts inside Turkey included an English officer, Charles Frederic Henningson, whom Palmerston had sent to the Balkans;<sup>45</sup> the Polish émigré Count Wladislaw Zamoyski, who had come to Hungary from the Polish émigré capital of Paris and had fled to Turkey along with the Hungarians;<sup>46</sup> and the Romanian émigrés: the Golescu brothers (Nicolae and Alexander) and particularly Ion Ghica, who had recently escaped from the failed Bucharest revolt of 1848–49.<sup>47</sup> This is not taking into consideration Kossuth's association with the Hungarian émigrés, particularly Teleki, Andrásy, Ferenc Pulszky, Hungary's agent in London, and General György Klapka. It was during this period, from Vidin to Kiutahia, that Kossuth, with the help of those nationals mentioned above, but particularly Teleki and the Romanian Nicolae Bălcescu in London, began working on the confederation.

In actuality, the initiative of the first confederation rested more with the Romanian than the Magyar émigrés. Even before Világos, the idea of such a system circulated among the exiled leaders.<sup>48</sup> The Romanians took the most serious approach to the idea. As early as May 1848 Dumitru Brătianu went to Pest to discuss with Lajos Batthyány the construction of a confederation of Danubian states.<sup>49</sup> Later in 1849, Bălcescu had conversations with Kossuth in Debrecen. They discussed the possibility of joint cooperation between the Hungarian and Romanian revolutionary movements.<sup>50</sup> In the spring of 1850, Bălcescu played a vital role in convincing the Hungarians, particularly Teleki and Klapka, to support the confederation idea.<sup>51</sup> More importantly, his influence on Klapka would continue long after Kossuth abandoned the idea of a confederation.

Suffice it to say that the idea of a confederation received enough support to warrant further development and discussion. Bălcescu had already made converts of Klapka and Teleki. Lajos Lukács examined the correspondence between Bălcescu and Ghica and showed that there was a gradual development of ideas supporting the establishment of the confederation. In January 1850, Bălcescu drew up a constitution for the Romanians, Magyars, and South Slavs in which a plebiscite would decide the borders of each state. Bălcescu's ideas eliminated old historic borders and boundaries. Blocks of nationalities were to be given to the appropriate nations to which they belonged: the nation of the same culture and language. Naturally he was addressing the question of Romanians in Transylvania. He maintained that the Transylvanian question could be discussed during the final rounds of talks, after all the other details had been concluded. Also, a central parliament composed of fifty members from each nation, one hundred-fifty members in all, would meet annually to decide common affairs: defense, foreign

affairs, commerce, and communication. Each year a different nation would host the parliament, whose language would be either French or German.<sup>52</sup> But when Ghica approached Kossuth with the Romanians' proposal, even though it had been endorsed by the Hungarian émigrés in London, he rejected them. Upon hearing of Kossuth's rejection, Bălcescu remarked to Teleki that Kossuth was a "dead person... a representative of Hungary of the past, the past that is buried forever."<sup>53</sup> Nevertheless, Bălcescu and the other émigrés knew that without Kossuth's approval nothing could be accomplished.

Kossuth's counter-proposal to the Romanians was his letter to Teleki of 15 June 1850, which gave his reason why he was against autonomous territorial concessions to the nationalities. He believed that the integrity of historic Hungary would be ruined by joining all the Romanians of Transylvania to Romania. Also, it would only be a short while before the other nationalities, i.e., the Slovaks, Carpatho-Ukrainians and Germans, would want the same rights as the Romanians.<sup>54</sup> The principle of majority was not a viable process to determine the structure of the state. Many areas of Transylvania had a mixed population and could not be determined ethnically as a majority for any nation. Hungary would create a dangerous precedent if it granted territorial concessions to the nationalities. But democratic rights, which would include individual language and cultural development, religious freedom, and local autonomy was another matter. Kossuth supported the idea of a federated Hungarian state with confederated ties to the other Danubian nations.

This letter to Teleki, Kossuth wrote about the organizational basis for such a system. Like Bălcescu, Kossuth wanted the confederation to have a common foreign, military, and economic policy and a common market with joint decisions on important economic questions. Also, Kossuth supported the creation of a council for deciding joint cooperation, which would have equal membership from all the nations. It would meet in Hungary at a place determined at a later date and be ruled by a president elected for one year. Every twenty-five years the alliance would go through a revision that would determine the constitutional status for each member of the alliance. Also, they could determine whether or not to remain in the confederation. Kossuth went on to state that the language of the parliament would be Hungarian, with the usage of local languages in the autonomous areas, in judicature and other local matters.<sup>55</sup>

Previously, Bălcescu had questioned Klapka, whom he regarded as a man having a wide perspective as to the language of the future diet.

Klapka suggested a common diet with German and French the official language while others suggested they should have Latin familiar to both Hungarians and Poles and related to the Romanian language as well.<sup>56</sup>

While Kossuth, in his nationalistic way, recommended Hungarian, Klapka, being more pragmatic, suggested German or French. It is interesting that of all the émigrés, Klapka and Teleki were to stand behind the confederation idea the longest, keeping it "from sinking into oblivion."<sup>57</sup> Also, they were more willing to come to an amicable solution of the differences that existed between the nationalities, including concessions on the important territorial and language issues.

Kossuth's ideas had a democratic basis and, except for the language decree and the territorial concessions, were an excellent basis for negotiations with the other nations. Granted, Kossuth planned to keep Hungary in a position of primary importance within the basin, but he was willing to give more rights than ever before to the nationalities. He was willing to share power in a confederation if the basis for such cooperation could be worked out. Kossuth believed in the viability and necessity of the existence of historic Hungary, not only for Hungary's future but for the basin's as well. A large and powerful Hungary in the midst of such a confederation would be a force in world affairs. Hungary would then be in a position to defend itself from external enemies. But the émigré communities were disappointed with Kossuth's reply because they put so much emphasis on the territorial solution as the basis of cooperation. Unfortunately for Kossuth, nationalism played a greater role in these negotiations than democracy, but he cannot be criticized for his willingness to bring bourgeois democracy to the region.

In May 1851, Kossuth wrote his *Kutahiai alkotmányterv* (The Constitution Plan of Kiutahia). He was against the nationalities forming independent territorial entities within Hungary, but he supported the development of an autonomous infrastructure that allowed the nationalities to control their own democratic development within the communities, counties, and state. Kossuth used the term "Universal Suffrage" in describing the democratic processes that would determine individual participation within the country. According to historian Domokos Kosáry, Kossuth's constitution relied upon the declaration of civic equality in 1848, the Nationalities Law of 1849, and "harmonized the structure of the state with the principle and practice of the democratic self-determination of the nationalities."<sup>58</sup>

Kossuth addressed the language issue by using the United States as an example for overcoming this problem. He cited the varieties of languages used by the population and that language was not an issue amongst them. Also, he alluded to Switzerland with German, French, and Italian in use among its population.<sup>59</sup> Kossuth still supported the use of Hungarian as the language of state but only for practical reasons of joint communication and administration. He supported the nationalities' rights to use their own language in its

communities, counties, churches, and schools. Also, in counties of mixed nationalities, the schools must offer the languages that are used by its peoples. In addition, the county assembly must offer its citizens the right to use their languages. Also, their elected representatives needed to have a minimum knowledge of the languages of their constituents.<sup>60</sup>

The national parliament would be elected from the different counties by universal suffrage. Minorities would naturally be allowed to send their own representatives to the two-house parliament. Since almost one-half of Hungary's population was non-Magyar, the parliament would reflect the population. Hungarian would be the language of the councils, but all legislation and transcripts would be available in every language of the state.<sup>61</sup> Kossuth made provisions for the different branches of government and the right of succession of the monarch.<sup>62</sup> Parliament was to have a president that could rule in case the monarch became ill. Kossuth even gave the age requirements of recruits who would constitute Hungary's citizen army.

Kossuth believed the idea of a Danubian confederation could actually be realized. Once again, he used the United States as an example to be emulated. Although Kossuth still adhered to the idea of Hungary's territorial integrity, he saw the confederation developing into a federated system structured like the state system in America. Domestic affairs would be the concern of each individual national territory within the confederation. He again reiterated his willingness to give Croatia the option of leaving the kingdom. Fiume would have to remain under the joint protection of Hungary and Croatia, and Hungary's access to the port must be a prerequisite for any settlement. Kossuth was emphatic in stating that Transylvania could not be compared with Croatia, and solutions applied to the latter did not apply to Transylvania. Transylvania would decide whether to join with Hungary's parliament or have its own, but Transylvania would remain with Hungary, since the Transylvanian population was thoroughly mixed. Historically Transylvania was Hungarian and it would remain under the Holy Crown. However, Kossuth mentioned that the individual democratic rights concerning the nationalities in his constitution applied to all nations of Transylvania.<sup>63</sup>

The Kútahia Constitution granted democratic rights to all the nations of Hungary. Except for the issue of territorial concessions and the use of Hungarian as the state language, Kossuth had granted almost every possible right that could be accorded in structuring a democratic state. He had devised a way to accommodate nationalism within a multi-national state. But according to Lajos Lukács, none of the émigrés approved of Kossuth's plan. Teleki criticized his ideas as out of harmony with the ideas of democratic co-existence.<sup>64</sup> Denis Jánossy saw Kossuth as a staunch defender of historic rights

over the principle of nationality.<sup>65</sup> But it is difficult to examine Kossuth's constitution and understand how any of the other émigrés could have gone further in granting concessions to the diverse nations of the Danubian basin if they were in Kossuth's place. Kossuth's main shortcoming at the time was that he was not willing to grant territorial concessions. However, the other nations were not required to give territorial concessions for their participation in the confederation. Naturally, heavy concentrations of Hungarians were absent from Serbia or the Danubian Principalities; this is one reason that Garašanin and Bălcescu were not afraid to stress territorial concessions over the concept of historic right. Also, it was a reason why they demanded Hungarian territory for their participation in the confederation.

Negotiations with the Serbs were conducted with Ilija Garašanin, the most important Serbian statesman in the nineteenth century. In 1844, he developed his *Načertanije* (Outline), a plan that became the basis of Serbia's foreign and national policies until its eventual success in 1919. The *Načertanije* was a three-stage program that outlined the liberation of South Slavs from Turkish and Austrian rule and their unification in a state under the Serbian monarchy.<sup>66</sup> In this program Garašanin stated:

[Serbia] must realize that she is still small, that she cannot remain so, and that she can achieve her future only in alliance with other surrounding peoples.<sup>67</sup>

Garašanin's ultimate objective was the recreation of the Great Serbian Empire of the Middle Ages.

Garašanin had an excellent relationship with the Polish émigrés under Czartoryski and the French government, both of which pursued a policy of undermining Russian influence in Europe and the Near East. Before the Polish Revolution of 1830, Czartoryski, the former foreign minister to Russian Tsar Alexander I, advised the South Slavs to unite under Russian leadership. However, after the revolution, Czartoryski, aided with French financial and diplomatic support, pursued a policy that sought to reestablish an independent Poland.<sup>68</sup> Since 1804, Serbia, although still under Ottoman suzerainty, enjoyed domestic autonomy generally recognized by other states. Also, the Serbs were the only Slavs, besides the Russians, to have a degree of political independence in Europe. This, along with its important geographic location in the Balkans, made Serbia the focus of numerous schemes by different powers to achieve political advantage over each other. Both the Poles and Magyars hoped to use the Serbs for their own purposes. Thus Garašanin approached each group cautiously and always negotiated in a manner to get the most for Serbia's interests.

Another important émigré for the Serbs was the Czech František Zach, who became Hôtel Lambert's envoy in Belgrade in 1843. Zach, along with Czartoryski, supported the plans for the creation of a large South Slav state under Serbia's aegis. In a memorandum to Czartoryski, Zach "stressed the Austrian threat to Serbia and urged the Serbs to cultivate the Austrian Slavs and cooperate with the Porte against Russia."<sup>69</sup> Serbia would form the nucleus of the future South Slav state once the Ottoman Empire disintegrated and would be a bulwark against Russian and Austrian expansion into the Balkans.<sup>70</sup> Both Zach and Czartoryski's ideas played a role in helping Garašanin formulate the Načertanije. The one major difference between their ideas was that Garašanin believed that his goal was more attainable with Russian support. He cautiously rejected the negative view of Russia held by Czartoryski and Zach.

The idea of an independent South Slav state under Serbian leadership was discussed during the early stages of the revolution in 1848. From March to May, Garašanin began discussions with the Croatian leader Josip Jelačić concerning joint cooperation against the Hungarians.<sup>71</sup> And in July, immediately following his correspondence with Garašanin, Jelačić and Batthyány met in Vienna to negotiate Croatia's relationship to Hungary. But Jelačić, who could have acquired Croatian independence from Hungary, refused to negotiate with the Hungarian president. On 29 July, Batthyány said:

We shall negotiate, if need be, with hell itself; we shall negotiate, if negotiate we must, on purely Croatian grounds, perhaps even with Jelačić; but we shall never negotiate with reactionaries who would curb Hungary's independence.<sup>72</sup>

By refusing to negotiate with the Hungarians, Jelačić missed an opportunity to achieve Croatian independence. Also, the promotion of Serbo-Croat cooperation, supported by Garašanin, Bishop Juraj Strossmayer,<sup>73</sup> and Ljudevit Gaj<sup>74</sup> among others, might have had a chance to develop on the path to a South Slav or Illyrian state.

Following the revolution, negotiations continued with the Serbs through Garašanin, Henningsen, and Zamoyski. Of all the participants, Garašanin and the Serbs were the least supportive of the confederation. As previously mentioned, Garašanin's Načertanije entailed incorporating all territories inhabited by Serbs and Croats into a South Slav state. After supporting the fight against the Hungarians in 1848-49, Garašanin, like almost all the national leaders, tried to gain the most he could out of the situation. He had no faith in the confederation and hoped, like every other participant, to use it as a means to achieve his national end: Greater Serbia. This was apparent in his

negotiations with the Hungarians, and he was supported by the Poles who could not understand Hungary's refusal to grant territorial concessions for the good of the confederation.<sup>75</sup> It was apparent that Kossuth was adamant in not surrendering any of Hungary's territory with the possible exception of Croatia. Needless to say, he would not even begin to consider giving Serbia the Bánát and Bácska for their support or for participation in the confederation.<sup>76</sup> Although Kossuth received much of the criticism for the stall in negotiations, it was the Serbs who adopted a wait and see attitude towards the idea and who expected the Hungarians to make the territorial sacrifices for their support.

As early as 2 November 1849, Henningsen wrote a letter addressed to Zamoyski that discussed such a confederation. Henningsen credited Kossuth and the Hungarians for the basis of the plan, but for some reason Henningsen never forwarded the letter. Its contents favor the creation of a large Serbian state within the confederation. Greater Serbia was an idea that the Serbs had been pursuing for quite some time. In the letter Henningsen confessed that Kossuth's ideas "startled [him] at first by [their] boldness."<sup>77</sup> In the letter the following proposals were given:

1. ...to gain the co-operation of Serbia by giving up to them Slavonia, (and leaving them the option of uniting or not with Croatia as they might agree,) but the whole to be as Serbia now under the protectorate of the Porte.
2. The price (for Serbia) would be offensive and defensive alliance, abolition of quarantine duties and a common system of lines of communication – in fact a free trade Zollverein.
3. ...the protectorate of the Porte for Hungary itself. Hungary would in fact accept its suzerainty on terms somewhat analogous to those, determining the actual inter-relations of Serbia and the Porte and Serbia, according as it could agree with the Croatians, might enter into fusion with them.
4. The Hungarians only stipulation was for a sea port and uninterrupted right of way to that point (Fiume).
5. Poland, Dalmatia, Wallachia, Moldavia etc. might not be indisposed to enter with this confederation under Turkish protectorate.<sup>78</sup>

Henningsen was to act as intermediary with the Serbs, was naturally favorable towards the idea.<sup>79</sup> The plan held distinct advantages, Henningsen believed, for the British position in the Balkans. The proposal could actually extend the Ottoman Empire to the Baltic and erect a permanent "barrier against Russia,"<sup>80</sup> that would help to consolidate the empire.<sup>81</sup> Through such

consolidation, it was believed, that the empire's centralizing forces would become stronger, strengthening Turkey against the external and internal threats of invasion and dissolution.<sup>82</sup> But it is difficult to imagine how Turkey, facing so many problems on so many fronts could possibly be consolidated and centralized with the addition of further multinational populations of such revolutionary, nationalistic character as the Poles and Magyars, who had just recently fought for their own independence. Of course, Henningsen was examining the idea from the standpoint of Britain's role in the balance of power. Naturally, a strengthened Ottoman Empire of such magnitude could replace Austria's role in Britain's scheme. Also, Hungarians and Poles believed that the achievement of independence for their countries would be easier with the weak Ottoman Empire as an adversary than it could ever be against the combined absolutist powers. Why would they consider subjecting themselves to a power they regarded as inferior to their own unless they just hoped to win British approval and eventual independence?

It needs to be mentioned that the Poles, particularly Zamoyski, strongly supported the confederation. Since 1831, they had been playing the game of *émigré* politics.<sup>83</sup> By the time the Hungarians became *émigrés* in 1849, the Polish emigration was well established in its role and knew how to function in Europe's diplomatic community. It had established itself throughout Europe and the Near East with a network of agents willing to support any movement that might aid its cause. The number of Poles who supported Hungary in 1848 indicate their willingness to aid Europe's revolutionary movements. Also, Austria, Hungary's adversary in that struggle, was one of the powers which participated in the partitions of Poland in the eighteenth century. In other words, the Poles had been *émigrés* much longer than any other group and they hoped to use the experience along with their political connections, to lead Europe's revolutionary community in its struggle for freedom. Early on, they hoped to join with the Hungarians and Italians in an alliance of democratic revolutionaries that would aid in the liberation of nations oppressed by the absolutist powers.<sup>84</sup>

One of the problems the Poles faced in negotiations with the Hungarians was their failure to comprehend Kossuth's ardent refusal to grant territorial and other concessions for the overall good of the confederation.<sup>85</sup> In this, Kossuth was just as obstinate as the Polish *émigrés* who envisioned a re-creation of the Poland of the pre-partition period. The Poles would never have considered relinquishing their dreams of Poland at its apex in territory, power, and glory for the purpose of joining a confederation. There was never any discussions concerning what territorial sacrifices the Poles would give up for the good of the confederation. Indeed one of the objectives of the



confederation was the liberation and restoration of Poland. The confederation then, was merely a vehicle for the Poles to reclaim their state; it was just another of many ideas that circulated throughout Europe that they hoped to use to their advantage. Thus, although the Poles had certain advantages in their established emigration and their French connections, the other émigré communities were understandably unwilling to hand over the leadership of their specific groups to the Poles.

In 1848, Hôtel Lambert discussed the idea of a confederation with Teleki in Paris. However, by January 1850, Czartoryski put a halt to the confederation idea among his people in Turkey. Although this might create a new Poland, it was not the promised land. Also, the Poles could not come to grips with the Hungarian nationality question, or the Hungarian attitude towards that issue. Since many of the Polish leaders had been in exile since the Revolution of 1830, they were unaware of the effects nationalism was having on all the emerging nations in East-Central Europe. They believed that if the confederation wanted the Poles, Poland should come above all the other nations within the alliance. The problem was that Kossuth felt the same about Hungary's participation. Where Kossuth was willing to grant certain rights to the nationalities, Czartoryski was not even aware of their existence in historic Poland. Not only, thought Czartoryski, could this confederation be a vehicle for the re-creation of the Polish state, but it could also help perpetuate Panslavism of a Polish variety.<sup>86</sup> Such ideas were anathema to the Hungarians, not to mention to the other nationalities, or to the more recent Polish émigrés who were slowly developing a schism with Hôtel Lambert's less than democratic leadership.<sup>87</sup>

Czartoryski, like Kossuth, hoped, or rather expected to dominate and use the confederation for his own purposes. After all, the Hungarians and Poles viewed themselves as having the more advanced cultures. Both nations had recently experienced independent statehood, and more important, they had great historic pasts and a strongly felt sense of national identity. Also, they were, in the majority, Roman Catholic. Hungary had strong Calvinist and Lutheran traditions,<sup>88</sup> but these looked westward. This orientation helped to re-enforce their attitudes of superiority when they compared themselves with their Balkan neighbors, who followed Eastern Orthodoxy or Islam. How could the Poles and Magyars be expected to share power with such eastern peoples? The confederation was just another scheme in which they hoped to regain their political independence, by supplanting Austria, or by rejoining the political arena as one of the great powers.

The confederation plan had no viable means of success. Everyone realized that France and England were not going to change the European equilibrium to benefit Hungary and Poland or to construct a Danubian confederation. It

would have to be a great catastrophe similar to the First World War, to accomplish such objectives, an event all the émigrés waited anxiously to happen. However, until such a war actually happened, the only way to achieve a degree of independence or autonomy laid through domestic compromises with the monarch or sultan and not foreign negotiations.

It is understandable how these nascent plans for a confederation would end in failure. In reality, there was always a plethora of ideas circulating in the émigré communities, and the Poles were extremely active in the ideological field. For instance, on 27 August 1849, Czartoryski and Zamoyski discussed a Turkish–Hungarian–Polish alliance against Russia and Austria.<sup>88</sup> However, the different attitudes and objectives among the émigrés created a further widening of the gap which made any type of cooperation virtually impossible. These problems were also evident amongst each individual émigré community. The Hungarians, like the Poles before them, were beginning to develop a schism that would cause the émigré leaders to question Kossuth's leadership and policies. Eventually this would lead to breaks within the Hungarian émigré community. Nevertheless, Kossuth's power was so intact and strong that it was impossible to accomplish anything concerning Hungarian affairs unless he approved. After he dismissed the joint confederation plan of Bălcescu there was no need to discuss the matter any further. At that time he rejected the concept as impractical for the creation of an independent Hungary. When he received his invitation to come to America in 1851, he left his confederation ideas behind buried in Turkey. The Hungary of 1849 was still his immediate objective, and no one could convince him that it was unattainable. The knowledge and experience he acquired during his negotiations in Turkey would prove invaluable in the future. When Kossuth left for America he felt Hungary could achieve independence if Russia was prevented from intervening a second time against the Hungarians. Thus, while in Great Britain and America, he hoped to create an alliance of democratic states that could act as a deterrent to Russian interference. But during the next few years, until he fully came to understand the importance of the balance of power, Kossuth put the idea of the Danubian Confederation on hold.

## Notes

1. Oscar Jászi, *Revolution and Counter-revolution in Hungary*, (London, 1924), np.
2. György Szabad, "Kossuth and the British »Balance of Power« Policy (1859–1861)," *Studia Historica*, No. 34, (Budapest, 1960), pp. 3–49.
3. Thomas Lengyel, "The Hungarian Exiles and the Danubian Confederation," *The Hungarian Quarterly*, vol. 5 (1939), pp. 458–460.
4. C. A. Macartney, *The Habsburg Empire 1790–1918*, (New York, 1969), p. 537.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 552.
6. Lajos Kossuth, "Magyarország alkotmánya," *Kossuth demokráciája*, Tivadar Ács ed., (Budapest, 1943), pp. 52–74.
7. But they were not as progressive as the ideas of Zsigmond Kemény, Gábor Kemény, and Miklós Wesselényi on solving the nationality problems. The idea of relinquishing Hungarian territory to the minorities for their support never entered Kossuth's plans until much later. Both Keménys and Wesselényi were farsighted enough to realize that concessions, other than democratic guarantees, needed to be given to the minorities. The Transylvanian situation was of particular concern for Wesselényi. His estate was attacked and destroyed during the revolution by Romanian peasants. He understood that territorial concessions could not be ignored. See: Zsolt Trócsányi, *Wesselényi Miklós*, Budapest, 1965; and Gábor Kemény, *A nemzetek fejlődéséről*, Kolozsvár, 1856.
8. Besides Kossuth, the Great Powers, Pan-Slavism, and Kossuth's Hungarian contemporaries also played a major role in Hungary's failure to accommodate the nationalities. For example, Sándor Petőfi was more radical in his opinion of a future society, but less tolerant towards the nationalities. István Széchenyi, on the other hand, was more tolerant towards the nationalities, but had conservative views on political change. Kossuth had to take their opinions into consideration when formulating political policy.
9. Lajos Kossuth, "A dunai állam-konföderáció és a nemzetiségi kérdés," *Kossuth demokráciája*, *op. cit.*, pp. 34–50. This is a reprint of Kossuth's letter to Teleki of 15 June 1850.
10. György Szabad, *Hungarian Political Trends Between the Revolution and the Compromise*, (Budapest, 1977), p. 50.
11. György Szabad, "Hungary's Recognition of Croatia's Self-Determination in 1848 and its Immediate Antecedents," *War and Society in East Central Europe*, vol. IV, *East Central European Society and War in the Era of Revolutions, 1775–1856*, Béla K. Király ed., (New York, 1984), p. 596. As early as 1841–42, Kossuth had discussed the idea of granting Croatia independence from Hungary. See: Kossuth, *A dunai állam-konföderáció*, p. 39.
12. "Opposition to Kossuth's Declaration of Independence stemmed from their conviction that it was a breach of legal continuity." In László Pusztaszeri, "General Görgey's Military and Political Role: Civil-Military relations during the Hungarian Revolution," *War and Society in East Central Europe*, vol. IV, p. 477.
13. Szabad, *Hungarian Political Trends*, p. 12.
14. Deák, *The Lawful Revolution*, (New York, 1979); and John Komlos, *Kossuth in America 1851–1852*, (Buffalo, 1973).
15. Andrassy was the Hungarian Minister in Constantinople when the Revolution ended. He had been hanged in absentia by the Austrians, and worked with Kossuth and the emigration until 1858. Afterwards, tired of Kossuth's less than democratic leadership of the émigré circle, he returned to Hungary under a general amnesty.

16. Macartney, *The Habsburg Empire*, p. 295; and David MacKenzie, *Ilija Garašanin*, (New York, 1985). It needs to be pointed out that Garašanin did not favor a confederated or federated system. Moreover, he viewed all south Slavs as Serbs, and believed they should be united in one Serbian state.
17. Arthur J. May, *The Hapsburg Empire 1867–1914*, (New York, 1968), p. 27; and Joseph F. Zacek, "Palacký and the Austro-Hungarian compromise of 1867," Anton Vantuch and Ludovít Holotík eds., *Der Österreichisch Ungarische Ausgleich 1867*, (Bratislava, 1971), pp. 555–573.
18. Szabad, "Kossuth and the British »Balance of Power« Policy," *Acta Historica*, pp. 3–4.
19. *Ibid.*, also, Pulszky–Kossuth, Paris, 26 February 1859, cited in Dénes A. Jánossy, *Great Britain and Kossuth*, (Budapest, 1937), pp. 9, 15–16, and Macartney, *The Habsburg Empire*, p. 429.
20. Jánossy, *Great Britain and Kossuth*, p. 27.
21. Lajos Kossuth, *Kossuth nyílt levele Deák Ferenchez és Pulszky Ferenc nyílt válasza Kossuth Lajoshoz*, 22 May 1867, (Szeged, 1867), pp. 1–4.
22. Jászi wrote about Kossuth's confederation during the latter days of the First World War and as an émigré in Vienna and America. These works included: *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Hungary*, London, 1924; "Kossuth and the Treaty of Trianon," *Foreign Affairs*, 12, No. I, (October 1933), pp. 86–97; "Kossuth Lajos emigrációja és az októberi emigráció," *Az Ember*, March 30, 1928.
23. Lajos Kossuth, "Kossuth kiáltványa a nemzethez lemondásáról," Arad, 11 August 1849, cited in *Írások és beszédek 1848–1849ből*, (Budapest, 1987), pp. 499–500.
24. Lajos Kossuth, "Kossuth lemond és Görgey Arthúr vezérőrnagyra ruhazza a polgári és katonai hatalmat," Arad, August 1849, cited in *Írások és beszédek 1848–1849ből*, p. 498.
25. Kossuth–Palmerston, Viddin, 20 September 1849, cited in István Hajnal, *A Kossuth-Emigráció Törökországban*, (Budapest, 1927), pp. 482–486.
26. *Ibid.*
27. General Julius Haynau was the principle instigator of Austria's reign of terror during and after the revolution of 1848–49. He became infamous for his brutality. In Italy he was called "the hyaena of Brescia," and in Hungary "hangman Haynau" for hanging thirteen honvéd officers at Arad.
28. Jánossy, *Great Britain and Kossuth*, p. 24.
29. *Ibid.*, pp. 37–38.
30. Andrassy–Kossuth, Constantinople, 11 September 1849, cited in Hajnal, *A Kossuth-Emigráció Törökországban*, p. 468–470, also, Jánossy, *Great Britain and Kossuth*, p. 33.
31. Jánossy, *Great Britain and Kossuth*, p. 36.
32. Kossuth–Palmerston, Viddin, 20 September 1849, cited in Hajnal, *A Kossuth-Emigráció Törökországban*, p. 484.
33. Jánossy, *Great Britain and Kossuth*, p. 40.
34. "Kossuth levele az angliai és franciaországi magyar követekhez és diplomáciai ügynökökhöz," 12 September 1849, cited in Kossuth, *Írások és beszédek 1848–1849ből*, pp. 508–529.
35. *Ibid.*
36. Jánossy, *Great Britain and Kossuth*, p. 40.
37. *Ibid.*
38. Kossuth–Palmerston, Viddin, 20 September 1849, cited in Hajnal, *A Kossuth-Emigráció Törökországban*, p. 484.
39. Jánossy, *Great Britain and Kossuth*, p. 40.
40. *Ibid.*, pp. 42–43.

41. Lajos Lukács, *Magyar politikai emigráció 1849–67*, (Budapest, 1984), p. 55, Deák, *The Lawful Revolution*, p. 296 f., and Komlos, *Kossuth in America*, p. 70.
42. Endre Kovács, *A Kossuth-emigráció és az európai szabadságmozgalmak*, (Budapest, 1967), pp. 161–168.
43. Pusztaszeri, "General Görgey's Military and Political Role: Civil-Military Relations during the Hungarian Revolution," *War and Society in East Central Europe*, vol. IV, p. 477.
44. Lukács, *Magyar politikai emigráció*, pp. 51–55.
45. Hajnal, *A Kossuth-Emigráció Törökországban*, pp. 52–59, and Lengyel, "The Hungarian Exiles and the Danubian Confederation," *The Hungarian Quarterly*, p. 451.
46. Lukács, *Magyar politikai emigráció*, p. 51.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 52, and Lengyel, "The Hungarian Exiles and the Danubian Confederation," *The Hungarian Quarterly*, p. 453.
48. Lukács, *Magyar politikai emigráció*, p. 51; also, Zoltán Horváth, *Teleki László 1810–1861*, I, (Budapest, 1964), p. 247.
49. Kovács, *A Kossuth-emigráció és az európai szabadságmozgalmak*, p. 274; A letter from Golescu-Negru to A. T. Laurian proposed the creation of a united Rumania within the framework of a confederation in which the Romanians would hold the balance of political power between the Hungarians and the Croats to prevent either group from gaining predominance. The Hungarian police confiscated this letter. From Nicolae Bălcescu, *Correspondenta, scrisori, memorii, adrese, documente, note si materiale*, G. Zane ed., (Bucharest, 1964), p. 521, cited in Bruce C. Fryer, "Nicolae Bălcescu: Rumanian Liberal and Revolutionary," (Indiana University, 1972), pp. 215–216; also, Romanian–Hungarian cooperation is mentioned in Béla Köpeczi ed. et al., *Erdély története*, vol. III, (Budapest, 1986), pp. 1449–1452.
50. Lukács, *Magyar politikai emigráció*, p. 52.
51. *Ibid.*
52. Bălcescu–Zamoyski, Paris, 1 July 1850, cited in Nicholas Bălcescu, *Bălcescu Miklós válogatott írásai*, I. Zoltán Tóth ed., (Budapest, 1950), pp. 215–224; also, Nicolae Bălcescu emlékirata a magyarországi Konföderáció létesítéséről, Paris, (?) January 1851, cited in Horváth, *Teleki László* II, pp. 236–239; also, Lukács, *Magyar politikai emigráció*, p. 52, and L. S. Stavrianos, *Balkan Federation*, (Hamden, Connecticut, 1964), p. 70.
53. Bălcescu emlékirata, cited in Horváth, *Teleki László* II, pp. 236–239; also, Lukács, *Magyar politikai emigráció*, p. 53. In actuality, Bălcescu's believed nationality was more important than liberty. "Liberty can be regained easily when it is lost, but nationality cannot... I believe that in the present position of our country it is necessary to concentrate more on preserving our nationality, which is so greatly menaced, than on liberty, which is not necessary for the development of our nationality." From Bălcescu–A. G. Golescu, Trieste, 5 January 1849, Bălcescu, *Correspondenta*, p. 132, cited in Fryer, "Nicolae Bălcescu: Rumanian Liberal and Revolutionary," p. 209.
54. Kossuth, *A dunai állam-konföderáció*, pp. 40–44.
55. *Ibid.*, pp. 43–50.
56. Bălcescu–Ghica, London, 26 January 1850, cited in Bălcescu, *Bălcescu Miklós válogatott írásai*, pp. 212–214, also, Hajnal, *A Kossuth-Emigráció Törökországban*, p. 379.
57. Lengyel, "The Hungarian Exiles and the Danubian Confederation," *The Hungarian Quarterly*, p. 455.
58. D. Kosáry, "Le projet de Kossuth de 1851 concernant la question des nationalités," in *Revue d'Histoire Comparée*, (1943), pp. 515–540, cited in Szabad, "Kossuth and the British »Balance of Power« Policy," *Acta Historica*, p. 23.
59. Kossuth, *Magyarország alkotmánya*, pp. 56–57.

60. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
61. *Ibid.*, pp. 62–63.
62. *Ibid.*, pp. 64–68.
63. *Ibid.*, pp. 70–74.
64. Lukács, *Magyar politikai emigráció*, pp. 53–54.
65. Jánosy, *Great Britain and Kossuth*, p. 52.
66. MacKenzie, *Ilija Garašanin*, pp. 42–58; also, Charles Jelavich, "Serbian Nationalism and the Question of Union with Croatia in the Nineteenth Century," *Balkan Studies*, III (1962), pp. 29–42.
67. Garašanin, "Načertanije", cited in MacKenzie, *Ilija Garašanin*, p. 42.
68. MacKenzie, *Ilija Garašanin*, p. 45.
69. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
70. *Ibid.*
71. *Ibid.*, p. 74.
72. Batthyány. Cited in Szabad, "Hungary's Recognition of Croatia," *War and Society in East Central Europe*, vol. IV, p. 602.
73. Appointed bishop of Djakovo in 1849, Strossmayer was one of the most influential figures from Croatia supporting the Illyrian movement.
74. Born in 1809, Gaj, who inaugurated the Illyrian movement, was the most important figure among the Croatian intellectuals during this period. The Illyrian movement was the Croatian program for Yugoslav unity. Like Garašanin's Načertanije, Illyrianism sought to unite all the South Slav people into one state. See: Wayne S. Vucinich, "Croatian Illyrism: Its Background and Genesis," *Intellectual Developments in the Habsburg Empire From Maria Theresa to World War I*, Stanley B. Winters and Joseph Held eds., (New York, 1978), pp. 55–113.
75. Lengyel, "The Hungarian Exiles and the Danubian Confederation," *The Hungarian Quarterly*, p. 452.
76. *Ibid.*, p. 453.
77. Henningsen-Zamoyski, Viddin, 2 November 1849, cited in Hajnal, *A Kossuth-Emigráció Törökországban*, pp. 527–528.
78. *Ibid.*
79. Lengyel, "The Hungarian Exiles and the Danubian Confederation," *The Hungarian Quarterly*, p. 451.
80. Henningsen-Zamoyski, *op. cit.*, pp. 527–528.
81. *Ibid.*
82. Lukács, *Magyar politikai emigráció*, p. 54.
83. One of their recent activities, the 1846 Galician uprising, ended in a complete failure. In March 1848, Bălcescu and A. G. Golescu-Negru, met Czartoryski in Hannover in which the latter proposed the creation of a Romanian-Polish alliance for the purpose of spreading the revolution throughout Eastern Europe. For more on Czartoryski's Balkan policies see: Robert A. Berry, *Czartoryski and the Balkan Policies of the Hôtel Lambert, 1832–1847*, Ph. D. Dissertation, Indiana University, 1974.
84. Kovács, *A Kossuth-emigráció és az európai szabadságmozgalmak*, pp. 161–180.
85. Lengyel, "The Hungarian Exiles and the Danubian Confederation," *The Hungarian Quarterly*, p. 452.
86. Hajnal, *A Kossuth-Emigráció Törökországban*, p. 381.
87. The more recent Polish émigrés under Lelewel began to disassociate themselves from the conservative policies of Hôtel Lambert.

88. Religion in the Kingdom of Hungary, 1839. (thousands)

Religion	Kingdom of Hungary		Entire Kingdom*	
		[%]		[%]
Catholic	5,030	51.8	6,130	47.4
Greek Catholic (Uniate)	856	8.8	1,322	10.2
Evangelical (Lutheran)	783	8.1	1,006	7.8
Reformed (Calvinist)	1,614	16.6	1,846	14.5
Unitarian	9	0.1	47	0.4
Greek Orthodox	1,169	12.1	2,283	17.8
Jewish	240	2.5	244	1.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,701</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>12,878</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\*including Transylvania

Fényes Elek, *Magyarország statisztikája*, I-III, (Pest, 1842-43), Vol. I, pp. 33-34, Table 52B, cited in Andrew C. Janos, *The Politics of Backwardness in Hungary 1825-1945*, (Princeton, 1982), p. 6.

89. Czaykowski-Zamoyski, Constantinople, 27 August 1849, cited in Hajnal, *A Kossuth-Emigráció Törökországban*, pp. 457-460.





# LES IDÉALS FRANÇAIS DE ZOLTÁN AMBRUS ET LE JOURNALISME DE LA FIN DE SIÈCLE ZOLTÁN AMBRUS: *LES JOURNALISTES ET LE PUBLIC*

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Lors des années quatre-vingt et quatre-vingt-dix du siècle passé Zoltán Ambrus était une vraie incarnation des types d'orientation française les plus intellectuels et les plus modernes de la fin de siècle hongroise. Aussi ses collègues l'appelaient-ils entre eux «l'écrivain des écrivains».

Il n'a pas encore vingt ans quand nous le voyons déjà aux tables des habitués littéraires dans les cafés de Budapest, tout en feuilletant le *Journal des Débats* et *Le Temps*, et Gyula Reviczky, Elek Gozsdu, Gyula Rudnyánszky, Béla Tóth, écrivains bien connus, écoutent le jeune homme élégant. A la fin des années quatre-vingt il jouit d'un grand respect aussi aux yeux des écrivains plus jeunes, comme Sándor Bródy et Ignótus. «Nous l'avons suivi d'un café à l'autre, d'un salon à l'autre pour écouter ses paroles laconiques et en apprendre.» – écrivait Bródy dans *Magyar Hírlap* (Courir Hongrois) en 1891.

Les idéals d'Ambrus sortaient principalement de la littérature française. Anatole France, Flaubert, Maupassant, Zola, Daudet et le suisse Cherbuliez l'ont influencé au plus. Parmi les critiques contemporains, il attribuait une attention distinguée aux critiques théâtrales de Lemaître sur les pages des revues françaises et à celles de Sarcey dans les quotidiens.

La formation des points de vue pendant les années quatre-vingt du siècle passé, les signes caractéristiques du changement de la structure des valeurs – diffusées par les journaux et les hebdomadaires et jouant un rôle toujours plus important aussi bien dans la publicité et dans le monde des relations sociales que dans la culture – se manifestaient déjà d'une façon accentuée dans les publications des écrivains, des poètes, des journalistes et des essayistes nés dans les années cinquante et au début des années soixante. Avec l'arrivée de la nouvelle génération, la littérature arrive, elle aussi, à un changement d'époque. Les débuts d'Ambrus et de la jeune génération littéraire se voient développer pendant cette période de la fin de siècle, et leurs oeuvres commencent à s'achever au début du siècle. Ils sont les précurseurs de la revue *Nyugat* (Ouest), dépositaires du renouvellement littéraire et culturel, puisque, en ce domaine-là, ils avaient préparé une réformation fortement considérable des points de vue non moins qu'un changement des goûts littéraires.

Dans l'année 1932 de *Nyugat*, Aladár Schöpflin caractérisait Zoltán Ambrus par ces mots: «Sa culture, son goût, son attitude d'écrivain étaient beaucoup plus éminents que ceux d'un écrivain hongrois auraient pu l'être à la fin du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Dans une époque d'air optimiste il est arrivé pessimiste, en la Hongrie retentissante de la musique tzigane et des toasts, autour de la fête millénaire il parlait à la voix de la mélancholie.»

Regardant les structures informatives culturelles dans les cadres de la publicité sociale des régions centrales et occidentales d'Europe, le milieu et la fin du siècle peuvent être considérés comme la grande époque des relations mutuelles entre littérature et journalisme. Quant à Ambrus, la matière culturelle de son choix de valeurs de goût, de son orientation intellectuelle et de sa réception des effets s'enracinant dans sa mentalité, peut être cherchée dans les sources de la presse française de l'époque, dans les revues littéraires et culturelles, qui nous montrent bien les procédures des changements structuraux des valeurs, des styles et des goûts. Dans la vie littéraire autour des revues et des quotidiens français diffusant les notions de valeur de la bourgeoisie, on voyait, depuis le milieu du siècle, des rédacteurs et critiques, personnages déterminants et respectés, mais qui sont devenus conservatifs et souhaitaient empêcher le modernisme de l'époque: Gustave Planche, Buloz, Charles Rémusat, Émile Montégut, Arnaud de Pontmartin. Tandis que Saint-Beuve âgé, renouvelé d'un tournant, s'est retourné au cercle d'idées du libéralisme conservatif, aux idéals des valeurs du classicisme national français. A l'époque, la mentalité considérable comme au plus moderne en les sciences, l'esthétique et la littérature était déjà représentée par Renan, Berthelot, Taine et Flaubert. Dans le cas d'Ambrus, du point de vue de la réception mentionnée des influences françaises, c'est la fin des années soixante-dix et les années quatre-vingt qui sont les plus remarquables.

Chez les Français une manifestation grandiose de la rédaction de revue, qui déterminait le visage des périodiques contemporaines européennes était *La Revue des Deux Mondes*. A l'époque du deuxième Empire la revue s'était caractérisée par un conservatisme libéral. Entre autres, on retrouve parmi ses collaborateurs Octave Feuillet, Murger, Leconte de Lisle, Fromentin, Renan et Baudelaire. Toutefois, le goût de Zoltán Ambrus était influencé par une *Revue des Deux Mondes* qui n'était plus rédigé par Buloz, mais, dès 1877, par Brunetière. A cette époque-là apparaissent, comme nouveaux auteurs, France, Loti, Coppée, Maupassant et Taine.

*La Revue des Deux Mondes* avait un rôle éminent parmi les revues qui exerçaient de l'action sur le goût et les idéals culturels de Zoltán Ambrus, devenant un personnage très compétent des tendances modernes dans la vie littéraire budapestoise dès la deuxième moitié des années quatre-vingt. Il était un des lecteurs hongrois les plus fidèles de ce journal pendant des décennies.

Plus tard, à 1908, *La Nouvelle Revue Française*, la fameuse NRF a commencé ses années, et cette périodique appuyée par Gide et son cercle portait encore une grande importance pour Ambrus au début de ce siècle.

Les idéals de style et le comportement de Zoltán Ambrus ont été formés par les valeurs culturelles de la direction analytique de la pensée française agissant au milieu et à la fin du siècle passé. La formation de sa mentalité et son idéal culturel étaient influencés surtout par les directions marquées de la pensée comtienne, principalement par Taine et Renan, et par les notions de valeur positivistes de la bourgeoisie contemporaine. Zoltán Ambrus défendait pendant toute sa vie les valeurs du libéralisme conservateur de la fin de siècle française. Au début de sa jeunesse, sa considération avait été caractérisée par la confiance réceptive en les valeurs culturelles, mais qui n'est pas restée stable: après quelques décennies son attitude d'écrivain et artistique serait déjà changée. Plus tard, la doute devient un élément principal de sa vision du monde, il se considère, tout comme la société, avec ironie et satire. Le ton mondain du traitement subjectif du sujet et l'approche sentimental étaient les caractéristiques de l'époque dans le genre du récit de journal. Zoltán Ambrus s'est montré excellent causeur, toutefois lui, au temps «du culte de la frivolité», il était caractérisé par l'objectivité d'un homme vivant dans une autoréflexion perpétuelle. On peut dire qu'il écrivait selon le principe que Descartes avait utilisé et exigé: claire et distincte, avec une clarté analytique et avec une maîtrise de soi. A cause de son caractère, de sa considération et de son goût, il était privé de «la négligence naturelle des inspirés».

Le jeune Zoltán Ambrus écrivait d'une façon captivante pour le public en ce style préféré des lecteurs de la fin de siècle, celui du récit de journal, formé sous l'influence créateur de genres du journalisme littéraire. A la fin des années soixante-dix et pendant des années quatre-vingt son nom est devenu célèbre dans les rubriques littéraires des journaux budapestois comme publiciste, critique, novelliste. Ses premiers articles sont apparus dans *Fővárosi Lapok* (Feuilles de la Capital), puis il écrivait continuellement dans *Függetlenség* (Indépendance), et Jenő Péterfy ayant quitté *Egyetértés* (Entente), il l'y a remplacé comme critique de théâtre. Plus tard *Budapesti Hírlap* (Courir de Budapest), *Nemzet* (Nation), *Budapesti Szemle* (Revue de Budapest), *Ország-Világ* (Pays et Monde), puis *Pesti Napló* (Journal de Pest) publient aussi ses articles. Il travaillait aussi pour *Koszorú* (Couronne) de Szana, et quelques-unes de ses articles sont apparus dans *Vasárnapi Újság* (Journal de Dimanche) et dans *Magyar Salon* (Salon Hongrois). Il était collaborateur principal du nouveau *A Hét* (Semaine), ses oeuvres littéraires ont vu le jour surtout ici et sur les pages des *Új Idők* (Temps Nouveaux).

Pour rendre sensible la façon de penser de Zoltán Ambrus écrivain des récits de journal, nous présentons aux lecteurs un récit typique de son époque,

retrouvé pendant nos recherches de sources dans la domaine de la presse littéraire de la fin de siècle. Ce récit oublié d'Ambrus est apparu originellement dans la revue *Magyar Salon* (Salon Hongrois) en 1888.

On y voit une contribution digne d'attention pour l'histoire de littérature étudiant la mentalité littéraire de la fin du siècle. Dans les cadres de la publicité de la fin de siècle, Zoltán Ambrus y donne l'image authentique de l'agrandissement du rôle de la presse, du journalisme conquérant, des relations entre journaliste et public.

Selon nos recherches il est devenu certain que dans l'oeuvre de Zoltán Ambrus le récit au titre «*Les journalistes et le public*»\* est l'antécédent de son essai «*Littérature et journalisme*» qui a une valeur de source excellente du point de vue de la sociologie littéraire et de l'histoire de la mentalité de l'époque.

\*L'article *Littérature et journalisme* est paru originellement dans la périodique *Szerda* (Mercredi) estimée comme antécédent de *Nyugat*. (Le texte a été publié de nouveau pour la postérité en 1978, dans le recueil *Esszépanoráma* [Panorama d'essais], par Zoltán Kenyeres.)

### Zoltán Ambrus:

#### Les journalistes et le public

Monsieur De Bissy – raconte Saint-Beuve quelque part – était un beau vieil homme aux cheveux blancs, qui, quand il entendait parler sans cesse de la révolution et de Bonaparte, devenait impatient, et s'exclamait avec un geste usuel pour chasser des mouches: «Ce n'est pas vrai! La révolution, ce n'est pas vrai! Bonaparte, ce n'est pas vrai!» La princesse Fitz-James lui expliquait en vain que la révolution et Napoléon étaient malheureusement des réalités, le brave vieux insistait: «Pas vrai! Pas vrai!»

Même à nos temps on peut rencontrer quelques types d'espèce De Bissy, qui ne veulent rien croire ni savoir de tout ce qui se passe dans le monde; qui, dès le moment qu'ils ne peuvent plus se délecter dans l'ordre des choses, se moquent bien des hommes, s'en foutent profondément du vent qui souffle, du temps qu'il fait au dehors de leur grotte.

Il y a quelque peu de niaiserie dans cette sorte d'obstination qui fait penser aux autruches, mais aussi un trait de dignité. L'homme qui tient tête au monde entier, même s'il est ridicule, peut compter sur quelque respect.

Ce trait de dignité caractérisait auparavant le Hongrois aussi, lui étant, comme on sait, beaucoup incliné vers le comportement distingué. Les vieux

Garamvölgyi, qui, un peu exaspérés, ne voulaient réfléchir même plus, se trouvaient chez nous de tout temps en grand nombre. Ces gens, qui se contentaient de leurs propres problèmes et qui ne voulaient même pas savoir qu'on canonisait dans le voisinage – dont toute la sagesse politique s'était épuisée au fait que «le portugais désire de la laine fine», qui étaient sérieusement convaincu que Sébastopol n'existasse même jamais – ils n'étaient pas de rarités.

Bien sur, dans nos jours, quand on ne peut plus se douter du chemin de fer «fameux», quand l'Electrom parcourt les rues et danse à l'Opéra, quand les gens sont en train de se niveller si considérablement, et même son majesté le peuple marchant nu-pieds commence à se livrer aux opinions démocratiques: ces originalités sont en voie de disparition.

Aujourd'hui tout le monde veut savoir ce qui fume chez le voisin. Nos intérêts ne sont plus tellement attachés à la glèbe que nous puissions nous cacher la tête dans le sable, mais si capricieusement ramifiés en général que le porc américain nous intéresse beaucoup plus que le sors de notre demi-frère. Depuis lors la lecture des journaux fait partie de notre vie, devenue un tel besoin que le chauffage ou l'éclairage. Et il n'y a pas un coin dans ce pays où la cigarette, le couplet d'opérette et le journal ne soient pas nichés.

Beaucoup de sorte d'intérêts nous rendent retirés du monde. La lutte pour le pain est toujours plus forte, et autant qu'elle devient plus forte, nous devenons nous-mêmes toujours plus isolés. Nous n'avons contacts à peine qu'avec nos associés, je pourrais dire, avec nos connaissances d'affaires: nous n'avons pas le temps pour voir la société. La plupart des gens, nous sommes en relations avec des firmes, nous avons à peine la possibilité de rencontrer les autres. Pourtant, comme disait Aristote, l'homme est un animal social, un animal de société, zoon politikon. En tout temps, tous les hommes avaient des affaires qu'ils voulaient discuter avec les autres. Jadis ils se réunissaient aux foires, aux fêtes – plus tard dans la «société» ou près du moulin. Le citoyen romain allait au forum, le citoyen de Debrecen allait devant l'hôtel de ville. Aujourd'hui les gens ne s'écrivent plus des lettres comme au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, la «société» n'est qu'une ombre de celle qui existait jadis, dans un monde beau, les fêtes ne sont que des spectacles et des entreprises de spéculation, les foires ne sont que des bourses; et si le citoyen de Debrecen veut s'occuper de politique, il reste à la maison et lit l'Entente. Notre besoin de société est aussi supplémente par un surrogatum: c'est le journal.

Pour accomplir ce devoir double, les journaux ont deux fonctions: ils informent et ils discutent les événements.

Bien entendu les journaux n'attachent pas toujours la même importance à toutes les deux vocations. L'Anglais, qui est un homme d'affaire avant tout,

prend son journal dans sa main principalement par intérêt, et il y cherche des informations rapides, ponctuelles et détaillées. Le journal lui remplace moins la compagnie: de ce point de vue il se contente de ce qu'il trouve dans sa famille et dans son club. Dans les journaux anglais donc l'information est le plus important: l'avertissement aussi rapide et bon que possible, le télégramme abondant, la correspondance régulière, la chronique détaillée du parlement. Le journal discute consciencieusement les choses politiques, avec quoi il sert toujours surtout les intérêts, mais il ne fouille pas trop les événements du point de vue social en général, évite la philosophie de cuisine, ne se complait pas dans les velléités littéraires, mais il se permet d'être majestueusement ennuyeux.

La plupart des journaux français veut jouer le rôle de l'amusant invité quotidien. Ses informations se limitent aux plus importantes, ses télégrammes sont pauvres, sa correspondance est presque ridicule. Il est caractéristique, que le *Figaro*, qui publie chaque mercredi les lettres arrivées de l'étranger, soit vendu en le moins d'exemplaires justement à ce jour-là, quand il apparaît muni d'un supplément abondant. Mais le parisien s'intéresse très peu à la politique mondiale, et ces lettres ne sont publiées que pour faire plaisir surtout aux étrangers. La plupart des journaux français ne donne presque exclusivement que des commentaires, et joue le rôle de Démocrite, le philosophe rigolant, avec le plus d'originalité, d'esprit, dans la forme la plus polie, la plus gentille que possible, sur le fond de la moindre information.

Evidemment, à la plupart des endroits la conception est devenue dominante selon laquelle le journal est d'autant meilleur tant il est capable de convenir à tous ses deux devoirs. Cette conception a vaincu chez nous aussi; qui n'est pas un miracle, puisque on rencontre de braves lecteurs hongrois qui n'exigent pas seulement d'avoir les meilleures informations et les commentaires les plus sages possibles, mais qui voudraient qu'on leur donne une pendule et un manteau d'hiver en supplément avec le journal. Nos quotidiens, s'ils veulent complètement satisfaire à toutes les exigences de leurs lecteurs, sont contraints d'avoir un médecin, un avocat et un commissionnaire à part, pour l'utilisation personnelle des lecteurs. Et, il est arrivé une fois en effet qu'un cher abonné a demandé son rédacteur: ne serait-il pas possible qu'il le présente à une de ses belles connaissances? Notre journalisme étant immaculé, le rédacteur a donné une réponse négative.

Depuis que tout le monde en a besoin, le journal est devenu une machine gigantesque. Il doit mettre à disposition énormément d'informations et énormément de commentaires. Tous les deux devoirs ne peuvent pas être accomplis par des mêmes gens. L'un fabrique la porte et un autre fabrique le loquet.

Où le journaliste commence-t-il? Certes pas à la première lettre imprimée. Alors nous devrions appeler journaliste un homme sur deux homme; puisque une partie considérable des nouvelles est servie par les lecteurs mêmes. Le monde entier apporte son concours à la publication des informations. Mais le reportage professionnel n'est peut-être pas journalisme non plus. Non que ça soit un métier facile. Il y faut beaucoup d'habileté et du talent spécial. Mais finalement, à chaque journal, ce sont les commentateurs, les publicistes, les chroniqueurs qui ont le rôle le plus important. Car tandis que le premier ne contribue à la rédaction du journal qu'avec son nez, ses mains et ses pieds, le commentateur, le vrai journaliste accomplit en même temps le devoir du rhéteur, de tribun du peuple et de l'écrivain. Et son influence peut être encore plus illimitée, plus universelle que celle de ceux-ci tous ensemble. Il est vrai que son pouvoir ressemble un peu à celui des grands vizirs turcs qui, faisant leur travail qui a ébranlé le monde, ne savaient jamais, en quel moment auraient-ils reçu le lacet. Car il n'existe pas un tyranne plus capricieux que Démos; et le dompteur de lions, aussi adroit soit-il, n'est jamais sûr que la bête royale ne le dévore un beau jour, peau et os.

Le journaliste le plus puissant parmi ceux qui sont restés journalistes (puisque ce métier était toujours un marchepied commode pour aller plus haut, et de temps à autre il y avait même des têtes couronnées parmi les journalistes), donc le journaliste le plus puissant qui ne voulait être que journaliste, c'était Timothée Trimm. Timothée Trimm, Léo Lespès de son vrai nom, a fondé, s'alliant avec l'éditeur Cochinat, le *Petit Journal*, qui apparaît dans nos jours en près d'un million d'exemplaires. La fortune du quotidien a été fondé par les chroniques de Timothée Trimm, où le monde des lecteurs friands du bon journal trouvait une voix jusque'alors complètement inhabituelle, une vivacité stupéfiante et un esprit vraiment brillant. Léo Lespès a eu une position sans exemple dans l'histoire du journalisme. Tous ses mots étaient payés littéralement de pièces d'or, son salaire est monté aux cent milles, à titre d'avance il lui a réussi à recevoir un million et demi. Une fois, Timothée Trimm s'est offusqué de son éditeur lésinant sur quelques cinq mille francs vilains, et, pour l'effrayer, il s'est donné ses huit jours. Un autre éditeur a donné volontiers, bien sûr, la somme bagatelle à Léo Lespès. Chez le *Petit Journal* on était mort de frayeur. Ils n'ont fait ni une ni deux, mais ils ont ramassé une douzaine d'écrivains qui remplaçaient Léo Lespès sous le nom collectif Thomas Grimm; le journal continuait à monter rapidement, le public a oublié son chouchou en quelques semaines. Lespès et son nouveau journal ont échoué.

Alphonse Daudet raconte de Villemessant, fondateur du *Figaro*, qu'il laissait tomber régulièrement ses collègues sur lesquels il avait entendu au café

de remarques dépréciatives. Celui qu'il avait porté aux nues la veille, pouvait être prêt d'écrire son dernier article le lendemain.

Chaque journal est en même temps une entreprise commerciale; toute sa vie dépend de son public. Un mot déplacé provoquant un ressentiment général, et le journal est voilà perdu. Une de nos meilleures entreprises illustrée a fait faillite à cause d'un portrait publié intempestivement. Or, l'intérêt de l'existence est plus fort que toute philosophie. Donc, d'une façon explicite ou implicite, le public exerce aussi une influence sur le journaliste. Le commentaire ne peut être écrit non plus librement, indépendamment; le monde entier participe non seulement à l'information mais aussi bien à la discussion.

Plus le journaliste possède des valeurs personnelles, plus il aspire à l'indépendance la plus totale possible, mais aussi ce but est idéal, on peut s'en approcher mais on ne l'atteint jamais parfaitement. D'ailleurs, généralement le journaliste ne devient pas plus fort dans cette lutte, même, le plus souvent, plus qu'il reste à sa place plus sa position affaiblit. Après tout, l'occupation continuelle rend tout le monde artisan. L'acteur qui récite chaque jour, le rhéteur qui harangue chaque jour tombent vite dans un maniérisme auquel le public ne s'accoutume pas facilement, par contre il s'en dégoûte très facilement.

Un soir Planche, le critique excellent qui était un journaliste d'assez grand respect, a envoyé son article très tard à son journal. Le compositeur en chef de l'imprimerie protestait, disant qu'il était déjà impossible de composer l'article, mais ayant entendu que l'article était celui de Planche, il a accepté de le faire composer quand-même. On lui a demandé pourquoi avait-il changé son opinion. Parce que je n'ai pas encore fait démonté son article apparu ce matin répondit-il. Et puisque monsieur Planche se répète tout le temps, dans son article nouveau il y a forcément un tas de phrase, déjà composées. En voilà: *«puisque il nous est impossible de ne pas en être convaincu – nous sommes obligés de déclarer sans aucune réserve – il serait absurde de ne pas reconnaître, etc.»*

La maladie de Planche, ou bien quelque chose de pareille attaque la plupart des journalistes tôt ou tard. Et pour qu'il puisse faire oublier cette faiblesse, il a besoin ou bien de mille petites manoeuvres (genre, style, changement de place) ou bien d'une génialité exceptionnelle. Bien sûr, il y a quelquefois un journaliste qui est audacieux et prudemment sage, spirituel et sans manières en même temps, brillant donc comme Rafaël Garucci dans la pièce de Musset. Celui-là peut alors se procurer d'une grande indépendance. Mais les Rafaël Garucci sont rares.

(Trad.: Noëmi Saly)



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# PSYCHOLOGY, FANTASTICALITY AND THE TRUTH OF THE NOVEL

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The truth of psychology, fantasticality and aesthetics is one and the same in the novel but the common path leading to it has to be found by the writer himself, wherever he or she starts from. A valid, trustworthy picture of this seeking ways and means can best be given with the help of the history of the novel—that is, the testimony of the different endeavours.

Our starting point is the history of ideas. At the beginning of the Hungarian modernity the new psychological conceptions of the early 20th century were among the most influential ideas. Due to Mihály Babits, Bergson became popular among Hungarian modernists already in the first decade of our century while Freudism provoked general as well as profound thinking in “Nyugat” as witnessed by studies of reception and novels describing the period. In the history of Hungarian literary modernity, however, Bergsonism played a different role than Freudism. In 1910 Babits introduced the great French thinker as “a deliverer who brings back dreams we thought to have lost long ago and leads us to regions we did not even dare to look towards”. This deliverer, in Babits’s interpretation, makes us revolt against preconceptions as well as “the despairs of Spencerian agnosticism and the slavery of automatism”. The aim of his conception, that is, his theories of intuition and time, is to eliminate the duality of experience and subsequent systematization. It is for this purpose that Bergson qualifies the examination of individual states of consciousness as a construction of a metaphysical order and thus makes psychology part of the philosophical train of thought. It becomes understandable that the modern writers felt that Bergson got very close to the problems of the artist. Thus his influence was absorbed in the general renewal of the view of the world and it did not affect directly the birth of the inner monologue in poetics. Meanwhile it calls attention to the fact that there are questions of life and death in the new psychological conception. In this respect Bergsonism has a common point with Freudism that had direct thematic influence. In Sándor Ferenczi’s obituary Dezső Kosztolányi refers with sympathy to Freud’s great follower who “regarded man... as a mystery that cannot be expressed with any

psychological formula. He did not like the writers who popularize or apply psychoanalysis but those who associate with their instincts, with nature. He admired Gyula Krúdy." Following Ferenczi, Kosztolányi saw psychoanalysis as an intellectual revolution that caused disappointment to self-conceited man. He expected more of it than digging up motives or exploring the unknown layers of the soul. Following the new psychology, many discovered the depth of the human soul with romantic ardour. They enriched their motives by describing suppressions. Several of them rejected biologism for naturalism. Kosztolányi's character Esti Kornél says: "I want to be a writer who thunders at the doors of being and attempts the impossible." Kosztolányi's great epic works, however, would break the borders of the "psychoanalytic" novels. He was still looking for the new role of psychology within the art of narrative when he constructed his own model of the psychological novel. "Today's literature is again violently haunted by ghosts," he wrote in *Éjjél* (Midnight) (1917). "What used to be outside, is now inside us. We have the ghosts within ourselves. The crucial discovery of the new psychology, namely that we do not know a large part of our soul, took place in this age. This enormous region... is just being discovered by the fearless conquistadors of the soul... The knots of the beginning and the end have never been unbound, people have always had hallucinations and visions... There were ages though that only realized the phenomena between the two points, ages that in the harmony of earthly life were oblivious of themselves... The 20th century is very mystical. Why? Because it is unhappy. Mysticism... is an activity deriving from the despair of the human mind... What should we believe in? What should we confess? Where should we run? Frightened from the alien world that we cannot understand we run back into ourselves, escaping from mystery to mystery... there are no mystics in happy ages." (*Éjjél*. Edited by Aladár Bálint, Gyoma, 1917, p. 5.) Kosztolányi makes his characters say that understanding is already half way to victory and the beginning of love. In the attraction of the new psychology he recognized both the escape of man who has lost his values and the self-expression of the age. It is this understanding that gave birth to the new psychological aspect and, at the same time, the fullness of his novels.

The eras after the Enlightenment mainly examined the temporal evolution of man: his role in society and in nature, the effects of the changes happening there and his struggle to improve his circumstances. The examining method of modern psychology has reversed the traditional view completely. Let this point of view be called anthropological. The timeliness of the new endeavour is demonstrated by the fact that the conception of the novel of the 1920–30s reached the same conclusion from a different starting point. By studying the changes in form Gábor Halász recognized that the modern novel originated in

the technique of the early English novels—in other words the Bildungsroman (formation novel, education novel) gave place to the action novel.

The changes in poetics launched by new psychology first of all modified the claims and characteristics of psychological description. In the nineteenth-century novel the description of the soul, similarly to that of the age or the landscape, served to describe character development. It was a means of expressing temporal changes and effects, and it only showed as much from its subject matter as was visible from the overall point of view. The novelty that the modern psychoanalytic novel brought was not primarily the idea of describing the incidents of spiritual life even if it was a problem freshly discovered by the new trends. The most important thing here was the change in the point of view as a consequence of which the psychological theme, too, came to fulfil a structural function. Whoever undertook such a theme had to give up the principle of rational causality.

It was still a long way to the clear formula of Kosztolányi's great novels and this way demanded a struggle with genre conventions even by writers who followed the new psychology. The orientations before new psychology, on the other hand, also contributed to the destruction of the inherited rules of poetics.

When the generation of the Nyugat appeared, the best of psychological description was still represented by Zsigmond Kemény's novels. His *Pál Gyulai* differs from the heroes of the contemporary novels: exaggerated virtue drives him toward sin and destroying; he is miserable before he would be tragic. It is not because of the circumstances of his life that he becomes unhappy; his temper causes his fall. In *Özvegy és leánya* (The Widow and Her Daughter), Mrs. Tarnóczy rushes at her enemies with a passion that cannot be explained simply by her circumstances. Her hatred is mythic and her way in the novel is something like running amok. Similar characters include Senno Barnabás, Stribe Gergely and Simon Pécsi. As we can see, Kemény raised psychological description to an unusually high rank and expected a lot from the exploration of spiritual causes. We know from his biography (Papp, Ferenc: *Báró Kemény Zsigmond*. Bp., 1922.) that he studied clinical neurology and psychology at the University of Vienna. Furthermore, as an undergraduate at the Academy of Nagyenyed, he became familiar with Troxler who examined the bases of human nature and who thought that obscure emotions lay behind human deeds and character. (Troxler: *Naturlehre des menschlichen Erkennens oder Methaphysik*. 1828.) But his own confession proves, too that his interest in psychology was due to reflection. He writes in his *Pál Gyulai*: "I firmly believe that all the moods of our soul derive from our ideas but from such pairs of ideas that are too small and too fast to find shape in words and so to become perceptible. So our mood, the seed-bed of our deeds, takes shape among effects

independent from us and at the same time originating in us." (Quoted by Papp, Ferenc, op. cit. p. 360.) If we read his works after having read the psychological novels of our century we feel a sense of destiny rather than the atmosphere of the depths of the soul. Pál Gyulai, Mrs. Tarnóczy and the other characters are the vehicles of their creator's fatalism while their description refines the classical realistic analysis of the soul into a model. (Rónay, György: *A regény és az élet* (The Novel and Life), Bp., 1947. p. 61.)

From the viewpoint of modern psychological epic, another figure outstanding from the nineteenth-century history of the novel is István Petelei. He wants to recreate the ballad in prose. We can find evidence of this in the structure and psychology of his best writings which is a recurring theme of the Petelei studies. The description of the process of psychological constraint in *Őszi éjszaka* (Autumn Night) for example, reminds one of the world of János Arany's ballad. Many of Petelei's other short stories have the same elliptical, disconnected structure with the representation of the psychical processes being delayed. We are imprecise if we call the author's message psychological, as it is not the contents of the inner world that Petelei's balladistic short stories represent by means of language but rather a display of the psychical processes taking shape in behaviour and action. Petelei did not fully understand the modern psychological trends penetrating into the depths of the inner world. In fact, his balladistic picture of the world is based on an inheritance from János Arany namely the combat of moral forces. As András Diószegi observed, the "ideal" is missing from this world and man appears to be subject to the irresistible power of fate. To discuss which psychological approach is more authentic would be going to false extremes. Obviously that the representation of spiritual contents have lead to formerly unknown territories of portrayal of man but, at the same time, just like the naturalistic description of human life, it was tightly connected to the momentary symptoms of everyday life. The moral approach of the ballad's psychology had not yet integrated the determining factors of the unconscious. It presented a hero emerging from the incidental that modern Hungarian literature after naturalism wants to reformulate.

The pressure of poetic conventions was first felt by those writers who preceded the lyrical revolution of the Nyugat or even experimented with new types of narrative technique. They examined the coexistence of poetic conventions and new formations. We have to examine the presence of the principle of rational causality to find the turning point of modern narrative. This study first of all wants to throw light upon the experiments of Viktor Cholnoky. Looking back at Cholnoky from the viewpoint of modernity he appears to be a typically transitional writer bounded by many inherited literary conventions

who also made several attempts to complete and to requalify the inherited picture of man. His contemporaries and successors, who could make headway towards the aims of modern narrative on the way already started, found the new medium defined both by the new messages and the new conceptions of genre either in the new description of the soul or in abstract objectivity expressing human existence. Viktor Cholnoky tried to orientate himself in both directions but he still justified his new psychology with the rational epic probability and did not create the homogenous medium necessary to his abstract objectivity either. He searches for the inner world and secrets of man but he finds *peculiarity, remoteness and weirdness*. This strange thrilling world observes Hungarian anecdotal rules which incline the writer to unfold the secret of his mysticism and fantasticality with the help of a rational motive. Examples include *Szürke ember* (The Grey Person), *Bertalan Lajos lelke* (The Soul of Lajos Bertalan) and *Trivulzio szeme* (Trivulzio's Eye). But the constraint of epic probability is only a symptom in Viktor Cholnoky's narrative art. In his *Kövér ember* (Fat Man), for example, he does not force the rational explanation. He creates a situation similar to those of Franz Kafka—but without Kafka's truth.

The constraint of rational epic probability can be felt in the works of authors who created modernism. In Géza Csáth's early works, for example, the principle of rational causality is conveyed in the main story while in the inner story chronology and memory merge into one another. After 1907 a world of visions, memories and elementary moods flourishes unrepressed alongside these "true" stories. This is Géza Csáth's way to the often quoted *Anyagyilkosság* (Matricide), that is the self-definition of the modern psychological short story. There is hardly any story here and the faint convention of epic probability has apparently become subject to reflection. The whole novel describes the accumulation of motives for the matricide. Psychology is not contained in the representation of the inner world but in the characters' deeds. They appear cold and dispassionate. The murder is a senseless act, too, with its senselessness representing the vanity of existence and indifference to the laws, morals and ideals of life. The standard of this new psychology in Hungarian narrative literature is Kosztolányi's *Anna Édes* but his short stories preceding the novels are already regarded as evidences pointing to it. The private tutor of *Sakk-matt* (Checkmate) rebels against his sick pupil because of being humiliated by him. The story is the summary of a psychological process beginning with the revolt of self-respect and reaching its climax in the irrational want to win. It is quite striking that although the author speaks in first person singular, he does not submerge in the flow of consciousness but leaves the psychological motives to narration. *A Kövér Bíró* (The Fat Judge) is

the representation of the same type of irrational force. The heroes of this short story are children who hate the judge simply because he is fat. Their passion does not break out in cruelty but is dissolved in sympathy aroused by the judge's mother when she recalls his son's childhood with painful nostalgia. The reverse psychology of the cruel joke is represented in *Április bolondja* (April Fool): the lodger of an Üllői road student room wants to pry into the loneliness of his room-mate and becomes the victim of loneliness. In these early experiments Kosztolányi is attracted by the findings of modern psychology, regions of human life which had not yet been conquered by 19th-century literature. The excitement of discovery is undoubtedly a new source of energy. But the inner force of the short story nourished by it is only potential, and the more familiar the new environment—the subconscious layers of the soul—is, the weaker this inner force becomes. A consistent writer must realize that the new territories of the soul can only be a starting point. It is not by accident that young Kosztolányi feels at home in the world of the children, in a world which is the borderland of transition and universality in natural life, too. But later he is unsatisfied with the inner reserves of his raw material and tries to express universality in the incidental details of the whole structure of his short stories. The turning point of Kosztolányi's narrative is probably *Lidérc* (Nightmare) written in 1911. The narrator/hero meets drunk workers on a dim road, anguish overcomes him and he escapes into a restaurant of bad reputation where he is soon followed by his supposed persecutors. He is identical with his psychological state, his anguish, further increased by the provocation of his persecutors. This provocation imperceptibly raises the novel from reality to irreality. His persecutors think he is an old friend who does not remember them. If the short story ended here, it would be the expression of the decadent way of looking at life in which memories are more real than things. But the hero continues his escape and runs home where he is seen as a stranger. When he faces himself in a mirror in the street the face that glances back frightens him. Is it the story of schizophrenia? Or is it the representation of feeling lost? Both can be the prefiguration of Babits's *A gólyakalifa* (The Nightmare) and of *Epepe* by Ferenc Karinthy as well. At the same time its abstract objectivity resembles the world of Franz Kafka because the hero's nightmarish visions take the form of things and actions. Only at the end of the short story can we read the deliberately enigmatic sentence: "The face... was motionless... (in the mirror) like a dead man in a glass coffin and the dream did not want to come to an end." Is this said by the narrator qualifying the foregoing as a dream? A stylistic knack showing simultaneously the reflection of the dead man and the man in the dream? In my opinion, this enigmatic ending of the short story is the amplification of the essence of the author's message. The final sentence



does not want to give a rational explanation of the anguish but it does want to raise it from the medium of psychological naturalism. In this way does *Lidérc* (Nightmare) become an authentic psychological record and an insight into the existential problem experienced by a person falling into loneliness and despair. This is why Kosztolányi will be able to represent the three-dimensional man in his great narratives, an individual who is part of history, society and of universal existence.

It is probably not by accident that the greatest test of the narrative influenced by the new psychology, the representation of the fantastic, soon lead to new experiments. Two from the early Hungarian psychological novels are based on fantasticality and, by expressing the role of fantasticality they try to express psychological problems.

Babits published his *A gólyakalifa* (The Nightmare) in the *Nyugat* in 1913. Three years passed before his first novel was published in book form, eight more years for a review in his own literary periodical. His critic was Frigyes Karinthy, a congenial colleague who justified his deepest motives. According to Frigyes Karinthy *A gólyakalifa* represents the most painful and the most noble driving force of Babits's psychology, philosophy and poetry: the problem of dualism. Philosophy calls it conflict, but the living person, the most vivid being, the poet sees it as the condition of life. "One will never become two: the lonely womb is sterile" as Babits writes in *Kabala* (Cabbala). But the twin poles of being create such a tension the discharge of which can only be death. The human mind can only comprehend one life and if he is confronted with its duality then he meets the gap of madness and voluntary death is preferable. He must be content with the credo of the "I do not know it for sure" and the brave hesitators suffer the martyrdom of uncertainty for us all: they live instead of the dead and die for those who live. As we can see Frigyes Karinthy finds the indivisible common ground of rational and irrational endlessness in *A gólyakalifa* and identifies the credo of this world with enlightened doubt. But about the shape, the form of the whole novel he only writes one declarative sentence: "This time he has created something bordering upon a narrative masterpiece."

*Nyugat* attempted a new interpretation of the novel in 1932 the pretext being its third edition. The critic was Endre Illés who examined how Babits's material related to the concepts of Freudian psychoanalysis. This question first necessarily leads him to the separation of the novel's psychological, naturalistic and fantastic elements and after that he recognized that in themselves. Endre Illés reaches the conclusion that creation makes process from the sequence of the elements and at the same time is the form of the writer's inner world. The critic recognizes the medium of the work of art and he names it timidly and

uncertainly. "Is it fantasticality? Yes, it is! But fantasticality of noble material is a more real representation of man, human soul and life than unstructured reality."— Illés writes in his summary.

What are the distinctive features of the novel's cohesive force? Illés raises the question whether the fantastic novel has a special mode of existence, whether it has any uniqueness in the theory of the novel; whether formerly, naturalism or new psychology has created such new value, new pattern, or to use a very popular term, new paradigm.

When critics attempt to define what type of novel *A gólyakalifa* is, they use the adjectives "psychological" and "fantastic". They do not openly accept the presence of a naturalistic motive, although we can discover the presence of the formerly revolutionary trend's conception of reality not only in the description of the joiner's shop, the suburb and the brothel but also in the presentation of passion. When the tormented apprentice starts to beat his master's son left to his care, he vaguely feels that what he does is villainous cruelty but his anger causes him pleasure. Later on the prostitute's patchouli frees him from his inhibitions and transforms his disgust into wild passion. And finally he feels the same pleasure of "evil" when throttles his victim. Of course, the contemporary critics are right if they say that these motifs cannot define the medium of the novel even if they are stressed. The question remains whether fantasticality or the new psychological theme itself are already preformed materials of the novel, whether they automatically contain a new form of novel. The reader of our day has probably got over the sensation of science-fiction. And if we consistently consider the "lesson" of this genre we must admit that the effectiveness of scientific or pseudo-scientific theses can only be realized in fiction. Science-fiction has to transcend itself just like social or historical novels. Naturalism has not even gone by the easier way of applied literature and it thought to be useful to exclude fiction from the demanded truths in the hope of conquering a higher realm. So its followers became the victims of an illusion of the theory of the novel. But from a historical viewpoint it is clear that philosophical novelties or those of life could temporarily appear as new values of the genre. And this illusion defined the first experiences of modern psychological novel.

The coexistence of naturalism and new psychology at the time of the birth of the modern novel is a natural phenomenon, so to say. The success of their coexistence depends on whether they can create a new generic formation. And if they can, even their interbreeding with fantasticality is possible making irreality an autochthonous and universal reality.

The intention of the author of *A gólyakalifa* is to create such an autochthonous and self-asserting world. Its hero is the victim of schizophrenia who

can look upon himself consciously. His prognostic symptom differs from the examples of psychology in such an extent that in him both personalities know the other and this knowledge finally destroys the walls between them and real life and the life of dreams merge together. So *A gólyakalifa* is science fiction because it extends and represents a psychological thesis. But is it a novel in the sense of having a valid fantastic world? We can answer yes if we think of Babits's concept of the world in which there is no sharp distinction between rational and irrational, good and bad, and man's life is an on-going struggle against his own extremes and conflicts. But is the hero's autobiography enough to make an epic serving as the frame of the novel? It probably expresses the psychological problems if it is combined with inner monologue.

But inner monologue in itself cannot verify fantasticality. The writer describes one of his smaller characters, the very learned teacher: "This strange reader was mainly interested in curiosities... The facts of the psychology of the abnormal, that are so important in the philosophy of our day, were only interesting curiosities for him, nothing else." At another place he makes his hero think of the essence of poetry: "Things that were only data and curiosity to him, gained emotional and aesthetic value in my soul." This emotion and aesthetics, i.e. the created world of universal validity is missing from the fantastic world of *A gólyakalifa*. Thus the epoch-making experience of modern Hungarian psychological novel remained unaccomplished.

*A gólyakalifa* is present in Hungarian literary life from its birth. A similar experiment, Kálmán Harsányi's first novel, *A kristálynézők* (The Crystal-Watchers) is hardly more than a work interesting only for a literary historian. It belongs to the circle of ideas of such literary challenges such as *A gólyakalifa* and *Elsodort falu* (The Village Swept Away) by Dezső Szabó. Its fantasticality associates it with the former novel while its point of connection with the latter's conception of Hungarian tragedy. "The most vivid problems of *Az elsodort falu* are all lurking in this novel" László Németh writes." You can feel that you only had to be clean and educated and you could understand if you wanted how the remnant Hungarians should think in this colonial town and country sinking as low as becoming an unloading ground of cosmopolitan products." And we have to bear in mind that this warning was written five years before Dezső Szabó's cry and Gyula Szekfű's analysis. We may add that *A kristálynézők* is a milestone for descriptions of the 1910s among *Állomások* (Stations) by Margit Kaffka, *Szegény magyarok* (Poor Hungarians) by Gábor Oláh, *Fáklya* (Torch) by Zsigmond Móricz and *Vulkán* (Volcano) by Marcell Benedek. To find the roots of modern Hungarian psychological novel we again face the work of Kálmán Harsányi somewhere between the naturalistic spiritual diagnosis and the mystic short stories.

Fantasticity, psychology and description: it is not the first time that these coexist in the world of a novel just at the revolution of the genre showing the effects of new-romantic attractions and the recognitions of basic poetic concepts. The fantasticality of *A kristálynézők*, just like that of *A gólyakalifa*, is given by an interesting psychological problem. The hero of Kálmán Harsányi's novel identifies himself with a hypothesis of occult psychology. According to this "the capricious visions of autohypnosis can be governed and forced to view reality." His Indian predecessors still contented themselves with being hypnotised while staring at a crystal and they dreamed their capricious and perplexed dreams about anything the illusion projected onto their mind. Kálmán Harsányi's crystal-watcher reversed the process and became the master of his dreams, dictates them and sees not a tale but reality. In addition, he is able to make this reality vivid and if he looks back at a historical figure he sees his features gained by learning in the medium of his personal ones given by nature. And as he regards this autohypnotic vision of reality as the hidden gift of the human mind, his fantastic experiments broaden and deepen the picture of man, complete the rational dimensions of life with spiritual and ontological dimensions. Thus the experiment in *A kristálynézők* always changes its ways: now it approaches the novel towards the contents of universal human spirit, then it is supposed to raise the state of consciousness that is evoked by scientific fiction. It is perhaps unnecessary to prove that the two ways should meet in order to help the novel get to that fantasticality which could make a homogenous medium for motives of different origin. The world of the novel should be self-justifying and its inner logic should be defined by the laws of fantasticality. But the psychological experiment of crystal-watching is a motif of a realistic story in Kálmán Harsányi's work. Its main character, Fábíán Balogh escapes into the mysticism of crystal-watching because his wife killed their child and destroyed his autograph. She was perhaps driven by vengeance or by hysteria. When she appears in her divorced husband's life after seven years she harbours thoughts of revenge again. Her new lover, Tamás, is Fábíán's young friend and the embodiment of his patriotic ideals. Of course, her ex-husband hinders her from making Tamás her victim, too. The reaction of the woman could be a deep spiritual drama as she herself is a victim, too, in whom the want for salvation is awakened by human and heavenly law. But Kálmán Harsányi shows this heroine only from the outside and puts her into the one-sided role of relentless vengeance. The ex-wife, Júlia, knows her husband's sticking to the resort found in the light of the crystal. She gets her friend, an actress, to deceive Fábíán by justifying the reality of the world suggested by crystal-watching and then to reveal her betrayal. The woman's vengeance is successful, at the end of the novel Fábíán, locked up in an irreal world, meditates on his loved and despised Budapest.

This real Budapest medium has an important role in *A kristálynézők* because in his normal, worldly status Fábíán is a man with national, moralistic and artificial ideals who passionately struggles against his modernized world in the hope of an ideal Hungary that bridges the past and the future. He thinks that Budapest is the prey of conceited cynics who work with trickery, the victim of fashions in art and politics and of a stolen cosmopolitan culture. In contrast to these, the genteel poverty, the unpractical but more valuable element, the community of inefficient and deadly wounded people. This love and hatred shows Budapest as the "girlfriend of anyone" whose "every drop of blood is deadly poison but her face is beautiful".

This conception is part of the criticism of culture at the beginning of our century but it refers to the conservative past and the alarming modernization at the same time. We may call this attitude conservative radicalism provided that we accept the truth of paradoxes. And we can probably accept them because from the studies that examine Kálmán Harsányi's entire career we may know that he really tried to reach a historical synthesis and while he was wrestling with the modernists, he also had to struggle with orthodox conservatism. But, of course, we can only consider properly his ideas of nation, society and philosophy of art in the context of their inner structure. The complexity of this consideration is shown by the "rural versus urban" dispute of our day and the parallels of Kálmán Harsányi's conception. Our conclusion can probably be that we do not only have to restart modernization but we also have to face the destructive paradoxes of Hungarian revolutions.

But the epic truth of *A kristálynézők* does not depend on this unfinished historical, sociological and philosophical evaluation. Fábíán Balogh's behaviour and concept of the world could be valid even without this if the inner structure of the novel's world would justify it. But this inner laws would only work if the fantasticality, the criticism of society and of art would be built together in *A kristálynézők*. There is an attempt to it on the level of the story. According to Fábíán, only those can get into the circle of the crystal-watchers who are wounded and helpless because crystal-watching is an intellectual suicide. The inefficiently righteous, the gentlemanly Hungarians who refrain from the rush, are exactly like this and thus the tragedy of the crystal-watcher could be the symbol of their fate. And it would symbolize it if the logic of fantasticality became a congruous element in the novel. But the pseudo-scientific experiment of crystal-watching gains a subordinated role in the history of the society and in the critique of art as well. So its fantasticality remains a sheer curiosity and conceptions of nation, society and art have to be valid in their abstract medium.

Harsányi's characters are losing the ground from under their feet, too. They do not have real dimensions, their credo is not surrounded by particularities. In the preface, the writer tries to defend his characters by saying that he only believes in the truth of the points of views and this is why he tackles that his characters are torn out from the "fullness of life". At another place Harsányi regards every problem as novel because he thinks that this genre is the "criticism of man and every criticism has a certain point of view". So he takes it for granted that the characters of a novel are mouth-pieces of the author. It is not important to prove the problems of such a theory of the novel. He would have been able to create a self-justifying fictional world inspite of his teachings. This motive, the idea and invention inspiring each other, that would have given birth to a living organism, is missing from *A kristálynézők*.

# DIE „ERZWUNGENE SELBSTKRITIK“ DES MESSIANISMUS IM VORFELD DER REALISMUS-THEORIE VON GEORG LUKÁCS

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In dem Vorwort zu der von Georg Lukács nach langem Zögern zugestimmten Neuherausgabe seines Werkes *Geschichte und Klassenbewußtsein* im Jahre 1967 stellt dieser rückblickend auf die für ihn schicksalsentscheidende historische Wende von den 20er zu den 30er Jahren fest: „Es wurde mir auf einmal klar: will ich das mir theoretisch Vorschwebende verwirklichen, so muß ich nochmals ganz von vorn anfangen ... ich befand mich im begeisterten Rausch des Neuanfangens.“<sup>1</sup> Auch in bezug auf die in seinem Lebenswerk nachweisbare Kontinuität ist Lukács beizupflichten: an den entscheidenden Wendungen seines Lebens zögerte er niemals, den vorangegangenen Abschnitt seiner Laufbahn einer radikalen Überprüfung zu unterziehen, und wenn nötig, diesen zu negieren. Dies geschah im Dezember 1918 mit seinem Eintritt in die KPU, als er die geistesgeschichtliche Interpretation des „Zeitalters der vollendeten Sündhaftigkeit“ (Fichte) hinter sich ließ; so verfuhr er auch 1930, dem Jahr seiner Umsiedelung von Wien nach Moskau, da seine in der Ungarischen Räterepublik von 1919 begonnene und nach deren Sturz in den 20er Jahren in der Wiener Emigration fortgesetzte Tätigkeit als Berufsrevolutionär für lange Zeit ihren Abschluß fand.

Ohne einen Blick auf Lukács' geistige Produktion der Wiener 20er Jahre, die er später zum großen Teil negierte, sind die eigentlichen Beweggründe seiner vielfältigen und umfangreichen wissenschaftlichen Arbeit während der anderthalb Jahrzehnte, die er bis 1945 in Moskau verbrachte, nur schwer verständlich. Gemäß der Dialektik von Kontinuität und Diskontinuität gingen eben aus dieser Produktion schrittweise und unter häufigen Widersprüchen jene neuen Antworten hervor, die Lukács den historischen Herausforderungen der 30er Jahre in seiner Philosophie, Ästhetik und Literaturanschauung entgegensetzte. Diese enthielten nicht nur eine Absage an das Vergangene, sondern lieferten zugleich den Beweis dafür, wie er die alten Fragen von der Warte seines sich zunehmend vertiefenden Wissensstandes erneut aufwarf.

Zu Beginn der 20er Jahre zeugen seine Schriften von einer verspäteten, spezifischen Philosophie der konvulsiven Welle nach dem Krieg, zu einer Zeit,

als die Stabilisierung des Kapitalismus bereits eingesetzt hatte. Seine Artikel und Studien, von denen einzelne Kapitel zeitgleich auf Russisch in den Spalten der *Westnik Sozialistitscheskoj Akademii* erschienen, sind in dem Werk *Geschichte und Klassenbewußtsein* (1923) zusammengefaßt.<sup>2</sup> In ihm wird Marx' Philosophie den Anschauungen der II. Internationale gegenübergestellt, doch Lukács' Theorie bleibt im Gegensatz zur Marxschen Ontologie im wesentlichen hegelianisch. Er zog zwischen den Prozessen in Natur und Gesellschaft eine scharfe Trennlinie und ließ die Dialektik lediglich im letzteren Fall zu ihrem Recht kommen. Zu diesem Zeitpunkt noch in Unkenntnis der in den *Ökonomisch-Philosophischen Manuskripten* verfaßten Hegelschen Kritik, setzte Lukács die Hegelschen Begriffe „Gegenständlichkeit“ und „Verdinglichung“ irrtümlicherweise gleich und hob damit als erster die im 20. Jahrhundert so entscheidende Kategorie der Entfremdung (bei Hegel: Entäußerung) ins Zentrum der Aufmerksamkeit. (Hierin gründet sich bis heute der internationale Widerhall des Buches, insbesondere in den Reihen der linken Intelligenz in den westlichen Ländern.) Mittels der Hegelschen Gleichsetzung von Subjekt und Objekt wurde indessen die Widerspiegelung negiert und es wurde somit einer bestimmten Philosophie in Auftrag gegeben, die prononcierte totale Entfremdung aufzuheben. Da die anvisierte Gesellschaftsschicht aus mehrfachen Gründen keine reine Bewußtheit zu produzieren vermag, obliegt dies dem Philosophen. Laut Lukács: Aufgabe der organisierten Vorhut ist es, das Ideal des klaren Klassenbewußtseins (das sog. „zugerechnete Bewußtsein“) zu vertreten. Dieser offenkundig geradewegs bis zu Kant und Fichte zurückreichende *Subjektivismus* greift soweit, daß die Immanenz und Wirksamkeit der ökonomischen Gesetze durch die souveräne Rolle des Bewußtseins verdrängt werden. Auf diese Weise wurde das Werk *Geschichte und Klassenbewußtsein* zu einem „sonderbaren Gemisch von theoretischem Subjektivismus und politischem Revolutionärismus.“<sup>3</sup> Es erfolgte die ablehnende Kritik seitens der zeitgenössischen politischen Philosophie keineswegs ausschließlich auf Grund der „Verspätung“ des Werkes. Wie im Vorwort der Ausgabe von 1967 bereits dargelegt, unterwarf der Philosoph selbst sein Werk einer grundlegenden Kritik und arbeitete sein Leben lang an einem selbstkritisch positiven Gegenentwurf. Diesem Anspruch folgt sein letztes großes (unvollendetes) Werk *Zur Ontologie des gesellschaftlichen Seins*, ein souveränes und positives Gegenbild. Für eine Gruppe seiner Schüler, der sogenannten Budapester Schule, war gerade dies der Anlaß, sich von ihrem Meister enttäuscht abzuwenden, da sie mit einer philosophischen Realpolitik, die die Fichteanische Haltung aufgab, unzufrieden waren.<sup>4</sup>

Zahlreiche Momente führten dazu, daß sich der späte Lukács von dem subjektiven Voluntarismus, ethischen Idealismus und messianistischen Sektarianismus von *Geschichte und Klassenbewußtsein* abgrenzte. Ein Jahrzehnt



lang, im wesentlichen bis Mitte der 30er Jahre, währte dieser widerspruchsvolle Prozeß des Umdenkens, in dem Lukács danach strebte, das Erbe Hegels und Fichtes zu überwinden. Um zu einem tieferen Erfassen der Dialektik historischer Prozesse zu gelangen, bedurfte es unterschiedlichster Faktoren: der bekannten Kritik in der Frage des Parlamentarismus ebenso wie seiner Zugehörigkeit zur realistischen eingestellten, antibürokratischen Landler-Fraktion der ungarischen linken Emigration in Wien bzw. der an Lukács geübten Kritik auf dem V. Kongreß der Komintern. Sein „Umdenken“ bestimmten unter anderem die drohende Ausbreitung des deutschen Faschismus wie eine objektive Wägung des Verhältnisses in Ungarn und seine theoretischen Schlußfolgerungen über den „Aufbau des Sozialismus in einem Land“. Sein geschichtsphilosophischer Messianismus begegnete in all diesen Geschehnissen und Ereignissen einem sukzessiven „Ernüchterungsprozeß“. Ein herausragendes Moment dieser Besinnung stellt die über Moses Heß verfaßte Studie<sup>5</sup> dar, in der er zwar das Hegelsche Prinzip der „Versöhnung“ noch als reaktionär einstuft, doch zugleich gegenüber der „abstrakten Utopie“ der Junghegelianer, jener „wahren Sozialisten“, die Hegel von links zu überholen suchten, hier den Hegelschen „großartigen Realismus“ wahrzunehmen vermag. („Das, was zu begreifen ist, ist die Aufgabe der Philosophie“, zitiert Lukács aus der Vorrede der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie.)

Eine wichtige Station jenes Weges, den Lukács als führender Theoretiker von der „Utopie zum Realismus“ zurücklegte, stellte die Ausarbeitung der sogenannten „Blum-Thesen“ (Januar 1929) dar, die der Vorbereitung zum II. Kongreß der KPU im Jahre 1930 dienen.<sup>6</sup> Bekanntlich setzte nach dem VI. Kongreß der Komintern (1928) innerhalb der internationalen linksextremistischen Arbeiterbewegung eine entschiedene Wende ein, als wäre diese durch die Weltwirtschaftskrise von 1929 und den damit einhergehenden sozialen Spannungen unterstützt worden. Dadurch wurde bei vielen die Hoffnung auf einen „neuen Durchbruch“ geweckt. In einem vom 28. Februar 1929 datierten Brief<sup>7</sup> berufen sich Béla Kun und D. Z. Manuilski – beide Sekretäre der Komintern – darauf, daß es 1919 in Ungarn bereits eine Diktatur des Proletariats gegeben habe und nun die Erringung der zweiten Räterepublik das richtige politische Ziel sei. Nach den ausgebrochenen Kontroversen war Lukács in seiner am 2. Mai 1929 verfaßten Erklärung gezwungen, seine unterbreitete Vorlage (die Blum-Thesen) zurückzuziehen. Die Thesen waren nicht frei von sektiererischen Einschätzungen: sie hielten die irrtümliche Losung vom „Sozialfaschismus“ aufrecht und qualifizierten die bürgerlichen Demokratien allgemein als Quartiermacher des Faschismus. Daher sind sie nur zum geringen Teil als theoretische Initiative der späteren sogenannten „Volksfrontpolitik“ zu betrachten. Doch Lukács' Ansicht über die demokratische Alternative zu einer unmittelbaren, sofortigen linken

Diktatur war für die Herausbildung einer perspektivisch angelegten, realistischen Weltansicht von großer Bedeutung.

Mit der Zurücknahme der Thesen erlitt Lukács eine politische Niederlage. Er ging nach Moskau, wo er anderthalb Jahre Mitarbeiter des Marx-Engels-Lenin-Instituts war. Als gleichsam befreiende Schockwirkung erwies sich die im Verlaufe des Studiums von den *Ökonomisch-Philosophischen Manuskripten* gewonnene Erkenntnis, warum die Konzeption von *Geschichte und Klassenbewußtsein* (die Gleichsetzung von Gegenständlichkeit und Verdinglichung) im Grunde verfehlt war. Hier konnte Lukács Lenins *Philosophische Hefte* studieren, entstand mit Mihail Lifschitz eine lebenslange Freundschaft ideell Gleichgesinnter. In dem Maße, wie sich Lukács von der unmittelbaren politischen Aktivität zurückzog, entfaltete er seine literaturkritische Tätigkeit. Von Bedeutung sind seine in der *Moskauer Rundschau* erschienenen Kritiken über Werke russischer Autoren (bzw. auch Klassiker) in deutscher Sprache.<sup>8</sup> Der Adressat war in erster Linie die deutsche technische Intelligenz in der Sowjetunion (die an der Verwirklichung der dortigen großen Bauprojekte mitbeteiligt war), doch gelangte das Blatt auch nach Deutschland. Der Ton dieser Schriften und die Art und Weise der Gegenstandsbetrachtung lassen deutliche Bezüge zur Literaturideologie der RAPP (Russische proletarische Schriftstellerorganisation) mit ihren positiven wie negativen Zügen erkennen. Die künstlerische Wertung steht hier bei Lukács noch hintenan, es dominiert die Absicht, über das sowjetische Leben zu informieren, doch auch eine Überbetonung des Aspektes der Klassenherkunft, die an das frühere Sektierertum erinnert (so z. B. in den Ausführungen über Scholochow, Dostojewski und Tolstoi).<sup>9</sup> All dies führte naturgemäß zu unausgewogenen Ergebnissen. Doch zugleich zeigten sich hier in Korrespondenz mit seiner sich langsam umwandelnden Philosophie im Keim bereits einige jener Momente (wie der Totalitätsanspruch oder die Forderung nach Wirklichkeitstreue), die in die Richtung der späteren *Realismus-Theorie* wiesen.

Beachtung verdient zweifelsohne Lukács' ausgedehnte literaturkritische und -theoretische Tätigkeit in der zweiten Hälfte der 20er Jahre, die in den Spalten der ungarischsprachigen Presse, der Wiener *Új Március* (1926–1930, Neuer März), der Budapester *100%* (1927–1930) und der in Moskau erschienenen Zeitschrift *Sarló és Kalapács* (1929–1937, Sichel und Hammer) ihren Niederschlag fand. Zu Recht stellte daher ein ausgewiesener Forscher dieses Zeitabschnittes fest, daß Lukács' „spätere, sich in den 30er Jahren herausgebildete Ideologieauffassung hierher, in die zweite Hälfte der 20er Jahre zurückführte ... und zwar nicht von ungefähr. Daraus folgt aber auch, daß seine Auffassung über Literatur stärker in den ungarischen Verhältnissen verwurzelt ist, als vielfach angenommen wird.“<sup>10</sup> Bereits hier – in Lukács' Skizzen und Artikeln

zur Entwicklung der ungarischen Geschichte und Literatur – fällt eine großangelegte Kulturkonzeption auf, die die in den 30er Jahren entwickelte geschichtsphilosophische Theorie in vielen Punkten förderte. In seiner Anschauung von der modernen ungarischen Gesellschaft ging Lukács bis zu den Ereignissen von 1848 zurück, als sich ein Weg zur bürgerlichen Umgestaltung in Ungarn eröffnete, jedoch daran scheiterte, daß die Revolution – nach seiner Meinung – nicht zur Volksrevolution wurde. Im Ausgleich mit Österreich im Jahre 1867 sah er einen Kompromiß zwischen Adel und Bürgertum; als dessen unmittelbare Folgen schätzte er den *Verfall der Kunst* im geistigen Leben und eine Reihe kompromißloser Vereinbarungen ein. Dies machte es Lukács unmöglich, im Vergleich zum Erbe und den Traditionen eines Petöfi und Ady bei solch herausragenden demokratisch-humanistischen Schriftstellern des 20. Jahrhunderts wie Gyula Krúdy, Zsigmond Móricz oder Mihály Babits künstlerische Werte zu entdecken. Seine enge Sicht in der Frage der literarischen Tradition spiegelt sich in besonderer Weise in seiner Stellungnahme äußerst sektiererisch-dogmatischen Plattform-Entwurf wider, der von den in Moskau lebenden ungarischen Emigranten-Schriftstellern nach der Charkower Konferenz ausgearbeitet worden war. Lukács stellte hierzu u.a. fest: „In der ungarischen Literatur *gibt es* nach 1867 *keinen* klassischen Schriftsteller, von dem man als proletarischer Autor lernen könnte.“<sup>11</sup> Seine starre ablehnende Haltung gegenüber Lajos Kassák, dem „Vater“ der ungarischen avantgardistischen Kunst, ist ein Beispiel für seine Jahrzehnte währende Polemik mit den modernen Kunstexperimenten. Zugleich stellen Lukács' Hinweise auf die großen antifeudalen bürgerlichen Freiheitskämpfe und Revolutionen als Ereignisse, die bleibende kulturelle Werte hervorbrachten, sowie seine Überlegungen zu den klassischen und realistischen Formen, zur Rolle der großen Genres (des Romans) ein positives Gegenbeispiel dar. Sie zeugen von den Anfängen einer konstruktiven ästhetischen Konzeption, zumindest, was die Beispiele der Vergangenheit anbelangt, denn von dem zeitgenössischen „dekadenten“ Bürgertum erwartete Lukács keine ähnliche Leistung, sondern konstatierte eher dessen Verfall.

Auf Ersuchen der IVRS (Internationale Vereinigung Revolutionärer Schriftsteller) ging Lukács zur Unterstützung der Arbeit im BPRS (Bund proletarisch-revolutionärer Schriftsteller) im Sommer 1931 nach Berlin. In seinem Gepäck befand sich die bereits in Moskau fertiggestellte Studie *Die Sickingendebatte zwischen Marx-Engels und Lassalle*. Mit dieser Arbeit wird allgemein – auch von ihm selbst – seine eigentliche Entwicklung als Ästhetiker angesetzt.<sup>12</sup> Die umfangreiche Fachliteratur zum Geschehen seines Berliner „Intermezzos“ vom Sommer 1931 bis März 1933 konzentriert sich in den Analysen verständlicherweise auf die Diskussionen in den Spalten

der *Linkskurve*.<sup>13</sup> Weniger Beachtung finden indessen die Publikationen der unmittelbar vorausgegangenen Jahre in der ungarischsprachigen und in der russischen Presse, obgleich diese – wie bereits erwähnt – das eigentliche, wichtige Vorfeld ausmachen. Die Sickingen-Studie ist Lukács' erste anspruchsvollere Arbeit, die bereits in Moskau entstand. Sie ist erstes *Teilprodukt* des von ihm – insbesondere in Zusammenarbeit mit Mihail Lifschitz – unternommenen Versuchs einer Rekonstruktion der Marx-Engelsschen Ästhetik. (Diese Rekonstruktion und der Ausbau der sich darauf gründenden Ästhetik bilden den eigentlichen Kern der Lukácsschen Tätigkeit in den 30er Jahren.)

In der Analyse von den „Klassikern“ zu Lassalles Drama wurde dessen Standpunkt als formalistisch kritisiert. Lukács sah Lassalles herausragende Rolle darin, daß er als einziger Dramenautor (anders als Fr. Th. Vischer, Hebbel usw.) im Ringen des Alten gegen das Neue entschieden für letzteres eintritt. Eben diese Rolle ermöglichte es ihm zu untersuchen, was für Helden Lassalle wählt, wie sein Verhältnis zu den nachhegelschen gesellschaftlichen Prozessen ist. Und daraus zog Lukács Anfang der 30er Jahre für sich die überraschende Erkenntnis, daß Lassalles Absichten dazu führten: „... in den konkreter gefaßten Menschen und gesellschaftlichen Verhältnissen bloße Träger, Repräsentanten, Sprachrohre der weltgeschichtlichen Idee zu sehen und zu gestalten ... Lassalles Idealismus [schlägt] in eine abstrakte Antinomie um, weil er ‚die Idee der Revolution‘ in die konkreten Menschen und Beziehungen hineinträgt, statt die wirklich konkrete dialektische Beziehung aus ihnen herauszuentwickeln, weil er ihre Konkretheit zugleich setzt und aufhebt.“<sup>14</sup>

Eben hieran entzündeten sich die aufflammenden Diskussionen in den Jahren 1931/32 in der *Linkskurve*. Dies wird besonders deutlich nach der Auflösung der „proletarischen“ Literaturorganisationen am 23. April 1932. Lukács' Publikationen dieser Zeit sind Streitschriften einer widersprüchlichen kritisch-selbstkritischen Auseinandersetzung mit der „Fichteschen Ethik“. Die folgende größere „Rekonstruktions“-Studie, die – zusammen mit seiner Mehring-Abhandlung – nach seiner Rückkehr nach Moskau entstand und hier erschien, belegt Lukács' uneingeschränkte Identifizierung mit der Engelsschen Kritik an Margaret Harkness' *Stadtmädchen*: „Das revolutionäre Aufflammen der Arbeiterklasse ... ihre Versuche, konvulsivisch, halbbewußt oder bewußt ihre Menschenrechte zu erkämpfen, gehören der Geschichte an und können ihren Platz auf dem Gebiet des Realismus beanspruchen.“<sup>15</sup>

Der mit diesem Zitat von Lukács übernommene *Realismus*-Begriff ist nicht mit jenem gleichzusetzen, der sich bei ihm von der Mitte bis Ende des Jahrzehnts herausbildete. Er hat zu dieser Zeit eher noch einen pejorativen Beiklang und wird – freilich im Zusammenhang mit der „subjektivistischen

Idealisierung“ – von Lukács als „versöhnlicher Realismus“ apostrophiert, in der Überzeugung, daß „allein ... ein revolutionärer Realismus ... die inneren Widersprüche der ... Entwicklung mit schonungsloser Offenheit, mit unerschrocken-zynischer oder revolutionär-kritischer Wahrheit bloßlegt.“<sup>16</sup>

Dieser „Realismus“ war für ihn nur in Verbindung mit dem noch aus der Zeit von *Geschichte und Klassenbewußtsein* stammenden Totalitätsbegriff vorstellbar, der auch in einigen seiner Artikel in der *Moskauer Rundschau* eine Rolle spielte. Von daher ist seine Aversion gegenüber der Verwendung von Verfahren der Reportageliteratur in der Epik und einer Montagetechnik erklärbar, die Figuren und Geschehnisse *isoliert* und eine Zerbröckelung des Ganzen zur Folge hat; deshalb wandte sich Lukács insbesondere gegen eine *Tendenz-Literatur*, die von seiten gewisser Kritiker der vorangehenden Periode als Fichtesches Erbe gehandhabt wurde. An ihrer Stelle setzte er einen höchst fragwürdigen Begriff der ‚Parteilichkeit‘. Diese unglückliche und später so viel umstrittene Kategorie hat selbstverständlich mit der von den deutschen linken Schriftstellern angewandten Methode, die zeitgenössische Bewegung in ihrem Alltags-Ringen unmittelbar zu unterstützen, wenig gemein; sie stützt sich vielmehr auf die von Lukács in seiner früheren Lassalle-Rezension gewonnene Erkenntnis. In ihr stellte Lukács fest: „... wird ... der konkrete Geschichtsprozeß selbst als das originär Dialektische verstanden, der in unseren Gedanken nur zum Bewußtsein gelangt, so können *ihm selbst* die entscheidenden Tendenzen des gesellschaftlichen Geschehens abgelauscht und so zum Gegenstand der Wissenschaft gemacht werden. Die Wissenschaft, die so erreicht wird, kann *als Wissenschaft* die Praxis leiten: eine Realpolitik *im weltgeschichtlichen Sinne* ist dadurch *methodisch* möglich geworden.“<sup>17</sup> Die Einsicht in solche Dimensionen drängt natürlich die früheren fragwürdigen Termini in den Hintergrund und läßt die Herausbildung eines zeitgemäßen Begriffs – der des *Realismus* – anbahnen.

Der „weltgeschichtliche Sinn“ gewann bei Lukács in der Zeit der Ausbreitung des Faschismus eine besondere Bedeutung. Er erkannte eher als die meisten, daß der Weg zum ersehnten Sozialismus – gelinde gesagt – steinig ist und in die verschwommene ferne Zukunft weist. Die „Realpolitik“ erforderte bereits zu dieser Zeit den Zusammenschluß aller progressiven Kräfte, also auch ein Bündnis mit dem Bürgertum. Lukács stellte sich in seiner Literaturauffassung auf eine solche Bündnispolitik ein, wengleich er vor 1935 selbst nicht frei von sektiererischen Einschätzungen war und sich von seiner Aversion einer „avantgardistischen“ Kunst gegenüber im wesentlichen niemals befreien konnte.

Auf dieser Grundlage ist sein prinzipielles Mißbehagen gegenüber einer „Materialästhetik“ verständlich, die er in ihrer ästhetischen Funktionalität und tendenziösen Ausrichtung für „fichteanisch“ hielt. Auf keinen Fall kann aus

dieser Position der Schluß abgeleitet werden, daß Lukács' Anschauung kontemplativ und deterministisch sei oder er sich den Standpunkt der Spontaneität zueigen gemacht habe.

Die Diskussion zwischen Lukács und den deutschen „proletarischen“ Schriftstellern wurde durch die Geschichte vertagt. Nach der Machtübernahme des Faschismus mußte auch Lukács Berlin verlassen und kehrte nach Moskau zurück. Die begonnenen Diskussionen und der anvisierte Gestaltung einer „Realismus“-Theorie wurden dann unter noch schwierigeren Bedingungen des Stalinismus fortgesetzt; die Anfänge nahmen zunehmend konkretere Formen an und gewannen an Tiefendimension.

### Anmerkungen

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3. Erwin Rozsnyai, *A politikai és filozófiai nézetek ellentmondása a Történelem és osztálytudatban* (Der Widerspruch der politischen und philosophischen Ansichten in ‚Geschichte und Klassenbewußtsein‘). In: *Magyar Filozófiai Szemle*, 1982. H. 4. S. 504.
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5. Vgl. Georg Lukács, *Moses Heß und die Probleme der idealistischen Dialektik*. In: *Archiv für die Geschichte des Sozialismus und der Arbeiterbewegung*. (Im weiteren: *Archiv...*) Hrsg. von Carl Grünberg. Leipzig, 1926, S. 105–155.
6. Vgl. hierzu Lukács' Vorwort zu *Geschichte und Klassenbewußtsein* (siehe Anm. 1) sowie: Miklós Lackó, *A „Blum-tézisek“ és Lukács György felfogása a kultúráról és az irodalomról* (Die „Blum-Thesen“ und György Lukács' Auffassung von der Kultur und Literatur). In: *„Az időt mi hoztuk magunkkal“* („Wir brachten die Zeit mit uns“). Budapest, 1985. Bd. 6. S. 297–320.

7. Vgl. Archiv des Instituts für Politikwissenschaft. 500. f. 221. Zitiert nach: Károly Urbán, *Lukács György és a magyar munkásmozgalom* (György Lukács und die ungarische Arbeiterbewegung). Budapest, 1985. S. 66–67.
8. Diese Arbeiten werden von gegensätzlichen Positionen betrachtet. Siehe: Alexander Stephan, *Georg Lukács erste Beiträge zur marxistischen Literaturtheorie*. In: Brecht-Jahrbuch, 1975. Suhrkamp V., Frankfurt am Main, 1975. S. 79–111; – Lothar Baier, *Vom Erhabenen der proletarischen Revolution*. In: *Der Streit mit Georg Lukács*. Suhrkamp V., Frankfurt am Main, 1978. S. 55–76; – László Sziklai, *Lukács György a Moszkvai Szemlében* (György Lukács in der Moskauer Rundschau). In: *Irodalomtörténet*, 1985. H. 2. S. 260–288; – Alfred Klein, *Georg Lukács in Berlin*. Aufbau V., Berlin, 1990. (Dieser Band enthält auch die Sammlung der Beiträge aus der Moskauer Rundschau.)
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11. György Lukács, *A régebbi magyar irodalomhoz való viszonyunk – Hozzászólások* (Unser Verhältnis zur älteren ungarischen Literatur – Diskussionsbeitrag). In: Sarló és Kalapács, (Moskau), 1931. H. 9. S. 55–57.
12. Die erste Veröffentlichung russisch bereits im Jahr 1932. Deutsch: *Die Sickingendebatte zwischen Marx–Engels und Lassalle*. In: Internationale Literatur, 1933. H. 2. S. 95–126. – Neuerdings: Georg Lukács, *Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels als Literaturhistoriker*. Berlin, 1948. S. 5–62.
13. Von der neueren Sachliteratur vgl.: Helga Gallas, *Marxistische Literaturtheorie – Kontroversen im Bund proletarisch-revolutionärer Schriftsteller*. Luchterhand V., Neuwied und Berlin, 1971; – *Dialog und Kontroverse mit Georg Lukács*. Reclam V., Leipzig, 1975. (In dieser Ausgabe insbesondere die Studien von Werner Mittenzwei: *Gesichtspunkte – Zur Entwicklung der literaturtheoretischen Position Georg Lukács*; sowie: Ingeborg Münz-Koenen, *Auf dem Wege zu einer marxistischen Literaturtheorie – Die Debatte proletarisch-revolutionärer Schriftsteller mit Georg Lukács*); ferner: Werner Mittenzwei, *Brecht und die Schicksale der Materialästhetik*. In: *Künstlerische Avantgarde*. Berlin, 1979. S. 141–168; – Manfred Nössig, *Das Ringen um proletarisch-revolutionäre Kunstkonzeptionen – 1919–1933*. In: *Literaturdebatten in der Weimarer Republik*. Aufbau V., Berlin und Weimar, 1980. S. 629–709; – Manfred Naumann, *Blickpunkt Leser*. Literaturtheoretische Aufsätze. Reclam V., Leipzig, 1984. S. 171–190; – Szerdahelyi, István, *Lukács György útja „Az esztétikum sajátosságá”-hoz* (György Lukács' Weg zu „Die Eigenart des Ästhetischen“). In: „Az időt mi hoztuk magunkkal“, a. a. O. S. 465–524.
14. Vgl. Anm. 12, A. a. O., (1948). S. 19.
15. Zuerst russisch im Jahr 1935. Deutsch: *Friedrich Engels als Literaturtheoretiker und Literaturkritiker*. In: Internationale Literatur, 1936. H. 2. S. 79–94; Zitiert nach der Ausgabe von 1948. S. 86, vgl. Anm. 12.
16. Georg Lukács, *Die Sickingendebatte zwischen Marx–Engels und Lassalle*. A. a. O., S. 46.
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# DUELLING IN HUNGARY BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS

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In the minds of a public tainted with cinematic melodrama, the word "duel" brings up Pushkinian visions of a small clearing in a gloomy, perhaps snowy, forest where, at daybreak, well-clad gentlemen – disregarding the danger of catching cold – had shed their redingotes, and are poised with pistols at the ready. Better even, the action has already been completed as one is allowed to conclude from the fact that one gentleman, dead or dying, is lying on the ground. One might even perceive in the distance a coach in which a veiled and distressed lady watches the outcome standing, of course I mean morally, behind the man through all the tribulations he would not have had had it not been for her.<sup>1</sup>

Let me now jump a century or so and move from an unspecified country to Hungary, say in the 1930s. The duel is taking place in a well lit gymnasium (literally a fencing-room *vívóterem*) in the presence of four seconds and two doctors. The duelists are naked above the waist with bandages protecting the neck and wrist arteries. The fencing swords have been duly inspected and disinfected. The senior second had already done his duty and called upon the parties for a reconciliation. Now he is standing with a sword in his hand and gives the first command *Vigyázz!* ("Attention!"); the two men salute with their swords. At the second command *Állás!* ("On your mark!") the duelists take up their position at a distance which would allow the points of the two swords to touch when the arms of the antagonists were fully extended. At the third command, *Rajta!* ("Go!"), which would follow almost at once, the duel starts and probably in less than one minute there is a clash resulting, in this imaginary case, in a small cut on the forearm of one of the men. The leading second shouts *Állj!* ("Stop!"). The fight is over; the insult which caused the duel to be fought had been a slight one and it had been agreed that it would stop "at the first blood" (*első vér*). Let us hope that before the duel the insulting party had expressed to his own seconds his readiness to apologize to the insulted party; he now does so, and the other man accepts the apology; reconciliation follows. But even if the ending is not as happy, for all intents

and purposes the affair ends here: chivalrous amends (*lovagias elégtétel*) have been given for the insult, quite irrespective of the outcome, i.e. whether the insulted or the insulter had been wounded. Subsequently, the four seconds would prepare the minutes of the meeting, and sign them; a copy would go to each of the parties involved.

Perhaps it might be useful to introduce the protagonists of the cast; each of them plays a double role, one passive and one active. He who suffered the insult becomes the challenger, demanding satisfaction while, conversely, the insulter becomes the subject of the challenge which he is bound to accept. The insulted party, through his representatives, two seconds, has the privilege of determining the time and location of the duel, the choice of the weapon (mostly swords of differing weights, or pistols), and the severity of the conditions. It had to be decided whether thrusts with the sword were allowed or only slashes. Thrusts were very dangerous and were allowed only in cases of severe insults. Agreement between the seconds had to be reached also on the length of the encounter, namely whether the combat should last until the first wound had been inflicted or until disablement of at least one of the parties. (I will come back to explain how "disablement" was defined.) In all these negotiations conducted by the seconds, the wishes of those representing the insulted party were decisive: he who made the affront must pay for his behavior.

The opposing parties never meet before a duel or, more precisely and accurately, while the "chivalrous course of action" (*lovagias eljárás*) has not been completed. Each of them is represented by two "seconds" (*párbajsegéd*) who not only conduct all negotiations but whose decision is binding on the parties involved. The course of action is as follows. He who feels insulted and is ready to challenge<sup>2</sup> the insulter asks two gentlemen to represent him in this affair. They establish contacts with the adversary who will promptly name his own seconds. It is the duty of these four men to determine what would constitute satisfactory, honorable amends. It is important to remember that the seconds are not playing the role of attorneys, defending the interests of their clients. For instance when it comes to armed confrontation they must abstain from giving advice to their party. The seconds are guardians of the well-established chivalrous tradition, and their duty is to make sure that its rules are well and humanely followed. Once they have become familiar with the circumstances of the insult, they submit their recommendations to their respective party who would normally abide by them.

It should be remembered that there is a perfectly honorable way to put an end to the conflict, one that does not involve the recourse to arms. The insulter may express his "regrets", or "deep regrets", he may state that he had acted

under a misapprehension, that there is a misunderstanding and he had never intended to insult or, indeed, that the words or acts imputed to him had never been uttered or committed. Most importantly, he may even be willing to offer his apologies; these may or may not be accepted by the insulted challenger. It is, of course, also possible that the insulter shows no regret for his action or that the insulted may remain dissatisfied with a mere expression of regrets or even with an apology offered before the duel, though he may be willing to accept it following the armed confrontation. If an agreement is reached on a peaceful solution, the two men may never need to meet, avoiding thereby a perhaps painful or embarrassing scene. The insulter would simply have to state to his own seconds, perhaps in writing, that he would be willing to express his regrets or to offer his apologies. The seconds convey this to the seconds of the adversary who may or may not accept the olive branch thus offered. In most cases he would follow the advice of his seconds, who prepare the minutes of their deliberations and signed copies are given to the parties involved. If ever needed, each of them can prove that they abided by the code of honor. The choice of the seconds is an important one. They should be men of integrity, experienced in chivalrous courses of action, and not of a bloodthirsty disposition. In my recollection most of these conflicts could be resolved without an actual duel taking place.

Let us imagine now a few cases to exemplify how the system worked in practice. At a party, a slightly drunk Mr. A calls a Mr. B an ass who, understandably upset, issues right then and there, but certainly within 24 hours a challenge. By that time a sober Mr. A has come to regard his remark as unjust; he offers regrets or apologies which are then conveyed through the seconds to Mr. B who graciously accepts them. The affair is closed.

Now it so happens that a few months later, at another party, the two men meet again and the previous scenario is repeated. Once more Mr. A calls Mr. B an ass. In due course he is challenged but, this time his apologies would not be accepted and, most probably, a duel would ensue.

Let me spin my yarn a little further. Some time later, at yet another party, for a third time, Mr. A calls Mr. B an ass who, this time losing his temper, slaps Mr. A. A physical assault being considered more grievous than verbal assault, the onus would shift: Mr. A is now the insulted party who will seek satisfaction on his own terms which may be quite heavy. Had Mr. B retorted "you are an ass yourself" he would have kept the status of the insulted. In an exchange of verbal insults the insulter is he who began the exchange.

Not surprisingly, things get much more complicated when women are involved. Let me again present a scenario. On a sunny morning a perfectly sober Mr. A is standing, say, in the corridor of the university. His reveries are

interrupted by a lady, a nodding acquaintance, who points at a Mr. C whom she accuses of having followed her for fifteen minutes through the streets and into the building in a way which she had found aggravating. Having said so much, wrapped in her dignity she moves on. Mr. A and Mr. C gaze at each other (probably neither of them has much sympathy for the lady), but they have no choice, this is a typical and somewhat extreme case where *noblesse oblige*. The two men exchange their calling cards, the four seconds will gather and, this is my hunch, will conclude that Mr. C followed the route taken by the lady by sheer coincidence and, though he may have noticed her pleasing appearance, he had no intention to become disrespectful. Therefore Mr. C expresses his sincere regrets for any temporary distress he may have caused to the lady and assures Mr. A of his high esteem of the chivalrous and justified steps he had taken in the defense of said lady. The mechanism is set to work, the four seconds prepare the minutes, etc.; the matter is settled. The six men may derive a modicum of satisfaction from the fact that the lady, though probably tortured by curiosity, will never learn what had happened. She knows better than to ask, ever so indirectly, but were she to do so, Mr. A would pretend not to have heard the question. In all such matters absolute discretion is the rule. The lady's name was not mentioned by anyone engaged in the proceeding.

Let me now switch from this trifling affair to another, much more consequential. Our friend Mr. C, a moderate person, accompanies his mother to the theater. As they squeeze their way through the row towards their seats, the lady treads with her pointed heel on a most sensitive corn on Mr. D's foot. She apologizes at once but Mr. D, not known for his self-control, lets go a string of pejorative adjectives which it cannot be my task to reproduce here. Of course Mr. C's first reaction would be to slap Mr. D in his face, probably causing him to fall over his neighbor; a *mêlée* might ensue which would be most inconvenient to a great number of people and, almost certainly would bring about the arrest of both gentlemen by an ever-vigilant police officer. Since the curtain is just about to rise, Mr. C – a moderate as I have just said – sits through the first act and uses the interval to exchange cards with Mr. D To assault verbally a middle-aged lady in the presence of her son, whose responsibility it is to defend and protect her, is no small matter and the conditions under which the duel would have to be fought would have to be commensurate with the insult.

It would be my bet that a duel "to disablement" (*harcképtelenség*) would be suggested by the seconds of Mr. C The seconds of Mr. D, to avoid the charge of cowardice, would probably agree. In such a case, the first cut would not put an end to the duel but, perhaps, with some short pauses the combat would

continue until either one of the duelists or one of the doctors present declare that one of the combatants can no longer fight effectively (as judged for example by losing the firm grip of the sword) or that a heart-attack may be imminent. A duel fought under such conditions was no child's play. Of course it was still less life-threatening than a duel fought with pistols and allowing for several shots to be fired. But duels of that type were relatively rare in interwar Hungary and I would abstain from their description. It is probable that Mr. D genuinely regretted his harsh reaction but he did not offer his deep apologies lest he would appear to chicken out of a difficult duel. At the same time Mr. C felt that words alone were insufficient to compensate for the insult his mother had suffered. Now, having put up a brave fight, nothing stands in the way of a genuine reconciliation between the two men. Let us have a kind thought for the mother, uninformed of the details of the proceedings but sufficiently familiar with the stakes to know that her son may be carved up rather badly.

The reasoning as given in my imaginary examples may seem complicated. In fact it is most straightforward. The party insulted must be given satisfaction on his own terms. If for whatever reasons, be it gender, age, or physical handicap the person insulted cannot personally seek compensation, any member of the family, indeed any able-bodied man whose help was asked for immediately following the insult may take up the defense of the weaker (as was the case in the aforementioned A versus C scenario). It should be noted that there is no winner or loser in a duel; both men satisfied their chivalrous obligations and thereby put the matter to rest.

Life produces smaller conflicts galore and the imaginary cases described may give the impression that most of Hungary's male population was constantly engaged in chivalrous courses of action. After all, many men follow many women in a way which the latter find aggravating, many men are called asses on innumerable occasions, and the number of painful corns tread upon at any given hour is astronomical. Every society has its contingent of rowdies, ready to pick a fight at the slightest provocation – or without it. In Hungary, as elsewhere, there was very little one could do to neutralize them. They could take offense where there was none, or, conversely, they could gratuitously offend any one whom they wished. They would be called by the pejorative term of *krakéler* (a German loan) or, in a slightly ironical tone *párbajhős* "hero of duels". I know of one instance where such a man was converted to more civilized behavior by a good, old-fashioned thrashing, administered quite outside the norms of any chivalrous course of action.

When compared to the country's population, and in absolute figures, the number of "chivalrous courses of action" taken must have been insignificant.

Only a small proportion of the country's adult, male population was expected to follow a chivalrous way of action. Men were either *párbajképes* or *párbajképtelen*. A rough translation of the two terms would be "fit for duel" or "unfit for duel". On the analogy of the adjective "clubbable" derived from "club" one might suggest "duelable" and "non duelable". The content of these terms was hard to define, though all concerned knew how and when to apply them.

In the interwar years on which I focus, the duelling code compiled by Vilmos Clair<sup>3</sup> was the authoritative work on such matters. It was for chivalrous actions what Robert's Rules of Order are for American debates. Though the two words are frequently used on its pages, no definition is given for either of them. The excellent one volume Hungarian-Hungarian dictionary *Magyar értelmező kéziszótár* (Budapest 1972) defines *párbajképes* az, aki a feudális erkölcsi szabályok szerint párbajt vívhat, i.e. "he who according to feudal moral habits is fit for duelling". The seven volume *A magyar nyelv értelmező kéziszótára* (Budapest 1959-1962) gives a much more detailed, and more Marxist definition of the word: *A kizsákmányoló társadalom uralkodó osztályaiban olyan, rendszerint érettségizett férfi, akit a feudális felfogás szerint értelmezett becsülettel összeférhetetlennek tekintett cselekmények nem terhelnek, akit ilyenek miatt katonai vagy polgári becsületbírósi, ill. bírói ítélettel nem bélyegeztek meg, s ezért mint sértett vagy sértő fél párbajt vívhat*, i.e. "a man, usually a high-school graduate, belonging to the ruling classes of the exploiting society who has not committed acts considered incompatible with honor as conceived by feudal opinion, one who has not been found guilty by military, civil or courts of honor of such acts and who, therefore is fit to duel either as the insulting or the insulted party."

This is a carefully worded, accurate definition made by men who knew what they were talking about because, there is reason to believe, in the earlier years of their lives they themselves had been "fit for duel" because they had their *érettségi*, i.e. their high-school certificate and had belonged "to the ruling classes of the exploiting society." Clearly, anyone found guilty in a court of justice of a felony would be disqualified from taking part in any chivalrous course of action. But if the absence of any such blemish would be sufficient qualification for the right to fight in a duel, surely the great majority of Hungarian men would have been "duelable". Yet this was not the case. I cannot enter here into the discussion of the structure of Hungarian society in the interwar years, but at least between the men there was a clear dividing line: there were the *urak* on the one side and the rest of the male population on the other. The definition of an *úr* is a very difficult task which I intend here to side-step by simply equating it with the concept of a "gentleman". But then who could be considered a "gentleman"?

If we turn to various dictionaries of English we find some differences in the definition of the word. I rather like the one given in the *Oxford Advanced*

*Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (1974) "gentleman" is defined thus: "a man who shows consideration for the feelings of others, who is honourable and well-bred." I would love to believe that this description indeed fits or fitted every *úr* I have had the honor of meeting, but, of course, I know better. So I have consulted my *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, the one that has been on my shelves since 1938, and discovered that the first meaning given for the word "gentleman" is: "man entitled to bear arms but not included in the nobility." A combination of the two definitions gives a fairly accurate picture of what a Hungarian *úr* was supposed to be and in most cases really was, at least within his own social class. And here lies the rub. Because in far too many instances the consideration for the feelings of others did not extend beyond his own, *úri* circle. For example, the man capable of challenging another, unknown man because of some slight inconvenience caused to a virtually unknown *lady*, could show the most callous behavior to a *woman* perceived as belonging to an other social class.

Strong as the wall separating *úr* from non-*úr* might have been, it had a wide-open door: education. Any Hungarian man having passed the difficult, comprehensive *érettségi*, the examination that ended his high-school studies, was thereby qualified to become a military officer, thus, by definition, a gentleman, fit to duel. Let me make it clear: the *érettségi* was not a prerequisite of an *úri* status; but he who had it automatically qualified for chivalrous courses of action. In fact, if he had already served in the army, he had to have recourse to these proceedings, and this notwithstanding the fact that duelling was a punishable offence in Hungarian law. The military code of honor prescribed a procedure which, in many cases led to a duel forbidden by law.<sup>4</sup> In practical terms this meant that for every able-bodied man with a high-school diploma and of military age, recourse to chivalrous proceedings and possibly to duelling was not an individual choice but an obligation the avoidance of which would have had very unpleasant consequences.

I have cited the term *párbajképtelen* "unfit for duel". Interestingly, it is not listed in any of the above-mentioned dictionaries. Yet, most of Hungary's adult male population belonged to this category. Let us disregard the small section of men who, to use the above-given definition, "committed acts considered incompatible with honor". The vast majority of men considered "unfit for duel" was so categorized merely on account of their social status in the strongly hierarchical Hungarian society. Even in the theoretically egalitarian American society one encounters the dichotomy of "white-" and "blue-" collar workers. If, somewhat anachronistically, this distinction is projected into the Hungarian society of the interwar years, one could say that the latter were "unfit for duel". In a perceptive book describing Hungarian society of his own

time (1930), István Weis<sup>5</sup> put the numerical strength of Hungarian middle-classes at about 300,000, in a population of 8,688,319, i.e. a mere 3.45 percent of the country's population. We obtain a slightly higher figure by looking at the number of high-school graduates. In 1930, only 3.6 percent had the *érettségi*.<sup>6</sup> It would thus appear that – since women were exempt from duelling – no more than about two percent of the country's population was “fit for duel”.

Let me now conclude with a brief examination of a conflict arising between two men, one of whom is *párbajképtelen*. In such situation basic decency dictates the solution: if asked for satisfaction, the insulter must comply, irrespective of the status of the man whom he had insulted. If insulted by someone “unfit for duel”, he has no obligation to seek “chivalrous satisfaction”.

The societal structure of Hungary in the interwar years was not exempt from contradictions; I know of no society which is. The recourse to a “chivalrous course of action”, let alone to duelling, does seem archaic. It is. Yet, having listened to many high-falutin' talks about methods of “conflict resolution”, I am convinced that it was an excellent way to resolve non-legal conflicts arising within a small, restricted, and well defined stratum of society.

### Notes

\* This article is an extended version of a lecture given in March 1993 at an East-European Conference held at New College, University of South Florida, Sarasota, Florida. It attempts to provide primary material to some future social historian focusing on Hungarian life between the two World Wars. The number of witnesses or participants of duels is fast diminishing; such value as the present essay may have consists in its claim to be a primary source, a first-hand account of duelling as practiced in Hungary, essentially in the 1930s. It was thought that the mechanism of the proceedings deserved to be recorded.

1. The literature on duelling is extensive. V. G. Kiernan, *The Duel in European History. Honour and the Reign of Aristocracy* (Oxford University Press 1986), is by far the best general presentation I have come across. It also has a good bibliography. The few remarks the book has on Hungary “a duelling country par excellence” are perceptive but do not go into detail. Closer to my topic is István Deák: “Latter Day Knights: Officer's Honor and Duelling in the Austro-Hungarian Army,” *Österreichische Osthefte* 28 (1986), 311–326. Though he focuses on the period before the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy, some remarks made by Deák are relevant to the interwar years.
2. The technical term for a challenge was *kihívás* literally “calling out”, a term used by Kiernan but one I could never substantiate from other sources.
3. *Párbajkódex* 25th edition (Budapest 1940). The book has 159 pages covering all contingencies of “chivalrous proceedings”. I have followed closely the procedures described in this work.



4. The first edition of the aforementioned duelling code by Vilmos Clair appeared in 1897; I own its 25th, probably last, edition published in 1940. This excellent work, which provides the authoritative guide for an action forbidden by law, is dedicated to the Regent of Hungary, Miklós Horthy and is prefaced by a distinguished civil servant, former minister of justice.
5. *A mai magyar társadalom* (Budapest 1930), 124. For our purpose, to this figure should be added an "upper crust" of the society, estimated by Weis to comprise about four thousand people.
6. Balogh Sándor (ed.), *Magyarország a XX. században* (Budapest 1985), 504.



# PIONEERS WELCOME: THE ESCAPE OF HUNGARIAN MODERNISM TO THE US, 1919–1945

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The unparalleled artistic, cultural, and intellectual upheaval in the final decades of the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy has been amply treated by a growing literature, in and out of Austria and Hungary.<sup>1</sup> Much of what we call “the modernist movement” in music, literature, the arts, social thought, philosophy, and psychology was indeed started in the fertile, sensual, and decaying intellectual climate of turn-of-the-century Vienna and, also, Budapest. There was a certain playfulness and experimentalism in the air, the creative élite became attracted to novelty and invention, intellectual challenge and a call for change.

Less has been written about the link between the spiritual and artistic upsurge in that “World of Yesterday” and the subsequent post-World War I exodus of the Austro–Hungarian intellectual élite. The revolutionary movement in the arts and thought of pre-War Vienna and Budapest was radically transformed right after the collapse and dissolution of the Monarchy in 1918–1920. The modernist movement suddenly lost momentum and was transformed into a more professional, and more conservative, tradition. It was also, however, gradually relocated into other countries such as Austria, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Soviet Russia, Great Britain, and, ultimately, the United States. What follows is an attempt to show some of the characteristic patterns of this migration of intellectual and artistic experimentalism and innovative spirit, illustrated here by three creative Hungarians who contributed to US culture and civilization in some major way.

\* Research for this paper was done mainly in the Houghton Library of Harvard University, the Mugar Memorial Library of Boston University, as well as in the Library of Congress, and was generously supported by grants given by the American Philosophical Society and the Interdisciplinary Humanities Center of the University of California, Santa Barbara. The first draft version of the text was presented as a brief lecture at an international conference on *Hungarians in North America* at Indiana University, Bloomington, in the Fall of 1989. I am indebted to the Rockefeller Foundation for a grant to the Bellagio Study and Conference Center in Bellagio, Italy, where most of the final paper was actually completed. The article will eventually serve as part or a chapter of my forthcoming book, *The Exodus of the Mind*, on Hungarian intellectual immigration into the US.

### Budapest Roots

One of the most well-known examples as to how the experimental mind emigrating from Hungary contributed to, or interacted with, American culture, is in music. All the Hungarian musicians who went to the US received their musical education at the Music Academy of Budapest, founded by Franz Liszt himself in 1875. A few remarks on the history of the Academy may help to get a better understanding of the musical and intellectual background of the innovative generation whom we may call the 'musical grandchildren' of Franz Liszt, the great musicians who were educated in the early decades of the century in Budapest and left Hungary between the Wars.

Liszt made a major effort to include his native Hungary into the more civilized, Western part of Europe. He is remembered today as a composer and a piano virtuoso and less for his organizational achievements in the international field of music of which Hungary benefited perhaps most. Right after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, Liszt settled down in what was Pest, then a small, German-speaking, provincial city with a single bridge connecting with Buda (they were to be united in 1873). He stayed there from 1868 through the early 1870s and his very presence contributed to the spiritual growth of the city into Budapest. He literally handpicked the first professors of musicology, violin, cello, and some others and founded a musical tradition equal to the very best in Europe. He had both the reputation and the authority to attract some of the best people, both Hungarians and foreigners, who came to the new Music Academy at his invitation. Professor Jenő Hubay gave up a promising career in Brussels, where he worked with the great Ysaÿe, to return to Budapest and founded his own school of violin at the Academy where he was to stay for the rest of his life. Professor David Popper, originally from Prague and arguably the greatest cellist before Pablo Casals, came from a distinguished position as concertmaster in Vienna to teach and perform in Budapest and with Hubay he formed a unique string quartet to present classical and contemporary chamber music, which included quartets, trios, and piano quintets by Johannes Brahms, Antonín Dvořák, Josef Suk, Karl Goldmark, and others. Professor Hans Koessler came from his native Bavaria and became the teacher of subsequent generations of Hungarian composers. Though he was conservative in his own music and a follower of Brahms, he allowed his students a great measure of freedom to write their own, modern music. His students included Béla Bartók, Zoltán Kodály, Ernst von Dohnányi, Leo Weiner, Emerich Kálmán, Albert Szirmai and several other well-known composers.<sup>2</sup>

None of these examples of late 19th century "modernism" should allow us to believe, however, that Budapest was altogether a capital of modern music.

Liszt himself was modern, the Academy much less so. His lesser-known and certainly less popular late music foreshadowed in some ways the early Bartók who himself felt "that Liszt's importance from the viewpoint of the further development of music is greater than that of Wagner." As he added in his inaugural address at the Hungarian Academy in 1936, "the compositions of Liszt exerted a greater fertilizing effect on the next generation than those of Wagner."<sup>3</sup> The Music Academy, however, set out to preserve classical values and nurtured conservative tastes. The ideal was the late-Romanticism of Johannes Brahms, who often came from nearby Vienna to the Hungarian capital where some of his work was first performed by the Hubay-Popper Quartet and local pianists like Vilma Adler-Goldstein. Really modern music was not appreciated: Gustav Mahler, for example, was applauded as a conductor and director of the Budapest Opera (1889-1892), yet his first *Symphony* written and performed during the same Budapest years was treated with almost unanimous indifference.<sup>4</sup> However, some of the moderns were invited to discriminating Budapest including Claude Debussy and Giacomo Puccini so it is difficult to argue that the musical public of the Hungarian capital was not at all susceptible to the voice of the incoming 20th century.

It was in the decade that immediately preceded World War I when most modern trends swept across the country, in literature, the arts, philosophy, the social and the physical sciences. This indeed was a renaissance of Hungarian national culture and the birth of modernism in the country. It symbolically started with the poetry of Endre Ady (1877-1919) whose *Új versek* (New Poems) made a veritable literary revolution in 1906, and with the poetry anthology *A holnap* (Tomorrow) (1908-1909) with Ady, Mihály Babits, Béla Balázs, and Gyula Juhász among the most prominent names represented. The movement got into full speed with the launching of the (mainly) literary periodical *Nyugat* (West) in 1908 which was to become the dominating organ of the modernists through World War II, and published vintage modern poetry and prose by authors like Endre Ady, Mihály Babits, Margit Kaffka, Frigyes Karinthy, Dezső Kosztolányi, Zsigmond Móricz, Árpád Tóth and a host of others.<sup>5</sup>

The literary pioneers had their counterparts in almost every other field. The art-group *Nyolcak* (The Eight) with Károly Kernstok, Róbert Berény, Béla Czóbel and other excellent artists were just as important members of this generation as Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály in music. Modernism was present in almost every field, and usually well ahead of many European countries. The very best left early, usually during or right after the revolutions of 1918-1919. In photography Hungary lost André Kertész, Brassai [= Gyula Halasz], in film, Béla Balázs who was the first major film-theoretician in the

world (*Der sichtbare Mensch*, 1924) and a versatile filmmaker, and other filmmakers such as Sir Alexander Korda, Michael Curtiz, and Joe Pasternak.<sup>6</sup> Though making their reputation in Germany, avant-garde artists such as Sándor Bortnyik, Lajos Kassák, Hugo Scheiber, Béla Kádár returned to their native Hungary when Hitler took over in the Reich.<sup>7</sup> Some stayed outside the country and left for the United States.

The immediate pre-World War I period nurtured a gifted and ambitious generation with politically liberal or sometimes leftists ambitions to change the outdated social and political system of the country.<sup>8</sup> Most of the people who left Hungary after World War I were members, students, or followers of this generation. In music, they invariably came from the Music Academy and were, often, though not exclusively, Jewish. The best known names are those of the conductors: Fritz Reiner, Eugene Ormandy, George Szell, Antal Dorati, Eugen Szenkár, Georges Sebastian, Ferenc Fricsay, István Kertész, and Sir Georg Solti. Violinists from the school of Jenő Hubay included Joseph Szigeti, Stefi Geyer, Ferenc (Franz von) Vecsey, Emil Telmányi, Ede Zathureczky, and Yelley d'Aranyi.

The lists are impressive by themselves and they speak highly of the ability of many of the professors in Budapest to give not only a thorough musical training but also, often, a good sense of how to explore the contemporary world. For the post-World War I generation of Hungarian musicians, Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály were the great examples to look up to and follow. To understand and appreciate the importance of their legacy, it is important for us to turn to a major representative of that next generation. As Eugene Ormandy pointed out in a 1937 article for *The Hungarian Quarterly*, it was due to them "that Hungary has emerged as a musical entity. This Hungarian music of the twentieth century is intensely nationalistic and, while nationalistic art is of necessity limited and destined to a comparatively short life, paradoxically enough the worlds of these two composers in the very intensity of their nationalism transcend(ed) nationalistic bounds."<sup>9</sup> Ormandy added, "In the dramatic inevitability of Bartók, we have a composer who might be compared to Beethoven."<sup>10</sup> "Breaking away from the over-refined, essentially cerebral and decadent music of the post-Romantic period, Bartók has injected new life blood into his music. It has a savagery and yet withal a youthful vitality that makes it of universal importance. ... Typical of Bartók are the frequent use of arabesques, rapid, passage work, myriads of trills, leaps into strange intervals and an unsymmetrical construction."<sup>11</sup> Bartók and Kodály revived "the racial idiom of Magyar music," Ormandy acknowledged, "to portray the distinct individuality of Hungarian music."<sup>12</sup>

The modernism of the music and ideas of Bartók and Kodály, their philosophy and lifestyle, their integrity and puritanism served, in many ways,

as a model for their students at the Music Academy, the next generation of musicians. Ormandy himself, together with Fritz Reiner and George Szell, was the very first to present the music of Bartók to audiences outside Hungary. They remained deeply committed to modern music throughout their career. Though mainly performing a classical repertoire, Eugene Ormandy also had a real interest in contemporary music such as that of Sergei Rachmaninov whose work he frequently performed for the first time with Van Cliburn and the Philadelphia Orchestra.<sup>13</sup> He recorded other Russian composers such as Dimitri Shostakovich (*Concerto for Cello and Orchestra*, Op. 107), and Dimitri Kabalevsky (*Concerto No. 1 for Cello and Orchestra*, Op. 49) and regularly added works by Richard Strauss (*Heldenleben*, *Death and Transfiguration*, *Metamorphosen for 23 Strings*). Gustav Mahler was a natural on his program. Antal Dorati, besides being a composer himself, performed many of his contemporaries including, particularly, Paul Hindemith.<sup>14</sup> Both Fritz Reiner and George Szell took an active interest in contemporaries. Reiner played Stravinsky,<sup>15</sup> as well as, quite regularly, Bartók, and also pieces by William Schuman, Zoltán Kodály and Leo Weiner. Szell shared his enthusiasm for Bartók, recording his music as well as that of Gustav Mahler, Leoš Janáček, and Zoltán Kodály, and also performed Jean Sibelius, Sergei Prokofiev, Igor Stravinsky, Paul Hindemith, Sir William Walton and lesser known American contemporaries such as the young composer Lukas Foss.<sup>16</sup>

### Szigeti

The man who did most for modern music among the Hungarian musicians was probably the violinist Joseph Szigeti. The virtuoso was perhaps the most celebrated and well-known student of Jenő Hubay and carried the Hubay tradition literally all around the world. All his life he was most conscious of the continuity of the Brahms tradition in both Vienna and Budapest and valued this tradition he received from his Budapest professor Hubay. He recalled Budapest as a center for the discovery of talented young people like Rafael Kubelik, Franz von Vecsey, Isadora Duncan, and, somewhat earlier, Gustav Mahler and Arthur Nikisch,<sup>17</sup> and, we may add, Hans Richter. The example of Szigeti is relevant in demonstrating the strong links between the old Music Academy tradition and the musical philosophy of the post-World War I generation.

On one occasion around 1955 Szigeti quoted a letter by Johannes Brahms to Eduard Hanslick dated December 11, 1888 inviting the music critic to come over to the Billroths' next day "and help Hubay and myself turn pages and

play wrong notes – perhaps also to drink a good glass?”<sup>18</sup> In an effort to reach out for the past, Szigeti added,

... I felt that these notes might interest the listener of our days who has been to a great extent deprived of the real ‘habitat’ of chamber music: the small Hall and – better still – the music room in which the congenial few gather around the players in rapt concentration. I was in my late teens when I turned pages at a rehearsal of the d minor Sonata. Leopold Godowsky and [my master] Jenő Hubay [rehearsed it] in preparation for their concert in Budapest, some twenty years after [Brahms had brought the pencil manuscript of his work to my master Hubay for] this Vienna ‘try-out.’ ... One has reason to feel grateful for having been born at a time when these sonatas were still a comparative rarity, when [their performances presupposed mature players] they had not yet become class room ‘material’ and grateful ‘vehicles’ for debut recitals. There were at the time no dozen – or – so recordings from which the student could choose his ‘model’; ... As the rare live performances he heard were mostly by mature interpreters and took place in halls of modest proportions (world famous performers like Ysaÿe, Sarasate, d’Albert, Busoni played in Vienna’s Bösendorfer Saal, in the old Paris Salle Pleyel in the rue Rochecouart seating barely 4 or 500, in the small ‘Royal’ Hall in Budapest) the intimate chamber-music characteristics of these sonatas were brought home to him... Hubay told me at the time how much these fine points meant to Brahms, how literally he took his marking[s]...<sup>19</sup>

Disapproving of Hubay’s approach toward chamber-music, Szigeti also attended some of the classes in quartet playing under Budapest professor David Popper, cellist of the renowned Hubay–Popper Quartet.<sup>20</sup>

Szigeti mastered practically the entire classical violin repertoire, and yet he became one of the few leading soloists in the world who was naturally attracted to contemporary music. Even the solo sonatas by Bach he started to play at the instigation of Milán Füst, a modernist poet who was his Budapest friend in their young days and became one of the leading spirits of the modernist movement in Hungarian literature and aesthetics.<sup>21</sup> For him the living tradition of late 19th century music in Budapest and Vienna also implied the inclusion of contemporary music. This became evident right from the beginning, as Otto Eckermann carefully observed it as early as 1922, stating, “Mr. Szigeti is one of the few violinists who always brings novelties (the others always play the concerts which they studied in the Conservatory), and he commissioned me to look for appropriate new works.”<sup>22</sup> Composer Kurt Atterberg added in 1958, “It is very interesting to read just now that you were interested in new music already in 1922.”<sup>23</sup> “Szigeti was always eager to learn new things and to understand music from the composers’ point of view: ‘For what would the lives of mere interpreters be without the fertilizing influence of this vital contact with »Work in Progress?«’ Szigeti believed that artists grew from their autosuggestive insights and stated, ‘If we concede — as



I am inclined to do — an important role to this autosuggestive faculty in our work, what better schooling in it than commerce with new works and their composers?"<sup>24</sup> Eugene Ysaÿe said of Szigeti's art after World War I, "I found in Szigeti that rare combination of musician and virtuoso. As an artist he seemed conscious of a high mission into which he put all his faith, and he placed technique entirely at the service of musical expression."<sup>25</sup>

At 80, he was awarded the George Washington Award of the American Hungarian Studies Foundation for identifying "himself with the new, untried and progressive," giving of himself "unstintingly so that a significant new voice in music might be heard."<sup>26</sup> More contemporary composers of all nationalities dedicated their work to, or were commissioned by, Szigeti than perhaps any other contemporary soloist. Often at an early stage of their career, he readily lent the power of his charisma to Hungarians such as Béla Bartók, Pál Kadosa, Antal Molnár, Americans like George Templeton Strong, Russians such as Nikita Magaloff and Sergei Prokofiev, the Armenian Aram Khachaturian, Irishmen like Sir Hamilton Harty, Englishmen like Alan Rawsthorne, the Italian Alfredo Casella, the Lithuanian-Jewish Joseph Achron, the Swiss Ernest Bloch, and the Polish Alexander Tansman. He considered it important to keep a whole series of contemporary music on his program, such as work by the Polish Karol Szymanowski, the French Albert Roussel and Darius Milhaud, the Roumanian Filip Lazar, the Russian Igor Stravinsky, the Italian Ferruccio Busoni and Ildebrando Pizzetti, as well as the Englishmen Sir Edward Elgar and Sir Arnold Bax,<sup>27</sup> and, later, the American David Diamond, Charles Cadman, and Henry Cowell.<sup>28</sup> He also worked in close collaboration with both Paul Hindemith and Igor Stravinsky. There was a great deal of the Liszt tradition continued in these gestures. He often invited composers to appear in recital with him performing their own work "thus creating a little oasis in a recital program where the composer and not the reproducing artist is the center of interest."<sup>29</sup> In the 1950s, he repeated a number of series entitled "20th Century Cycles" in several US universities and music centers,<sup>30</sup> which he recalled as a "pleasure evening series of eleven contemporary master-pieces, entitled 'Sonatas of the 20th Century.' I give this series about fifteen times on different campuses in America and also in Zurich and over the Italian Radio in 1959. I recorded it for the Swedish Radio."<sup>31</sup> In cases where he could not promote a contemporary work himself, he did everything in his power to make other artists interested, as it happened for example in the case of Gian Francesco Malipiero's *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* which he showed "to my friend, Maestro George Szell," as well as to Leopold Stokowski in New York and Henri Barraud at the Radio Diffusion Française in Paris.<sup>32</sup> By carrying the tradition of an active interest in the

contemporary, Szigeti made an example to his entire generation throughout a long and productive life. As Manoug Parikian saluted him in *The Royal Academy of Music Magazine* on his 80th birthday in 1972, "All this would seem commonplace in these days of over-consciousness of contemporary music; in the 1920s and 1930s, in the midst of virtuoso-type recitals and endless repetitions of the same five or six concertos it was a brave crusade. His deep knowledge and understanding of the spirit of Bach, Mozart and Beethoven was as important as his search for new music."<sup>33</sup>

In the US, Szigeti's delayed popularity has been attributed to the slow growth of intellectual sophistication in American audiences. His was a long and tedious journey toward making contemporary music recognized in the country. His pioneering efforts in front of select audiences of metropolitan music halls, enterprising campus groups and on élitist radio programs were often unnoticed and at best not remembered. When he received a copy of Henry Cowell's new *Sonata for Violin and Piano* (1945) from the Publishers asking him to perform it, Szigeti ironically noted on the cover letter, "They sent me this Sonata which was written *for me* and which I had premiered at Carnegie!! Machine-made 'promotion'..."<sup>34</sup> Gelatt asserts that this fact "...detracts nothing from Szigeti's personal achievement. For no one has contributed more to that growth than the violinist himself."<sup>35</sup> He was of course often criticized for his programming. "Playing the Roussel *Sonata No. 2* once lost Szigeti a prospective manager who heard him perform at Carnegie Hall. Modern composers do not sell programs, Szigeti was promptly informed. Recalling this incident Szigeti wrote, 'needless to say I was entreated once again to mend my already notoriously incorrigible ways of programming.'<sup>36</sup> Yet, his pioneering efforts led to a break-through even in the US where his philosophy of musical programming came through triumphantly when playing the world premiere of the Bloch *Concerto* in Cleveland in 1938; Bartók's *Contrasts* with Benny Goodman and the composer in Carnegie Hall in 1939; Prokofiev's *Sonata in D*, op. 94 in Boston in 1944 and his *F minor*, op. 80 in San Francisco in 1946; and premiered Prokofiev's *Concerto in D* and the Ravel *Sonata* in the United States.<sup>37</sup>

For one particular contemporary composer, self-exiled Béla Bartók, Szigeti did more in the United States than perhaps anybody else between 1940 and 1945. Their friendship started in the 1920s. They then toured together in Berlin in 1930. Szigeti used his connections to make Bartók's music available and popular to audiences in the US. He appeared with Bartók in recitals at the Library of Congress and played with the newly arriving Hungarian composer in 1940 in the Carnegie Hall. He was in touch with leading US conductors such as Leopold Stokowski and tried to get Bartók's American compositions performed. Szigeti was one of the loyal supporters of Bartók during his last

illness and tactfully helped the poor though proud composer to receive help from wealthy patrons such as Mrs. Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge in 1943. He was ready to be at Bartók's disposal to the very last when the terminally ill composer requested his help to interest conductors in his *Piano Concerto*, the third and last he composed.<sup>38</sup> After Bartók's death, Szigeti served as one of the trustees on the board of the Bartók Archives in New York.<sup>39</sup>

Joseph Szigeti lived most of his adult life abroad though he visited Hungary regularly to the end of his life except for a gap after World War II. Characteristically, the Leningrad (today: St. Petersburg) Conservatory headed by the famous composer Alexander Glazunov thought of him in 1928 as the right candidate to succeed the great Hungarian-born Maestro Leopold Auer as their violin professor, an invitation which he did not accept.<sup>40</sup> (After several decades as the head of the institute, Glazunov himself left the Conservatory that same year to live abroad.)

Throughout, Szigeti maintained excellent relations with Hungarian musicians and helped a number of them start their own careers. He was instrumental in launching the career of cellist Janos Starker at the Indiana University School of Music when he stated in a letter of recommendation to Dean Wilfred C. Bain that Janos Starker is "not only a superb virtuoso but a sound musician, versed in all fields of chamber music and a man who, in his conversations with me on technical matters, revealed himself to be a thinking pedagogue and theoretician."<sup>41</sup> He was glad to be associated with Hungarian causes, and, together with Arthur Koestler and Nobel Laureate Albert Szent-Györgyi, was acknowledged by the honorary membership of the Association of Hungarian Authors in Foreign Countries, located in London, right after the revolution of 1956.<sup>42</sup> Newcomers from post-1945 Hungary such as pianist Tamás Vásáry were glad to register their homage to the *maître*.<sup>43</sup> Szigeti found it important to publish his autobiography in Hungarian as well thinking that "this new Hungarian intelligentsia should get to know me a little."<sup>44</sup> He asked Hungarian-American diplomat Andor C. Klay how he felt about it and Klay's answer was most enthusiastic: "I have found that they know about you to a degree which is surprising in the light of your long absence from Hungary and their long years of isolation from the West. I recall examples from Camp Kilmer when I visited there in order to select some refugees to form a delegation which could be presented to the President and the Secretary. I raised various questions, ranging from the political to the cultural, in order to gauge their range of knowledgeability. Your name was repeatedly mentioned; I made a firm mental note of this. (No one knew, however, that you were living in the United States.)"<sup>45</sup>

Szigeti always tried to include Hungarian pieces in his US programs and even his most popular ones such as the People's Symphony Concerts on CBS

included a *Scène de la Csárda* by his master Jenő Hubay, *Rhapsody in C* by Ernst von Dohnányi and a piece by Bartók played together with the composer.<sup>46</sup>

### Moholy-Nagy

Comparable in many ways to the achievement of Szigeti in the performing arts was the *New Vision* of László Moholy-Nagy, a most dramatic testimony to the significance and range of the modernist contribution in the visual arts from Hungary. Coming from the same generation of Jewish Hungarians, Moholy-Nagy (1895–1946) was probably the most versatile among the Hungarian artists, being an architect, photographer, designer, prolific author, and filmmaker.<sup>47</sup> Together with fellow-Hungarian Marcel Breuer, he was a founding member of the *Bauhaus* school first in Germany and later, in 1937, in Chicago. Moholy became a pioneer in a number of diverse fields such as non-figurative, geometric art, in kinetic sculpture, typographical design, as well as in photography. *Bauhaus* founder and lifelong friend Walter Gropius also approached Moholy-Nagy's abstract art, his "new vision," in musical terms at the opening of the Moholy-Nagy Exhibition at "London Galleries," at the very end of 1936, providing one of the most lucid and rational explanations of abstract art ever given.

You know that musical work, a composition, consists, just like painting, of form and content. But its form is only in part a product of the composer, for in order to make his musical ideas comprehensible to any third person, he is obliged to make use of counterpoint which is nothing more than a conventional agreement to divide the world of sound into certain intervals according fixed laws. These laws of counterpoint, of harmony, vary among different peoples and in different centuries, but the changes are very slow... In earlier days the optical arts also had firm rules, a counterpoint regulating the use of space. The academies for art which had the task of keeping up and developing these rules, lost them – and art decayed. Here the abstract painters of our day took up the threads and used their creative powers to conquer a new statutory law of space. This new counterpoint of space, a new vision, is the core of their achievement.<sup>48</sup>

Gropius described Moholy-Nagy's whole work as "a mighty battle to prepare the way for a new vision, in that he attempts to extend the boundaries of painting and to increase the intensity of light in the picture by the use of new technical means, thus approximating nearer to nature. Moholy has observed and registered light with the eye of the camera and the film camera, from the prospective of the frog and the bird, has tried to master impressions of space and thus developed in his paintings a new conception of space."<sup>49</sup>

Indeed, Moholy-Nagy was a most intense and insightful observer of the "modern" world of the 1920s and 1930s. Like some of the very best of his generation, he went very far in the visual exploration of form, construction, spacial relationships, and light effects.<sup>50</sup> "We might call the scope of his contribution 'Leonardian,' so versatile and colorful has it been," Walter Gropius eulogized him at his Chicago funeral in 1946.<sup>51</sup> "His greatest effort as an artist was devoted to the conquest of pictorial space, and he commanded his genius to venture into all realms of science and art to unriddle the phenomena of space. In painting, sculpture and architecture, in theater and industrial design, in photography and film, in advertising and typography, he constantly strove to interpret space in its relationship to time, that is motion in space."<sup>52</sup>

What Gropius tried to explain particularly was the source of Moholy-Nagy's modernism, the basis of his deep and enthusiastic interest in anything new. "Constantly developing new ideas he managed to keep himself in a stage of unbiased curiosity from where a fresh point of view could originate. With a shrewd sense of observation he investigated everything that came his way, taking nothing for granted, but using his acute sense for the organic."<sup>53</sup>

"Many of us will remember his peculiar freshness when he was facing a new problem in his art. With the attitude of an unprejudiced, happy child at play he surprised us by the directness of his intuitive approach. Here I believe was the source of his priceless quality as an educator, namely his never ceasing power to stimulate and to carry away the other fellow with his own enthusiasm. What better can true education achieve than setting the student's mind in motion by that contagious magic?"<sup>54</sup>

Just like many other contemporary artists of the early 20th century representing varied brands of modernism, Moholy was aptly described as a technical pioneer "who was fascinated and stirred by the dynamic pace of the machine age. His *élan vital* thrived on the tempo and the motorized rhythm of big-city life."<sup>55</sup> He deeply believed in the new unity of art and technology.<sup>56</sup> The big European and American metropolises exerted an unmistakably "modern" influence and left a lasting imprint on his whole generation. The great experience of Moholy's life, too, was the big city and the continuous mechanization of the world and human life with it. For him, modern man's structure was indeed mechanical, "the synthesis of all his functional mechanisms."<sup>57</sup> "Man is unique in the insatiability of his functional mechanisms, which hungrily absorb every new impression and never cease to crave for more. This is one reason for the continuing need for the creation of new forms," he went on explaining his artistic philosophy in his *Malerei, Photographie, Film*.<sup>58</sup> As an artistic expression of his functionalist artistic philosophy, Moholy-Nagy

experimented with what he called the "space modulator," a pioneering optical-kinetic sculpture pointing towards a new art form. Some of his other ideas contributed significantly to new branches of knowledge such as cybernetics and semantics.

Experimentation was a natural in Moholy's whole life, starting with his participation in the *Ma* group in Budapest and his cooperation with Lajos Kassák. But it was in Germany, in the early Bauhaus period that his experimenting qualities started to blossom and young Moholy became particularly productive.

A primary example is his discovery of a new kind of creative photography, a new artistic discipline. He became convinced that photography came to replace painting in representing reality. In his painting, he was striving for "organized order." In his photography he proved to be a superb master of new techniques, but his photographs became artistically significant really through "his completely novel and individual manner of looking at familiar things – the use of bold foreshortening, unusual angles, and superimposed light-dark structures, such as the shadow of a net or a fence."<sup>59</sup> His growing reputation made Sir Alexander Korda request that he do the special effects for his *The Shape of Things to Come*, based on a novel by H. G. Wells.

His experimental photography gave fresh impetus to advertising techniques. To this end, he renewed the art and technology of typography as well, in order to create a new form for communicating messages. He suggested that "printing processes had not undergone a significant change, either technically or aesthetically, since Gutenberg's time, and that the printed image should be made lively and interesting and should be brought up to date to make it worthy of the twentieth century."<sup>60</sup> Here again, his innovative spirit was almost preoccupied with "modern technology and the use of machines. To express the character of the technological age, contemporary products of the printing industry will have many points in common with the latest machines, i.e. they will have clarity, compactness and precision. ... Opportunities for innovations in typography are constantly developing, based on the growth of photography, film, zincographic and galvanoplastic techniques. The invention and improvement of photogravure, photographic typesetting machines, the birth of neon advertising, the experience of optical continuity provided by the cinema, the simultaneity of sensory experiences – all these developments open the way for an entirely new standard of optical typographic excellence; in fact, they demand it."<sup>61</sup>

Though Moholy-Nagy in his American years continued to do the experimental art of his German Bauhaus period and gradually became a very influential teacher of his ideas, he, just like Szigeti, had a long fight for the

recognition of the modern in the United States. It all started very promisingly. While a refugee in London, in May 1937 he received a telegram from the Industrial Artists Association saying "starting industrial design school in fall [-] backed by industrialists [-] modest beginning but real opportunity to establish project along lines bauhaus [-] looking for head [-] gropius recommends you highly [-] would you consider it [-] at what figure [-] cable."<sup>62</sup> The idea to invite him came from his mentor Walter Gropius, then Chairman of the Department of Architecture at Harvard, who worked out even some of the details with the people in Chicago. For Moholy this sounded like intellectual salvation, as in London he had bitterly complained that "from a spiritual point of view one can reach here nothing or only the minimum and that every stimulus and every excitement is missing."<sup>63</sup> He was also anxious to get back and work in a school just as in the old days of the Bauhaus. Now the chances were good to build up an American version of the Bauhaus in Chicago and Moholy eagerly answered, "for plan highly interested [-] please send more details."<sup>64</sup>

His friend Walter Gropius, then 60, was most optimistic about the US environment. "We feel very well," he wrote to Moholy shortly afterwards, "a lot of the aspects of our stay here are brilliant, and I think if we succeed in making good use of our chances something will be allowed to be built here."<sup>65</sup> He called America a "pleasant continent," and gave details as to the Chicago plans based on the money of department-store-millionaire Marshall Field and located in one of his buildings. One of the crucial points of Moholy-Nagy's candidacy was his many relations with British and German industry, and firms like Simpson and International Textile, as well as Julian Huxley were provided as references. Huxley gave "a magnificent testimonial" saying how sorry he was to see Moholy leave England. Moholy characteristically noted, "Nevertheless we have the notion that every Englishmen feels easier and less responsible if we get such offers from America."<sup>66</sup> In fact, it was Huxley's personal relationship with the President of the Board of Trustees of the Association of Arts and Industries, E. H. Powell, that ultimately helped the artist to get his contract.<sup>67</sup>

After what he labelled [this] "*enervierenden kleinkram hier*," Moholy was eager to leave Britain and relocate, as it were, the Bauhaus spirit in Chicago. "Everything calls here for a better design in industry," Gropius underlined the nature of the new job he helped to find for Moholy.<sup>68</sup> He planned four classes in industrial art, in metal, wood, "typo-photo-film (commercial graphic)," and textile. Gropius suggested that he would "be given free hand to develop the thing in a direction as you like fit."<sup>69</sup> He also thought Moholy could put together his faculty as he pleased and the opportunity to start from scratch seemed to have particular advantages.

Moholy put enormous energies into what became officially called "the new bauhaus – American School of Design, founded by the Association of Arts and Industries." First he had to fight for the very name *bauhaus* itself, for he thought that since the Americans had adapted *weltanschauung*, why couldn't they have *bauhaus* as well.<sup>70</sup> Immediately, he wanted to become part of the Bauhaus exhibition of the Museum of Modern Art at the Rockefeller Center in New York.<sup>71</sup> He also intended to continue the old Bauhaus book series, particularly as the Nazi takeover closed the German market for the Bauhaus publications.<sup>72</sup> He shared, however, the opinion of Gropius who saw great potentials in bringing over the Bauhaus to the US but considered it essential to adapt its methods to the country and to the character of her people.<sup>73</sup>

*The new bauhaus* was finally opened in Chicago on October 18, 1937, "at the announced time," as Moholy proudly reported to Gropius.<sup>74</sup> He was pleased with his first experiences which he found interesting, particularly as he had earlier considered the Americans not clever enough and he had to realize how mistaken he had been. "Their intellectual standard, the quick copying of the facts is fascinating. Only their capacity of experiences must be enlarged, I think. They eat knowledge really with the spoon, with large, real, round soup spoons."<sup>75</sup> He persuaded some of the very best available people to join his faculty, including Archipenko for modeling, David Dushkin for music, the journalist Howard Vincent O'Brien to lecture on "the meaning of culture," as well as three professors of the University of Chicago, Charles W. Morris to teach "intellectual integration," Ralph W. Girard for life sciences, and Carl Eckart for physical sciences. "Kepes will arrive, with all the gods' help, in the middle of November," he added to the list.<sup>76</sup>

The first academic year was successful. By the end, however, it brought about financial difficulties to an extent that Moholy-Nagy was advised by the Association of Arts and Industries to tell his faculty that if they were offered other positions "they should take them because the Association's financial position made it probable that we would not open next semester."<sup>77</sup> Moholy-Nagy felt especially bitter about experiencing a typical émigré situation: "After I and my teachers were asked by the Association of Arts and Industries to come to this country and after we have shown every possible amount of good will, that the reason why she [Miss Stahle of the Association] could not raise money for the school was the resentment against foreigners in this country."<sup>78</sup> The school started to disintegrate: teachers were dismissed, the necessary equipment was less and less available. Moholy felt he had to look for other sponsors and get out of the Association. Gropius called the story "the first case of Chicago gangsterism that we experienced in actual fact," and tried to use his prestige to help.<sup>79</sup> Moholy, however, thought he should solve his own



problems “without bothering my friends.” He added emphatically at the end, “America was always a country of pioneers and there is no doubt my next time will be a justification of this term.”<sup>80</sup> The students, about sixteen, showed “wonderful enthusiasm to continue the Bauhaus,”<sup>81</sup> and though Moholy felt compelled to send farewell notes to his colleagues, he continued to fight for their survival. “Now sometimes I think why is to fight? As stranger in a foreign country! But I found such a great enthusiasm everywhere I go for the Bauhaus that I think it would be a pity to drop it. Also the last year I felt that I grew really, more and quicker than in the past 5 years all together.”<sup>82</sup> Oddly enough, he felt at home and, correspondingly, he wrote most of his letters, even the ones to Gropius, increasingly in English.

At Christmas 1938 the situation was still unchanged and Moholy's wife Sybill complained bitterly to Mr. and Mrs. Gropius, “*Es ist immer und immer die alte schmutzige Geschichte mit ihnen...*”<sup>83</sup> Moholy himself wrote a few days later a long letter to *The New York Times* and gave it a detailed story of their humiliation. Soon he was able to gather enough support and it became possible to open the school again under a new name, School of Design, at a new address, starting February 22, 1939. The “Sponsors' Committee” included distinguished names such as Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Walter Gropius, and Julian Huxley. Soon he was able to offer a summer course for 1940 and a series of evening lectures for 1939–1940. By Christmas 1939 the storm was over and Moholy confidently reported to Gropius, “Indeed the school looks fine. We have much more and better machines and equipment than we had on Prairie Avenue [the location of the *new bauhaus* in Chicago] and as good luck, my public lecture on ‘The New Vision and Photography’ drew about two hundred and twenty people and was very well received.”<sup>84</sup> He was also able to secure a grant of \$10,000 from the Carnegie Foundation and again \$7,500 somewhat later, and this was a major triumph.<sup>85</sup> Characteristically, at this point he planned to invite Stravinsky to lecture and perform at the School. By March 1, 1942 the School had 120 students “which is absolutely wonderful as it is 20% more than last semester and so many art schools and colleges have lost rather than gained students.”<sup>86</sup>

The School was blossoming when leukemia claimed Moholy's life in 1946.<sup>87</sup> Robert J. Wolff commented on the book by Sybill Moholy-Nagy on her husband, “Laszlo Moholy-Nagy will perhaps be best remembered as the man who not only helped to formulate one of the most vital manifestos of our time, but who, unlike many of his brilliant Bauhaus colleagues, had the power and the faith to fight to the point of death for the social implementation of the brave young words of the original Bauhaus documents.”<sup>88</sup>

### Von Neumann

For a third and last look at the relocated fine, experimental minds of Hungary there is the case of John Von Neumann (1903–1957). The son of a rich and upwardly mobile Budapest banker, Von Neumann “was very much a Budapest type,” a “good Budapest of his time and social class,” as his longtime friend and fellow Hungarian, economist William Fellner noted.<sup>89</sup> Though also of Jewish origin, the great mathematician had little to fear, even in Horthy’s Hungary after 1919–1920. His upper-middle class and well-connected family fled to Austria during the Soviet-type Republic of Councils of the Spring and Summer of 1919. Unlike most fellow-Jewish-Hungarians he was not victimized by the *numerus clausus* quota system set up by the incoming Horthy administration and was accepted at the University of Budapest in 1921. Yet he almost immediately left for Berlin, Göttingen and, later, Zürich where he became a student of those prestigious universities and their professors, including Albert Einstein and David Hilbert. His is an important case to help us better understand the situation after 1919–20. Not only were Communists, Leftists, Radicals, and simply Jews victimized by the consequences of the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the revolutions of 1918 and 1919, and the ill-designed Peace Treaty of Trianon (1920) that partitioned Hungary herself. Whether or not they were technically harassed by rightwing thugs or stopped in their careers by the anti-Semitic *numerus clausus* legislation of 1920, the devastating aftershocks of World War I left little or no chance for major creative talents to develop their abilities and forced them to leave the country.<sup>90</sup> Hungary, and to a lesser extent Austria, ceased to provide the shelter where genius had been produced, nurtured, and educated over the previous several decades. Modernization was no longer possible, and it was not even wanted. Economic development came to a stop, there was no money available, and in the ensuing spirit of neo-conservatism, the prevailing political and social forces pushed out most of the people who were to introduce new ideas. After Trianon, progress was no longer the creed and cry of the post-War generation which was influenced by the various shades of conservative thought of Ottokár Prohászka, Gyula Szekfű, or Cecile Tormay.<sup>91</sup>

First invited to Princeton in his late twenties, John Von Neumann was certainly one of those who, in the words of his friend and first biographer Stanislaw Ulam, desired “to blaze new trails and to create new syntheses.”<sup>92</sup> Ulam distinguished this group of mathematicians from those who wanted to contribute “to the edifice of existing work” and added: “It was only toward the end of his life that he [Von Neumann] felt sure enough of himself to engage freely and yet painstakingly in the creating of a possible new mathematical discipline,” namely the theory of self-reproducing automata, as Ulam put it.<sup>93</sup>

Stanislaw Ulam may have been right from a purely mathematical point of view, though he should have added Von Neumann's pioneering studies on the theory of games and economic behavior, or his last efforts on the mathematical modelling and interpretation of the brain. But the real "modernism" of Von Neumann is indeed an all-embracing feature of his entire work and *Weltanschauung*. Von Neumann brought his (and his family's) optimism and faith in technology and modernization to the United States from some of Hungary's best years of economic development. He thought of new technology as something basically beneficial: developments in technology captivated him to such an extent that "he could barely find the time to work out his highly innovative mathematical ideas."<sup>94</sup> Von Neumann's optimism, his belief in "progress" was rooted essentially in a 19th century European tradition which had been based on French Enlightenment philosophy as well as the thinking of Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer and transmitted continuously by the best Hungarian gymnasia. The celebrated Sándor Mikola (1871–1945), the dominating physics teacher and later principal of Von Neumann's Budapest high school, based his entire textbook *A fizika gondolatvilága* (The Mind of Physics, 1933) on the underlying philosophy that "starting from some basic qualities, human spirit is in constant progress."

When and why did Von Neumann turn from pure mathematics toward artificial and natural automata, "computing machines" and the brain? Some time during the early 1940s he realized that the safety of a system is not so much dependent upon the nature of its constituent elements but rather on its organizational principles, its complexity, and the quality and quantity of the information processed by it. His turn toward the theories of control and information was highly motivated and influenced by regular contact with his mentor and friend Rudolf Ortvy (1885–1945), professor of physics in the University of Budapest. Many of the ideas that came to captivate Von Neumann's mind through the 1940s and 1950s originated in his long correspondence with Professor Ortvy who considered it his special duty to support and encourage young and talented people both in and out of his physics seminar. In his 1939 letters from Budapest, Ortvy literally pushed his young Princeton friend into dealing with complex issues such as the axiomatic method, the theory of games, computing machines, and particularly brain research.<sup>95</sup> Though it would be misleading to overestimate Ortvy's influence, it did prove to be profound and lasting especially for two reasons: it was pertinent to the philosophical foundations of Von Neumann's future work and it came just on the eve of World War II which gave Von Neumann's interest an entirely new focus.

From the very early 1940s, the war effort directed Von Neumann's work toward a whole series of new problems mostly related to defense, the struggle

against Nazi Germany, and, finally, the Cold War. The war years put him on an unending trail of government connections, starting, as of 1940, with his membership in the Scientific Advisory Committee of the Ballistic Research Laboratories, and his consultancy with the Navy Bureau of Ordnance as well as with the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory. By the time he became one of the Atomic Energy Commissioners in 1955, he was invited to serve on some 20 other defense-related boards and committees working on very practical issues for the US Armed Forces, and particularly for the Air Force and the Navy. This impressive number of government commissions resulted in a wide array of pioneering tasks of a highly technical and practical nature where his experimental mind and engineering abilities were at their best. The list included the National Security Agency, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Weapons Systems Evaluation Group, the RAND Corporation, as well as nuclear research centers such as the Oak Ridge and the Livermore Laboratories and the Sandia Corporation.<sup>96</sup> Toward the end of his life Von Neumann became one of the nation's top defense experts involved in dozens of projects highly innovative and experimental in nature. When the newly established Enrico Fermi Award was conferred on him, almost too late, in 1956, he was applauded primarily for his contributions "to the art and science of the design and application of fast electronic calculating machines," and was cited as "teacher, inspirer and original contributor to the profound problems of the logic of programming for the most effective use of these expensive and elaborate devices."<sup>97</sup>

It is probably justified to consider the computer a product of the war effort and the Cold War atmosphere. It became central to Von Neumann's thinking also during World War II. His correspondence with Professor Rudolf Ortvyay seems to suggest that the idea was first brought up by Ortvyay from Budapest in early 1941.<sup>98</sup> It was also Ortvyay who, repeatedly from 1939 through 1941, hinted at the importance of brain research and the mechanism of the nervous system as a whole, providing a number of useful starting points for an elaborate research project.<sup>99</sup> "I looked into your paper on [the theory of] games again....," Ortvyay wrote to Von Neumann in January 1941. "I liked it at the time very much as it gave me the hope that if I succeeded in directing your attention toward the connection of the brain-cells, you might be able to expose this problem."<sup>100</sup> Though war-related issues certainly contributed to Von Neumann's development of large computing machines, such as ENIAC, EDVAC, and chiefly, JONIC, it is highly likely that Ortvyay's encouragement and ideas had a fair share in alerting him to the links between complicated automata and the human nervous system. Even though his first major article in this field, "The General and Logical Theory of Automata," was read as a

lecture only after the war, at the Hixon Symposium in September 1948, the roots of his experimental interest in automata and brain theory go back to the immediate pre-war years. Thus, his celebrated though tragically undelivered Silliman Lectures at Yale University, published as a booklet only after his death, in 1958, were partly built on the very ideas first brought up by Ortway in their correspondence almost 20 years before.<sup>101</sup> Nevertheless, no credit was given to Ortway in the little book, or, indeed, by Arthur W. Burks in the edited text of Von Neumann's *Theory of Self-Reproducing Automata*.<sup>102</sup>

It is therefore possible to argue that Von Neumann's long-standing experimental interest in automata and the nervous system, probably his single most important contribution to modern science, has its origins in the immediate pre-war years and in his continued links to Budapest colleagues such as Rudolf Ortway. It is evident that the potential to deal with these issues was already there in his younger years and in his very first papers on the theory of games. The genuinely innovative character of his research and inquiry was only deepened and accentuated, rather than produced, by World War II and his long stay in the United States which, just as in so many other cases, helped to bring out the best indigenous qualities of the immigrant European mind. The spiritually liberating yet intellectually reinforcing two-way effect of leaving conservative Hungary and entering the US can be considered a most typical experience of Hungarian-American intellectual migrations.

"Commentators on American traits delight in quoting De Crèvecoeur's classic remark that 'the American is a new man who acts on new principles.'" <sup>103</sup> To the many aspects of American exceptionalism and uniqueness one may add perhaps an often neglected though basic secret of innovative immigrant success in 20th century US: the genuinely heart reception given to the pioneering spirit, inconceivable in any European country at the time, the sheer sensation caused by the profoundly hospitable welcome to new ideas, novel approaches, fresh methods, unexplored dimensions of the human mind. Productive abilities were incomparably more readily welcomed, eagerly appreciated, and carefully accommodated, indeed, institutionalized, in the US than in the threatening atmosphere of totalitarian and dictatorial systems prevailing all across Europe, including the calamities of World War II, and the subsequent threats of the Cold War.

Though often overlooked, one of the very special forces that drew a large number of major people to the US in this long period of time from the 1930s into the 1980s was not just material benefits but the uniquely appreciating American welcome which liberated the innovative spirit and experimental eagerness for fresh inquiry from several generations of European scientists, scholars, and artists. For non-conventional minds such as those coming

from Hungary, this provided features and stimuli they so very badly missed in their homeland. Increasingly, the US represented the exhilarating experience once offered by turn-of-the-century Paris to the earlier generation of the Hungarian poet Endre Ady who felt "noble, fair, and great" not "beside the Danube [where] a demon army jibes and screams," but "beside the Seine" only.<sup>104</sup>

### Notes

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# AMERICAN WAR TIME POLICY PLANNING ON HUNGARY 1942–1946

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Three weeks after Pearl Harbor, on December 28, 1941, President Roosevelt approved the Department of State's setting up of the Advisory Committee on Post-War Foreign Policy. Its task was to work out the policies that would guide the U.S. in the postwar negotiation of peace. Though under other names, the Committee continued to function, in fact until the end of the war.

The accumulated material was deposited in the National Archives by the State Department in 1970. The collection was catalogued as the *Notter File*, and made available to researchers in 1974.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this study is to present the various points of view that emerged in the course of the Advisory Committee's discussions of the future of Hungary and its place in the proposed "East-European Union".

## 1. The Composition of the Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee first met on February 12, 1942. It included not just scholars and university professors, but also leading associates of the Department of State. The chairman of the Committee was Secretary of State Cordell Hull, its deputy-chairman was Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles, while the person who actually ran the day-to-day workings of the Committee was Leo Pasvolsky (1893–1953), an economist of Russian descent, and one of Hull's advisers. The Advisory Committee spent its first meeting setting up six subcommittees, the most important of which were the Political Subcommittee and the Territorial Subcommittee. The former, whose sessions were generally chaired by either Hull or Welles, dealt with global and regional political issues. The latter, the Territorial Subcommittee, was charged with mapping the territorial and ethnic disputes of the world and suggesting border revisions that might eliminate or at least minimize these tensions.

The chairman of the Territorial Subcommittee, and one of the key figures of the Advisory Committee as a whole, was Isaiah Bowman (1878–1950) a

professor of geography. As president of the National Geographic Society from 1915 to 1935, Bowman had travelled the world over, his interest in geopolitics making him an avid student of international relations, his specialty at Johns Hopkins University after 1935. The other key figure of the Advisory Committee was Hamilton Fish Armstrong (1893–1973), the member of the above two subcommittees best versed in European affairs, and the editor of *Foreign Affairs*, the semi-official quarterly of the Department of State. Armstrong, whose job as editor since 1922 had gained him an extraordinary range of contacts, was particularly knowledgeable about Eastern Europe.

Other names that we come across in reading the minutes of the various subcommittee sessions as those of Adolf A. Berle (1895–1971), a lawyer and from 1938 Deputy Secretary of State; Anne O'Hare McCormick (1882–1954), foreign policy analyst of the *New York Times* and the first woman journalist to win the Pulitzer Prize; Herbert Feis (1893–1972), economist, economic consultant to the Department of State at the time, and later one of the best-known historians of the war and cold war years, and Cavendish W. Cannon (1895–1962), a career diplomat, and head of the State Department's Southeast European Section in 1944–1945.

The Advisory Committee and its various subcommittees had a research staff to help them in their work. By the summer of 1942, thirty graduate students who had just received their Ph.D. degrees 'or were just about to' were recruited specifically for this job. The research staff consisted of fifty-five people at the end of 1942, of ninety-six in mid-1943, and of seventy-seven when it was terminated in 1944. The de facto head of the research staff was a youngish career diplomat, Harley Notter (1903–1950). His lieutenant, and also the head of the group of research staffers working on territorial issues, was Philip E. Mosely (1905–1972), a Harvard graduate, and a specialist in East European history. In the early 1930's, Mosely, then a young teaching assistant, spent two years in the Soviet Union; the years 1935–36 saw him spend a number of months in the Balkans. It was at that time that he also visited Transylvania. Except for Armstrong, Mosely was the member of the Advisory Committee most familiar with the Danube region. Other members of the research staff working on Eastern Europe, and thus on Hungary, were Harry N. Howard (1902–1987), John C. Campbell (1911–). Cyril E. Black (1915–1969), and Thomas F. Power (1916–1988). All of them young historians at the start of their careers, in the postwar years they were to follow their boss, Philip E. Mosely, in making a name for themselves in the postwar decades as the chief East-European experts, Balkan experts and Kremlinologists of the United States.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. The "East-European Union" and Hungary

The idea of a confederation of "eastern", "east-central" or "central" European states—was first raised in the U.S. in the fall of 1918, once the fate of the Habsburg Monarchy was sealed. Once the U.S. delegation withdrew from the Paris peace talks at the end of 1919, however, and particularly after President Woodrow Wilson lost the 1921 election and isolationism became the order of the day, the idea was shelved, until Hitler's *Drang nach Osten* gave it a new urgency.

By 1942, the time the Advisory committee started its work, postwar economic and political cooperation between the countries of Eastern Europe was taken for granted, and it was only natural that the Political Subcommittee, in charge of regional planning, should give it considerable attention. Eight entire sessions were devoted to the matter in the spring and summer of 1942, and the issue was returned to periodically in 1943 and 1944. Of the concrete proposals discussed, four were considered particularly carefully: those of Wladislaw Sikorski, of Edvard Beneš, of Otto von Habsburg, and the plan jointly worked out by Tibor Eckhardt and János Pelényi. Sikorski, the head of the London-based Polish government-in-exile, advocated a loose, primarily economic confederation of all the states lying between the Baltic Sea and the Adriatic, and Germany and the Soviet Union. Beneš's idea, which enjoyed the support of a number of the exiled politicians of the countries concerned, was two confederations: a Balkan federation centering on Yugoslavia and Greece, and a Central European federation centering on Poland and Czechoslovakia. The Yugoslav-Greek pledge of cooperation of January 15, 1942, and the Polish-Czechoslovak agreement of January 19 of the same year seemed to have laid the groundwork for such a system. Archduke Otto's proposal was a Danubian federation of the lands of the former Habsburg Monarchy, one in which dynastic and national aspirations were reconciled in the spirit of the twentieth century. Though this never concretely specified, it was clear that he himself was to be the Habsburg at the helm of this federation. The Eckhardt-Pelényi proposal envisioned three loosely-knit federative units, the Balkan, the Polish-Baltic, and the Danubian—the last much like the Danubian Union envisioned by Archduke Otto, consisting of Austria, Hungary, Bohemia, Slovakia, Transylvania and perhaps Croatia.<sup>3</sup>

The Political Subcommittee examined the above proposals from two salient points of view: security and economic viability. The security consideration meant that they wanted the new federation to be proof against a possible German or Russian attack, and even a joint Russo-German aggression, as in 1939. The other main consideration, economic rationality, involved

establishing a unit of the size optimal for a domestic market, so that a functional economy might serve to alleviate some of the social tensions endemic to the region, and become the basis of a functioning democracy.

Both security and economic considerations argued for the Subcommittee's taking a stand for the largest and strongest units possible, already at its very first sitting. This ruled out the Eckhardt-Pelényi plan for a tripartite region, and also Archduke Otto's proposal, which had left out the Balkans and the Polish-Baltic Sea region. What remained was Sikorski's suggestion, and perhaps Beneš's.

Another point at issue in connection with the proposed federation was its precise nature and organization, i.e. the measure of autonomy the member states would retain, and the competence of the organs of central government. The majority on the Subcommittee agreed that given the legacy of national conflict and non-cooperation in the region, federation was, at best, a long-range goal; initially, what was realistic was a loose confederation of sorts. The issue arose as to how far it was necessary or feasible to carry economic cooperation over into the political sphere. Some of the members would have been content to see no more than a tariff and currency union for a start. Others insisted on the need for close political cooperation without political coordination.<sup>4</sup>

The Political Subcommittee dealt very little with the matter of borders, leaving it to the Territorial Subcommittee to do so. It did, however, declare that the confederation must aim to bring about "cohesive national groups", and that possibly, border adjustments would need to be made to this end. Furthermore, the creation of smaller national units than the ones existing at the time was not out of the question. The points on which the Political Subcommittee had reached a consensus as of June 19, 1942, were outlined in a few pages by the research staff, the gist of which reads as follows:

The regional organization should have the form not of a federation but of a union of independent and sovereign states, cooperating for limited objectives through common non-legislative institutions, loosely rather than tightly organized. Provisionally the union is considered as including all states of Central and Eastern Europe between Russia and Germany from and including Estonia on the North to Austria on the West and Greece on the South.<sup>5</sup>

The Political Subcommittee returned to the East-European Union issue at several sessions in late 1942 and early 1943. One reason for this was that they had "polled" the émigré politicians of the region, and had found little enthusiasm for a plan that wanted to see the entire region become one federal unit.

That a federation embracing the entire region would indeed, be problematic was the conclusion arrived at also by Notter, Mosley, and other members of the research staff. They concluded their analysis of February 10, 1943, by pointing out that an Eastern Europe spreading from Finland to Greece was illusory in the extreme: the areas involved looked back on no common history, were heterogeneous in respect of culture and religion, and, in fact, had absolutely nothing in common besides their backwardness and subjection to Germany. With no internal cohesion to bind it, they noted, it was very dubious if this test-tube baby of a federation would prove in any way viable. Notter and his group believed the federation would stand no real chance unless the victorious allies or some international body were to assume protectorate over it "for an indefinite period".<sup>6</sup>

The Political Subcommittee sought to bridge the chasm between its own recommendations and the reservations of the exiles and its own research staff by espousing, as of early 1943, also "a possible but less desirable alternative", a plan calling for two East European federations, a "Balkan" and a "northern" union. This, naturally raised other problems, such, for instance, as where Austria and Hungary were to belong, and even Croatia and Slovenia, in the absence of a Unified Yugoslavia. Since the "Danubian countries" as such belonged organically neither to the Balkan unit nor the Polish-Czech unit, a number of people began to toy with the idea of a South German-Austrian-Danubian unit, which, of course, was tantamount to the rehabilitation of the Eckhardt-Pelényi, and the Otto von Habsburg proposals. As of the summer of 1943, the Political Subcommittee was able to come up with no unanimous stand on this matter. After that, it no longer wanted to, for it would have been senseless to force a decision on a matter which, more and more obviously, would fall to the Soviet Union to decide on and not the United States or Great Britain.<sup>7</sup>

It was in December of 1941, on the occasion of Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden's visit to Moscow, that Stalin first informed his Western allies that one of the Soviet Union's goals is to restore the borders agreed in the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, in short, to reannex certain parts of Finland, the Baltic States, Eastern Poland, and Bessarabia. Stalin also mentioned that he regards Eastern Europe and the western half of Central Europe as likewise of immediate interest to the Soviet Union, and that it might be best to divide Europe in British and Soviet spheres of influence.<sup>8</sup> The British and the Americans refused to sign a secret agreement as to the postwar territorial division of spoils, and publicly insisted that territorial disputes will be settled after the cessation of hostilities by a peace conference more fair-minded than the one of 1919-1920 had been. At the strictly confidential sittings of the

various peace preparatory committees, however, they were already discussing what of Stalin's demands might be acceptable.

By the end of 1943, U.S. diplomacy had more or less officially agreed to let Stalin have his way in Eastern Europe. In Teheran, Roosevelt agreed to have Poland "pushed" west, and agreed to the 1941 borders in the north and south as well. Somewhat earlier, Cordell Hull had told a fellow diplomat that he could, of course, go to Moscow to discuss the Baltic States and Poland's eastern borders, but in that case "he ought to take some of the U.S. Army and Navy with him".<sup>9</sup> An expedition of this kind, however, was something that neither Hull nor Roosevelt, nor any other American political force of consequence wanted to see. For though the United States had its own version of the postwar Eastern Europe that would be desirable, it was not in its interest to use military force to achieve it. This conviction was clearly reflected in all the statements made by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Department of Defense in 1943-44. Repeatedly, these communiqués emphasized that the U.S. was not to get involved "in the area of the Balkans, including Austria", and that "the Balkans and their troubles were beyond the sphere of proper United States action".<sup>10</sup>

In the course of the Moscow and Teheran conferences, it became an accepted fact that Central and Eastern Europe were particularly significant from the point of view of Soviet security, and that this gave Moscow certain privileges. The question, as of the end of 1943, therefore, was not whether or not Europe would be divided, but how divided it would be, and where the line of demarcation would lie. This latter set of questions, however, was the wellspring of much animated debate in Washington throughout 1944.

The controversy produced two camps, the "cooperationists" and the "confrontationists". Walter Lippman, an influential political theorist was one leading spokesman of the cooperationists. As Lippman saw it, the time was past when the small states could feign independence, seesawing between sets of great powers all the while. The postwar world would consist of three, perhaps four, spheres of influence, and the small nations would have no choice but voluntarily submit to the directives of the dominant great power allotted them by geopolitics. In view of the fact that the Atlantic Charter nations had very little direct economic or strategic interest in Central and Eastern Europe, the countries of that region, much as they might deplore this on historical, cultural and psychological grounds, would have to accommodate to the Soviet Union.<sup>11</sup>

The confrontationist point of view, shared by Roosevelt's successor, Harry Truman, was formulated by Sumner Welles, who had resigned from government in the fall of 1943. Though Welles, too recognized the 1941 borders, and somewhat hypocritically assumed that "... the peoples of the Baltic States



desire to form an integral part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics", he was determined to put a stop to further Soviet expansion. As late as 1944, Welles stood firm by the need for independent states in East Central Europe, joined together in some kind of federation.<sup>12</sup>

The Advisory Committee itself, specifically a new subcommittee headed by Armstrong dealing with the reorganization of Europe, finally took a stand on the matter of the future of Eastern Europe. That the region east of Danzig (Gdansk)–Sudetenland–Trieste line would belong to the Soviet sphere of influence they took for granted. It was a *fait accompli*. American policy, they argued, would depend on how the Soviets interpreted the concept of sphere of influence. If they meant by it something akin to what the U.S. meant by the *Monroe Doctrine*, and, on the pattern of the Soviet-Czechoslovak agreement of 1943, made treaties of friendship and cooperation with the various countries, thus obliging them to an amicable foreign policy without interfering in their domestic governments or their trade relations with any other nation, then this was something the Americans could hardly take exception to. If, on the other hand, the Soviet aim was the "annexation" or "subjugation" of the states of Eastern Europe, this had to be thwarted as unacceptable. On the basis of testimony heard from Charles E. Bohlen, First Secretary at the Moscow embassy, and subsequently U.S. ambassador to Moscow, the subcommittee more or less assumed that the war will have exhausted the Soviet Union, especially its economy so thoroughly as to make it impossible for it to aim at more than a "minimal program" akin to that embodied in the *Monroe Doctrine*.<sup>13</sup>

Proceeding on this assumption, Armstrong's subcommittee still did not completely give up on the planned regional federation, or at least cooperation. It was clear, however, that this cooperation, if it came about at all, would be a far cry from what the Advisory Committee envisaged in the spring and summer of 1942. That official Washington had more and more reservations in connection with the original proposal is indicated also by the change in terminology. Instead of the terms "East-European Union", "confederation" or "federation", the 1944 documents, for the most part, contain the expression "regional groupings." A memo in connection with "a Democratic Danubian or East European Federation," dated January 22, 1944 notes: "At the present such regional units are viewed with disfavor in official quarters."<sup>14</sup>

### 3. Hungary's borders

Both President Roosevelt and his Wilsonian Secretary of State believed that the most important guarantee of lasting peace in the postwar world was the

creation of an international organization which—unlike the League of Nations—was strong enough, if it saw fit, to defend the status quo in the face of any aggression anywhere in the world. At the same time, they were only too aware of the fact that the only status quo that could be preserved in the long run was one which did away with the territorial injustices conserved—or created—by the previous postwar settlement. A great deal of the Advisory Committee's efforts therefore, were focused on identifying the various territorial disputes the world over, and coming up with proposals for their solution. It was specifically the job of the Territorial Subcommittee to do so.

The members of the Territorial Subcommittee did not aim at a radical revision of territorial boundaries. Though their chief goal was ethnic fairness, at the very first sessions they introduced the "Principle of Minimum Change", and this was to be the guideline in decisions involving both borders and population exchanges. In practice, this meant that they wanted to change the borders established in the wake of the First World War only to the extent absolutely necessary on ethnic, strategic, or economic grounds. Accordingly, they decided to look into not borders as such, but only the most disputed segments of each country's frontier.<sup>15</sup>

Besides the principles of ethnic fairness and of minimum change, the matter of which side the given country was on in the war also entered into the Territorial Subcommittee's deliberations. We must note, however, that the idea of "punishment" of "retribution" was never a dominant consideration, not even in the case of Germany or Japan. In the case of "satellite countries" such as Finland, Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary, it was a very minor consideration indeed. Roosevelt and his Secretary of State, as is known, considered these countries "victims", not aggressors, and did not take seriously their declarations of war. Most members of the Territorial Subcommittee shared their view. Thus, as we shall see in a moment, the Subcommittee not only strove for ethnic fairness in the case of two enemy countries, but, in the case of an allied and an enemy country, was capable of deciding in favor of the latter.<sup>16</sup>

Of the over fifty areas of tension identified and examined by the Territorial Subcommittee, thirty-four were in Europe, and of these, twenty-four in Eastern Europe (cf. Map 1). Except for where Hungary bordered on Austria, every section of the Hungarian border—the Yugoslav–Hungarian, the Slovak–Hungarian, and the Romanian–Hungarian stretches of the frontier—was included among the areas in dispute. A fourth area of territorial tension with an impact on Hungary's future, and one separately listed and treated, was the Kárpátalja (Subcarpathian Ruthenia), a region that had belonged to Hungary until 1920, was part of Czechoslovakia between 1920 and

1939, and was reannexed to Hungary in 1939. (The Soviet Union annexed it in 1945, and it would remain part of the USSR until its recent break up.)

The Subcommittee first dealt with the Slovak-Hungarian border in the summer of 1942. By that time, Mosely and his research staff had prepared a number of background studies on the ethnic composition of the region, on Slovakia's development between 1919 and 1938, and on the findings of the American peace delegation of 1919-20. Though their report included the relevant data of the Hungarian census of 1910, because of the alleged distortions in the Hungarian count, and because the Czech figures were more recent, they took the 1930 Czechoslovak census as the more reliable. On this basis, the ethnic Hungarian population of Slovakia—without Ruthenia—was not 650,000 (as the more impartial figures of the 1921 Czechoslovak census also showed), but only 571,000.<sup>17</sup> Even so, it was clear that the Slovak-Hungarian border drawn in 1920 considerably farther south than the ethnic frontier, and that it would be neither fair, nor expedient—unless one wanted to feed Hungarian irredentist feeling—to restore the 1920 demarcation line. Since they were dealing with two enemy nations, Mrs. McCormick suggested that they might leave the 1938-39 borders well enough alone. The majority on the Subcommittee, however, rejected this proposal. In the course of the debate, Mosely pointed out that the First Vienna Award had been based on the Hungarian census of 1910, and was, thus, prejudicial to the Slovak population. He noted, moreover, that the 1939 reannexation of Ruthenia had absolutely nothing to do with the ethnic composition of the population. It had been a strategic decision bolstered with historical arguments. Thus, rather than keeping the 1938-39 borders or restoring those imposed by the Treaty of Trianon, he recommended a compromise solution which, in effect, split the difference between the two boundary lines. The new border would involve no real hardship for Czechoslovakia's transportation system on economy, and was maximally fair from the ethnic point of view. The Czechoslovak census of 1930 had shown that Hungarians comprised the absolute majority of the population in ten border districts: six of them in the Csallóköz (Grosse Schuett), three in Central Slovakia, and one in Eastern Slovakia. It was this area of 2,355 square miles, with a population of 396,000, seventy-eight percent (309,000) of which was Hungarian, that Mosely wanted to see returned to Hungary. He also thought it desirable that the southern parts of the fifteen districts north of the border districts—areas of mixed population, with the Hungarian comprising the largest single group (for instance, the areas around Galánta and Érsekújvár—Nové Zámky)—also belong, wholly as in part, to Hungary. On this proposal, the size of the pre-1938 Czechoslovak region—excluding Kárpátalja—that would have remained in Hungarian hands

was a minimum of 2,700 square miles, and a maximum of 4,500 square miles, with populations of 484,000 and 854,000 respectively. Redrawing the borders along the above lines would have decreased the ratio of ethnic Hungarians within the whole population of the area to 64 percent in the first scenario, and the 59 percent on the second (cf. Map 2). It was to improve these ratios somewhat that Mosely recommended that some measure of population exchange take place as well.<sup>18</sup>

The Territorial Subcommittee had Mosely's proposal on its agenda on five separate occasions. The main, and only serious opposition to it came from Hamilton Fish Armstrong, who adduced every possible argument in the effort to leave Hungary with as little of the disputed territory as possible. The vehemence of Armstrong's arguments was not something that other members of the Subcommittee could match, nor, probably, did they really want to. For while they did not agree with him on every detail, they did not really try to refuse his arguments. The vote on September 4 rejected Mosely's proposal, and recommended that Hungary be allowed to keep only the above six southwestern districts—an area of 1,400 square miles, with a population of 275,000, 79 percent of which was ethnic Hungarian (cf. Map 2, Table 2). By way of a compromise, they left open the matter of where the three central and the one eastern district along the border would belong. The Subcommittee recommended that further research and discussion precede any decision on this issue.<sup>19</sup>

Transylvania—which had been part of Hungary prior to 1920, was part of Romania between 1920 and 1940, and was split between the two by the Second Vienna Award, i.e. between 1940 and 1944—was discussed by the Territorial Subcommittee on three consecutive occasions in February of 1943. The rapporteur was John C. Campbell, a thirty-two year old assistant professor of history. Campbell outlined four possible solutions, of which he deemed none to be particularly satisfactory. Restoration of the borders determined at Trianon was undesirable because even the 1930 Romanian census figures showed Trianon to have placed a million and a half ethnic Hungarians under Romanian rule. "It would", as Campbell put it, "perpetuate a difficult minority situation". Restoration of the pre-Trianon status quo, i.e. returning all of Transylvania to Hungary, was even worse: it would create a minority of three million Romanians, and was difficult to reconcile with the Principle of Minimum Change. The third possibility presented for consideration was to keep the borders drawn by the 1940 partition. Economic and infrastructural considerations argued against that solution, as well as the fact that the partition had annexed to Hungary not only the purely ethnic Hungarian easternmost region, the Székelyföld (Szeklerland), and the western regions with their predominantly ethnic Hungarian populations, but also the million

Romanians living in the ethnically mixed regions. The fourth possibility was that of an independent Transylvania. "The idea of an autonomous Transylvania held certain attractions but it was hard to say how it would work since it would not be a satisfactory solution either to Hungary or to Rumania or to the local Magyar and Rumanian population." Though Campbell conceded that there might indeed be such a thing as sense of Transylvanian identity, he thought it probable that both ethnic groups would want to see an independent Transylvania become a part of the "mother country": the Romanians, of Romania; the ethnic Hungarians, of Hungary.

Like Campbell, the members of the Subcommittee, too, found themselves in a quandary. The only point they all agreed on was that Transylvania would have to come under the supervision of Allied or United Nations forces for the first few postwar years to ward off the danger of armed conflict between its Hungarian and Romanian population. Deputy Secretary of State Berle, who had raised this possibility, expressed his hope that such a transitional period would provide time for tempers to cool, enough, perhaps, for the two ethnic groups to themselves agree on some kind of long-term solution, without interference from the great powers.<sup>20</sup>

The next session, on February 12, likewise closed without a resolution. Campbell and Mosely gave a detailed account of Transylvania's ethnic composition, with the conclusion that the matters of the Székelyföld (Szeklerland) had to be distinguished from that of the predominantly ethnic-Hungarian strip along the border, and different solutions be found for each. To this, Adolf Berle made a quite unexpected counter-proposal:

"It might be a more fruitful approach to the Transylvanian problem to abandon all efforts to disentangle the population and to start from the theory of constructing a state. By that method one would concentrate on what would appear to be the most powerful element in the population, the one most likely to maintain itself as a group, and turn over to that group a territory included within the frontier most likely to lead to its stability. This would mean either enlarging Hungary as far as the Carpathians or the recreation of Versailles' Rumania."<sup>21</sup>

At the third session on Transylvania, the Subcommittee again reviewed all the possible approaches to the problem. Cavendish W. Cannon, head of the State Department's Southeastern European Department, advocated that they opt for an independent Transylvania, or rather, for a trialistic solution—a loose federation of Romania, Transylvania and Hungary—reminiscent of an old idea of a former prime minister of Hungary, Count István Bethlen. Bowman, Mosely and Campbell were inclined to have the border strip go to Hungary, with the Székelyföld to enjoy autonomy within

Romania. Armstrong continued to oppose the idea of an independent Transylvania, and wanted to see the whole go to Romania, except for a narrow border strip. Finally, John MacMurray, an adviser to Cordell Hull, took a stand for restoring the Trianon borders on the grounds that it was impossible to come to a fair decision in the matter of the Hungarian–Romanian territorial dispute. With no consensus forthcoming, Bowman adjourned the meeting, with hopes that those present would continue to study the matter and arrive at a resolution at the next session.<sup>22</sup>

Bowman's intentions notwithstanding, the Territorial Subcommittee never again returned to the question of Transylvania. What was taken to be its recommendation was the minutes of the March 2, 1943 meeting, which summarized the proposals that had been made in a way that gave preference to two of them. Most highly preferred was the idea that Transylvania should belong to Romania, with the Székelyföld enjoying wide-ranging autonomy, and the Romanian–Hungarian border revised to coincide with the linguistic border, or to lie just a little to the east of it. In second place was the notion of an independent state of Transylvania, which was to be a member of the proposed East-European Union, or a condominium of Romania and Hungary.<sup>23</sup>

The matter of the Yugoslav–Hungarian border was discussed on February 12, at the Subcommittee's second session on Transylvania. The rapporteur in this case was Cyril Edwin Black, an assistant professor at Princeton. Based on his background research, Black distinguished five separate areas where the borders were open to dispute. Along the southwestern frontier established at Trianon, there were twenty-eight predominantly ethnic Hungarian communities in an area of Wend Settlement; these he recommended that the postwar adjustment recognize as belonging to Hungary. The greater part of the Prekomurje, however, which was inhabited by Wends, and the predominantly Croatian Medjumurje, Hungarian territories since the spring of 1941, Black considered to be parts of Yugoslavia on ethnic grounds. Along the southern border, in Baranja, Bačka, and in the Banat, he recommended a compromise solution reminiscent of the American proposal of 1919, and one that followed linguistic borders to the extent possible. The compromise would have left about as many Hungarians (150,000) under Yugoslav rule as there would have been Yugoslavs under Hungarian rule (174,000) if the recommended northern districts were returned to Hungary. This northern tract, an area of 2,476 square miles, had a population of 486,000, whose ethnic distribution, according to the 1921 Yugoslav census, was the following: ethnic Hungarians, forty-seven percent; South Slavs, thirty-six percent, and German speakers, sixteen percent (cf. Map 4).

Black's consistent attempt to implement the principle of ethnic fairness was, however, taken exception to in this case by Berle and Cannon, the very people who had been inclined to side with Hungary in the matter of its borders with Romania. Yugoslavia was an ally, and they took its side, more precisely, Serbia's side. Clearly there was no guarantee that the Yugoslav federation could be restored after the war. But Hungary, noted Berle "had broken its word and had behaved badly" in breaking its 1940 treaty of perpetual friendship with Yugoslavia, and in having joined in Germany's 1941 aggression against it. Certainly, this was not the kind of conduct that they wanted to see rewarded at Yugoslavia's expense. The issue was decided by Pasvolsky. The head of the Advisory Committee found no reason for the United States to recommend changes to the pre-1941 Yugoslav-Hungarian border, and the Subcommittee voted unanimously for the *status quo ante bellum*.<sup>24</sup>

On Subcarpathian Ruthenia, the research staff completed its report in late October of 1943. Of the possible options, Harry N. Howard considered the reunification of Czechoslovakia and Subcarpathian Ruthenia "the best possible solution". He did not recommend either the creation of an autonomous Carpatho-Ukraine nor the region's autonomy within whether the Ukraine, or the Soviet Union, or Poland, or Hungary. He did, however, have his reservations about the proposed solution. "Simple restoration, however, might not solve the problem, since it might leave open the door for new revisionism on the part of Hungary, or possibly on the part of the Soviet Union." By way of a preventive measure, Howard thought that certain border adjustments might perhaps be made in favor of Hungary in the southwestern corner of the region, where even the Czechoslovak census of 1930 had put the ratio of Hungarians in excess of fifty percent. What argued against such change, on the other hand, was the layout of the transportation and communication network, particularly of the railway system. To leave with Hungary an area even approximating the one it had regained by the First Vienna Award, argued Howard, would cut the entire region off from Czechoslovakia, and would make communication between the various settlements of the region very difficult.<sup>25</sup>

Howard's report was distributed to the members of the Subcommittee on November 12, 1943, with the purpose of putting it on the agenda for debate in the near future. In fact, it never was put on the agenda. For the remainder of the year, the Subcommittee dealt exclusively with Asian affairs. Its last session was on December 17, 1943, for the Subcommittee as such was dissolved as part of the Advisory Committee's reorganization.

For, by summer of 1943, the Advisory Committee had accomplished a great deal of what it had been set up to do, while the series of Allied victories raised hopes that the war was rapidly drawing to a conclusion. It was this hope that

led Secretary of State Hull to reorganize the peace preparatory committee. Though certain of its subcommittees, for instance, the Territorial Subcommittee, continued to sit for the rest of the year, the emphasis shifted from debate to summaries which, as Hull put it, "can serve as a basis of more specific considerations of policies and proposals." The task of recapitulating the debates and whatever proposals had emerged fell to the research staff, restructured as the Division of Political Studies already in January of 1943.<sup>26</sup>

The summaries dealing with Hungary were prepared by the research staff between summer of 1943 and January of 1944. They presented a detailed account of the debates up to that time, including the Subcommittee's proposals. Still, reading them, one cannot help detecting small shifts of emphasis, and perhaps a selective grouping of arguments and counter-arguments. The purpose, one feels, is to make the original expert recommendations—based, as far as possible, on the principle of ethnic fairness—seem far more attractive than the Subcommittee's subsequent suggestions, motivated, without a doubt, by more partial considerations. We might, thus, with some exaggeration, see these documents as the circumspect "rebellion" of the disinterested young staff of experts against the political motives of the older generation, and the strategic considerations of the pragmatic career diplomats.

The summary dealing with the Slovak—Hungarian border, for instance, presents as the first of the proposed solutions the Subcommittee's resolution that Hungary be allowed the six districts of the Csallóköz. Very fairly, it notes, further, that "the Territorial Subcommittee did not favor suggesting wider territorial concessions to Hungary." It goes on, however, to present as an equally possible alternative solution one that Mosely had held to be optimal, but which Armstrong had repudiated in the strongest terms: namely, that the ten southern districts where ethnic Hungarians formed an absolute majority, as well as the southern parts of the adjacent six northern districts be ceded to Hungary. Altogether, this would have meant an area of 2,740 square miles, with a population of 484,000, sixty-four percent of which was ethnic Hungarian (cf. Map 2, Table 3).<sup>27</sup>

We see much the same story repeated in the case of the Yugoslav—Hungarian border. Black briefly stated the Territorial Subcommittee's advice that the entire disputed border region be given to Yugoslavia on political grounds, and that there had been no support for carving up the area by ethnic groupings. He then went on to describe his own proposal—the one the Subcommittee had more or less rejected—as a possible compromise. "This solution has not been discussed by any of the subcommittees," he noted, bending the truth somewhat, to put it mildly. The only change his "compromise proposal" contained over the one he had presented in February was that



the line of demarcation to run through Bačka and the Banat had been refined. The population of the area he proposed to be granted to Hungary fell from 486,000 to 435,000, with the figures for the South Slavic minorities dropping from 174,000 to 148,000. The number of ethnic Hungarians left in Yugoslavia by the new variant, on the other hand, rose from 150,000 to 160,000.<sup>28</sup> (cf. Map 4, Tables 3 and 4, Adjusted line.)

The summary most closely reflecting the Territorial Subcommittee's stand was the one dealing with Transylvania. The Subcommittee, as will be recalled, in the absence of a consensus, had postponed making a clear-cut recommendation for a later session never in fact held. As compared to the earlier documents treating of Transylvania's future, Campbell's August 1943 summary was a forward step in that it specified the size of the strip of land along the western border to be returned to Hungary: an area of 3,475 square miles, shown by the 1930 Romanian statistics to have a population of 591,000, fifty percent of which was ethnic Hungarian. The alternative recommendation, less closely based on ethnic boundaries, involved leaving Hungary in possession of 5,600 square miles of post-Trianon Romanian territory, with a population of 1,980,000, only thirty-six percent of which was ethnic Hungarian (cf. Map 3, the two top tables). For his part, Campbell unequivocally supported this latter solution. The first of his two reasons was that the Arad-Nagyvárad railway would, in that case, run all the way on Hungarian soil, instead of criss-crossing the border at several points. The second was that, not counting the Székelyföld, this latter solution would leave roughly equal numbers—about half a million each—of Romanians and ethnic Hungarians under foreign rule, and the exchange of these populations, as Campbell saw it, would be relatively easy to effect.<sup>29</sup>

The abstract dealing with Subcarpathian Ruthenia differed from the Subcommittee presentation of late 1943 primarily in being much more constructive. For one thing, Howard specified the possible forms that the southwestern strip to be ceded to Hungary might take. He presented three options: recognition of the borders established in 1938 by the First Vienna Award; the purely token gesture of returning 125 square miles of the area to Hungary; and a "compromise solution" between the two extremes, which would leave Hungary with 535 square miles of the 731 square miles reannexed in 1938. Of the population of 90,000 involved, the 1930 Czechoslovak census specified fifty-nine percent as ethnic Hungarian, as compared to the 1910 Hungarian census figures also given by Howard, which put their ratio at eighty-eight percent (cf. Map 5).<sup>30</sup>

The above-outlined summaries prepared by the research staff became the basis of "more specific considerations of policies and proposals", even as Hull

had intended them to be. The groups that were to "consider" them were the Inter-Divisional Country and Area Committees set up in late summer of 1943, which set to work immediately, and continued to study the reports all of the first half of 1944. These Committees consisted of members of the research staff, and of the officials of the Department of State involved with the countries and areas in question. Bowman, Armstrong, and other prestigious members of the Subcommittees, though called in for consultation, were not involved directly in this work either.<sup>31</sup>

The first of the Inter-Divisional Country and Area Committees to be set up, on August 12, 1943, was the Inter-Divisional Balkan and Danube Region Committee. Harry N. Howard was appointed chairman. By the spring of 1944, the Committee had submitted its recommendations regarding Hungary's borders in reports of a page or a little more. As compared to the research staff's summaries of 1943, these were both more concrete and more unambiguous, containing, for the most part, only the recommended solutions. For all that, they did leave room for some flexibility. In the case of the Slovak—Hungarian border, for instance, the Committee recommended the cession to Hungary of only the six districts of the Csallóköz, on the grounds that Czechoslovakia's postwar government would not be willing to agree to more. It did not, however, rule out the possibility of supporting "a more just solution on a purely ethnic basis", i.e. the cession of ten entire districts, and parts of another six, "if later circumstances should be favorable to its adoption". In view of the military situation, and of the Soviet Union's expansionist plans, the Committee suggested alternative solutions in the case of Subcarpathian Ruthenia as well. If the postwar settlement was such that the region was returned to Czechoslovakia—the alternative the Committee preferred—they wanted to see the borders revised in a way "which would leave predominantly Magyar districts in Hungary" without, however, disrupting railway communications toward Slovakia. Should Subcarpathian Ruthenia end up as part of the Soviet Union, however, they wanted to see the borders redrawn to coincide with ethnic boundaries, independently of any other consideration.<sup>32</sup>

For the Yugoslav—Hungarian border, the Committee supported Black's compromise proposal. This meant that, as opposed to the Territorial Subcommittee's stand, this higher-ranking Committee was for Hungary's keeping the northern parts of the Baranja-Bačka-Banat region.<sup>33</sup>

No pithy recommendation was ever made concerning Transylvania, due, perhaps, to the significance of the matter, or perhaps to its basic insolvability. The Committee accepted the research staff's 1943 summary; the only change it made was to mark some of the solutions as "recommended" solutions. As a temporary measure in the immediate postwar period, it suggested keeping the

1940 borders, i.e. the ones established by the Second Vienna Award. As a long-term solution, it recommended that the strip stretching from Arad to Szatmár—an area of 5,600 square miles, with a population of 1,098,000—be ceded to Hungary, with the Székelyföld to enjoy autonomy within Romania. The idea of an independent Transylvania, until this phase a preferred solution, was listed as one of the possible, but not recommended solutions in this document of April 20, 1944. The reason for this is probably that the idea of an East-European federation of which an independent Transylvania was to be a part was coming to appear more and more chimerical in the light of the Soviet Union's ever more evident expansionist plans, especially given the advances being made by the Soviet army.<sup>34</sup> We shall see in what follows how far the Committee's plans in connection with Hungary's borders were influenced by this very real political consideration.

The Committee's recommendations with regard to Hungary were outlined in a fourteen page document, dated May 1, 1944, and headed: "The Treatment of Enemy States: Hungary." The paragraphs on the Czechoslovak—Hungarian, Yugoslav—Hungarian, and Austro—Hungarian borders were verbatim transcripts of the respective April précis on the subject. The paragraphs treating Transylvania, however, were very different. There was no reference to an intermediate, postwar phase, nor to U.N. peace keeping contingent. There was no talk of autonomy for the Székelyföld within Romania. Of all the recommendations made to redress Romanian—Hungarian territorial grievances, all that remained was the suggestion that the "small strip" between Arad and Szatmár be ceded to Hungary. The idea of an independent Transylvania, on the other hand, crapped up again, as something which, despite the problems it involved, "should not be excluded from consideration."<sup>35</sup>

The recommendations of the Country and Area Committees were presented to a high-level select committee set up by the Department of State in early 1944, the Committee on Post War Programs. Its chairman was Cordell Hull, and its deputy chairman the new Undersecretary of State, Edward R. Stettinius; members included the Deputy Secretaries of State, department heads, Pasvolsky, who had headed the 1942–43 Advisory Committee, the chairmen of the various Subcommittees, for instance Bowman, as well as the leading members of the research staff, such as Notter, Mosely, and Howard. The fourteen page proposal on Hungary was discussed and accepted at the May 26 session. In his commentary, Mosely emphasized that the most difficult of the territorial problems, and one that was hardly likely to receive a satisfactory solution, was the issue of Transylvania, or rather, the matter of the Szeklers of the Székelyföld. His comment, however, was received in silence. The little debate there was, centered on the tone of the proposal.<sup>36</sup>

Like the idea of an East-European Union, the real value of all this painstaking study of Hungary's disputed border regions depended on how far these recommendations would be put into practice. Initially, the members of the Advisory Committee were optimistic on this score. Their optimism was based on "assuming a complete victory for the United States and a free hand in reconstruction." A corollary of this assumption was Bowman's belief that "larger countries like the United States could exert influence without any direct intervention."<sup>37</sup>

Besides their exaggerated notion of the position of strength in which the United States would find itself after the war, the Department of State was encouraged also by the fact that the emigré politicians of the countries concerned did not reject offhand the idea of a settlement that was perhaps less advantageous from their own point of view, but was, on the other hand, more fair. As Beneš, the ex-president of the Czechoslovak Republic, declared in July of 1940: "Nothing that has been imposed upon us since Munich do we consider to be valid in law... This does not mean that we desire as our war aim a mere return to the status quo of September, 1938. ... We wish to agree on our frontiers with our neighbours in a friendly fashion... Changes in detail are possible..."<sup>38</sup> An article of his of 1942 contained much the same message.<sup>39</sup> Similar statements were made by other members of the Czechoslovak government-in-exile as well, for instance Finance Minister Ladislav Feierabend speaking to several members of the Advisory Committee on April 12, 1943, and Foreign Minister Jan Masaryk in an interview conducted by Ferenc Göndör on November 13, 1943, and in an other statement on April 4, 1944.<sup>40</sup>

The Yugoslav government in-exile made no such promises. Their communiqué of May 20, 1942, stated no more than their determination to restore the Yugoslavia of before 1941.<sup>41</sup> Since, however, neither the American nor the British government would guarantee this—any more than they would the Czechoslovak borders drawn at Trianon—in 1942–43 it was still quite conceivable that the matter of the Yugoslav—Hungarian border, as of the Slovak—Hungarian border, would be decided by bilateral negotiations. The American experts working on the peace proposals thought this all the more likely as they had no very clear-cut notion of Yugoslavia's future. While, with small adjustments of its borders, they supported the restoration of pre-1938 Czechoslovakia, repudiating the idea of both an independent Slovakia and of an independent Subcarpathian Ruthenia, they were not at all convinced of the expediency of restoring pre-1941 Yugoslavia. Roosevelt was as uncertain on this score as anyone else. Twice in 1943, in the course of this discussions with leading members of the Advisory Committee, he spoke of Yugoslavia's restoration as improbable, and of an independent Serbia and an autonomous

Croatia as possibilities.<sup>42</sup> As late as September of 1944, Otto Habsburg recalls him saying that "Yugoslavia is, in his view, an unnatural state. It should be transformed into a federation."<sup>43</sup>

The "third party" with an immediate interest in Hungary's borders was the Soviet Union. In the first phase of the war, as is common knowledge, Moscow repeatedly reassured Budapest that the Soviet Union had no territorial claims against Hungary, and that the Soviet leadership considered Hungary's claim against Romania to be well founded, and one that would enjoy Soviet support when it came up at the postwar peace conference.<sup>44</sup> After the summer of 1941, however, when Hungary joined in Germany's attack on the Soviet Union, the Soviet stand changed. Thenceforward, the Soviet Union called into question the legitimacy of Hungary's revised borders with Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia alike, as well as of the Second Vienna Award. The first indications to this effect reached Washington in early 1942. Ambassador Winant reported from London that Sir Anthony Eden had information that Stalin meant to compensate Romania for the loss of Bessarabia with "territory now occupied by Hungary", i.e. with Transylvania. The information was confirmed by Molotov's memorandum of June 1943, which, among other things, noted that the Soviet Union did not "consider as fully justified the so-called arbitration award carried out at the dictate of Germany in Vienna on 30th August 1940 which gave Northern Transylvania to Hungary."<sup>45</sup> It was at this point, as we have noted, that the members of the Advisory Committee, recognized the contingent nature of all their planning, and shifted from comprehensive reorganization proposals toward a solution as far as possible in keeping with the Principle of Minimum Change. For all that, they continued to strongly oppose the *en bloc* restoration of the 1920 borders.

The United States first came up against the Soviet Union's alternate plans for Transylvania directly in the spring of 1944, at the time that the Romanian armistice was negotiated. The Department of State wanted to see the settlement of territorial disputes postponed until the peace conference, and wanted an armistice agreement that contained absolutely no reference at all to borders. The Soviet Union, however, wanted an armistice agreement to contain guarantees that it would get back Bessarabia—which had been annexed to Romania after the First World War—and was, thus, willing to include in it the compensatory condition that after the war, "Transylvania or the greater part thereof" would be returned to Romania. The conflict was finally settled in a compromise. At Churchill's insistence, the American side agreed to the Soviet formula against its better judgement; while the Soviet Union, for its part, agreed to have appended to the sentence on Transylvania a qualifying clause: "subject to confirmation at the peace settlement".<sup>46</sup>

Washington had no real way of knowing the Soviet stand on Subcarpathian Ruthenia. The Advisory Committees reports, thus, took account of two possibilities. Though the preferred solution was to have the region returned to Czechoslovakia, they were prepared to see Subcarpathian Ruthenia become part of the Soviet Union.<sup>47</sup>

#### 4. Views on Hungary's postwar government

Interwar American opinion on Hungary was typically Janus-faced. There were scores of diplomatic reports, travelogues, press reports and memoirs that spoke of the 1920 Treaty of Trianon as an outrage, and pointed with approval at the modernization the country had achieved in spite of the crippling blow the treaty had dealt the Hungarian economy. On the alternative, no less schematic view, the postwar disintegration was no more and no less than the inevitable catching up with multinational Hungary: the country's difficulties were rooted not in the terms of the peace settlement, but in the selfish and narrow-minded policies of the still ruling "feudal" aristocracy, which clung to the system of great estates, had suspended the secret ballot, in short, lorded it over a country that enjoyed not even a modicum of social and political democracy. Which of these two pictures someone presented depended as much on his political predilections and prejudices, as on who had served as his guide as he strove to discover Hungary. Classic examples of how far this was true are the two U.S. ambassadors to Hungary in the '30s: Nicholas Roosevelt, who served from 1930 to 1933, and John F. Montgomery whose tenure lasted from 1933 to 1941. Reading their memoranda, one has the feeling that they are speaking of two different countries. As Roosevelt saw it, the "survival of feudalism" was the country's salient feature. "Most of the Hungarian peasants were living under conditions but little removed from those of the serfs in Russia of the nineteenth century."<sup>48</sup> In Montgomery's view, on the other hand, the "stories about feudal Hungary" were stories and no more, told "in order to calm the world's conscience, which was a little troubled by the fact that in the name of national self-determination, more than three million Magyars had been put under Czech, Rumanian and Serbian rule." In reality, Hungary was well on the way to modernization, and though the conditions of the agricultural workers fell somewhat short, the condition of the industrial working class was on a par with that of American workers.<sup>49</sup>

Each one of the two pictures had its appeal to certain groups within the American business, political and scholarly communities. Among "official" Hungary's known supporters were Professor Archibald Coolidge, the founder

of *Foreign Affairs*, whose sympathy for the "Hungarian case" dated back to his 1919 travels in Central Europe (he had been a decided opponent at the time of the new border arrangements being planned for Hungary);<sup>50</sup> General Bandholtz, the American member of the Allied mission to Budapest in 1919–1920, the man who had protected the Hungarian National Museum's collection from the Romanian armies, and who was on friendly terms with Count Albert Apponyi, among others;<sup>51</sup> Jeremiah Smith, the Boston lawyer stationed in Budapest between 1924 and 1927 as the commercial representative of the League of Nations; and most importantly Senator William E. Borah, Wilson's opponent and chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee to 1940, perhaps the most influential of all the Americans urging the revision of the Treaty of Trianon.<sup>52</sup>

There is some indication that President Roosevelt, too, was pro-Hungarian in sentiment. His personal sympathy was said to be based partly on his having bicycled through certain parts of the Monarchy during his student years, Transylvania being one of these parts. The experience, so the story goes, had a positive and lasting impact on him. The second impression was just as personal, and dated back to his years in the navy during the First World War. While in Rome on one occasion, he found that the Italians spoke with great admiration of a "daring" Hungarian admiral of the Austro-Hungarian navy, Miklós Horthy—the man who was elected Regent of Hungary in 1920. That this episode was something Roosevelt was fond of recalling is indicated by the message he had Montgomery convey to Horthy in 1937, which made reference to their shared naval past. In September of 1943, the President is reputed to have told Queen Zita, Otto Habsburg's mother, that "he liked Hungary... more than any other country in Europe", and that "he wanted to save the country."<sup>53</sup> Be that as it may, Roosevelt's sympathy was certainly not unconditional, and did not keep him from being critical of many aspects of Hungarian policy. For instance, he believed the system of land tenure to be quite obsolete, and we know from a letter of Montgomery's that when they spoke in the summer of 1937, he "expressed considerable interest in the subject of dividing up estates in Hungary."<sup>54</sup>

The other picture, that of a deplorably feudal Hungary, was most efficiently kept in the limelight by Hamilton Fish Armstrong. Armstrong essentially subscribed to the views of Mihály Károlyi, Oszkár Jászi, Rusztem Vámbéry and Seton-Watson, and criticized Hungary's interwar political status quo from their democratic point of view.<sup>55</sup> Like Armstrong and Nicholas Roosevelt, Sumner Welles, too, was highly critical of the Hungarian domestic political scene, relying—over and above the official sources—primarily on Beneš for his information. Armstrong and Welles, however, different on one essential

point when it came to Hungary. Armstrong considered the Trianon borders to be basically acceptable, and thought the problem to lie only in the successor states' ungenerous treatment of the minority nationalities; Welles, on the other hand, believed that readjustment of Hungary's borders was a *sine qua non* of a just peace in the Danube region, and wanted particularly to find a satisfactory solution to the problem of Transylvania.<sup>56</sup>

The Advisory Committee, as well as the members of the research staff dealing with the future of postwar Hungary—Mosely, Howard, Power and Bradshaw—were as critical of interwar Hungary as Armstrong and Welles. Textual analysis as well as personal contacts point to the influence of Rusztem Vámbéry on their thinking. It followed that they saw absolutely no chance of the Horthy regime's surviving the war, and expected that defeat would bring in its wake Hungary's radical democratization.

Land reform was the issue that they gave most attention to. In late 1943 and early 1944, thoroughgoing studies examined the state of Hungarian agriculture, and the history of post-1918 reform legislation.<sup>57</sup> Two further studies in the spring of 1944 contained concrete proposals for postwar land reform. The radical redistribution of holdings was specified in both documents as "a prerequisite for the establishment of a more democratic Hungary." Thoroughgoing land reform—argued the author, probably Power—"... would open the way for peaceful development of social and political democracy and would eliminate the control of a reactionary minority which has monopolized political power at home and threatened the peace and security of the Danubian region through its cooperation with an aggressive Germany." For all that, though he did not rule out the possibility of an indiscriminate and wholesale land grab, the social discontent among the peasantry being as pervasive as it was, this was not something that he would have liked to see. What they would have preferred was "a rationally planned reform under the guidance of competent agronomists and with proper physical and financial implementation." In concrete terms, this would have meant nationalizing estates of over fifty-eight acres (a hundred *hold*), and parcelling them out as farms of between eight to fifty acres in size. The five thousand landowners thus deprived of their lands were to receive no compensation, but would have got some form of financial aid to help them set up a new livelihood. Those who wanted to stay in agriculture would have been allowed to keep "peasant-sized farms". The entire process was envisioned as requiring about ten years.<sup>58</sup>

The other problem studied in depth was the matter of the postwar political system, and the desirable composition of the future government. The studies prepared in early 1944 distinguished and reviewed the possibilities of five different kinds of political organization: authoritarian, soviet, centralized



democratic republican and decentralized democratic republican (the distinction is Vámbéry's), as well as the constitutional monarchic system. The preferred possibility was "a democratic government in either a monarchical or republican form." The studies expressed strong reservations in connection with both the authoritarian and the soviet systems, and thought it highly unlikely that the Hungarian people would opt for either of these.<sup>59</sup>

For the leaders of any democratic government, they looked to a popular-front-type coalition of Social Democrats, Smallholders and Liberals, to Károlyi and the democratic émigrés he headed, as well as to certain intellectual groupings within Hungary. Of the latter, specific reference was made to the populist writers, as well as the younger generation grouped around the bourgeois radical *Századunk*, the Catholic *Jelenkor*, and the *Ország Útja*.

The research staff thought it impossible for the political élite of the Horthy government to remain in power, and particularly for the Regent himself to do so. "The Russians have expressed their objection to the retention of the Regency and of the regime of the landlords." What was more, the old guard's remaining in power "would mean the continuation of an authoritarian regime. In all probability Hungary would again be a factor of instability in the Balkan—Danubian region." Their objection went beyond the person of Horthy himself, and extended, naturally enough, to the far rightist Arrow-Cross Party and the government party, and even to "conservative-liberal" opposition figures like István Bethlen, and to "pseudo-Smallholders" of the likes of Tibor Eckhardt, who spent the last years of the war in the U.S.<sup>60</sup>

The research staff did not rule out the possibility that the new democratic Hungary would be a monarchy. This, however, was by no means tantamount to their supporting Ottó Habsburg's claim to power. There is no denying, of course, that Ottó's name came up frequently in their discussions. But only as a possible option, never as the solution recommended, or desirable from the U.S. point of view. This was so in spite of the fact that Ottó had confidentially reassured the Department of State that he would assume the Hungarian throne only subsequent to being confirmed in his claim by a plebiscite.<sup>61</sup>

In general, there were two weighty reasons given against Otto's kingship. One was that there was no trace in his writings of his favoring land reform, and that his ties to the aristocracy were too strong. In short, he was not enough of a democrat. The other reason was that the putative postwar leaders of the neighboring successor states would not have him. In the light of this, on January 27, 1944, the Inter-Divisional Balkan and Danube Region Committee, like the preliminary studies and committees, rejected the notion of "the restoration of the Habsburgs to the throne of Hungary."<sup>62</sup>

Unlike the Advisory Committee's suggestions for an East-European Union and for border readjustments, the above program for Hungary's postwar political reform appeared to be realistic even in the last phases of the war. This, in spite of the growing fears in the course of 1943–44 that the Soviet Union would not be content to interpret the notion of sphere of influence in the limited sense of the *Monroe Doctrine*, but would aim at the sovietization of East-Central Europe. The "Declaration on Liberated Europe," however, signed at the Yalta Conference, which reiterated the right of all peoples to free and democratic self-determination, laid these concerns to rest. The only cause for anxiety subsequently was Roosevelt's compromise—probably made in the interest of having the Soviet Union join in the war on Japan—not to insist on the high-level four-power commission, whose job it would have been to make sure that the terms of the Yalta Declaration were observed, though the Department of State had ascribed as much importance to the commission as to the Declaration itself.<sup>63</sup> Those who, like Charles E. Bohlen, knew something of the Soviet mentality—"the Soviet leaders attached less weight to general principles than did the leaders of the western powers"—saw this as a bad omen.<sup>64</sup> In 1945, however, they formed a minority. The rest of those in the Department of State thought with their own heads, and naively believed that people were bound by their written and spoken word.

### 5. The game is up

The idealistic plans formulated between 1942 and 1944 behind the padded doors of the Department of State disintegrated during the last year of the war, and in the course of 1946–47. That they did so was due not to some conceptual void in American diplomacy, as some have suggested, nor to Roosevelt's illness, but to the Soviets establishing their dominance in the region, and to the Americans having no material interest in challenging this predominance. In what follows, we shall examine some of the major steps in this process.

Basically, Washington had no objections to the new Hungarian regime that took shape in 1944–1945. While it was obvious that both the interim government and the national assembly came into being under Soviet tutelage, the Department of State acknowledged that Béla Dálnoki Miklós's cabinet was "a well-balanced group representing the significant pro-Allied political forces", and that "it is a group of responsible personalities."<sup>65</sup> As opposed to the governments of Poland, Romania and Bulgaria, which it justly considered Soviet "puppet governments", Washington accepted the Hungarian leadership

as representative, and made no demand for its reorganization. Consequently, Hungary's internal affairs were not among the controversial issues at either Yalta or Potsdam, and the Hungarian government was the first of all the East European governments to be recognized by the United States, as early as September 1945, prior even to the election of the national assembly. This decision, made by James F. Byrnes, Secretary of State under the new U.S. government formed after the death of Roosevelt in 1945, was meant to underline that the United States would encourage democracies, and reject communist dictatorships.<sup>66</sup>

During the year and a half following the election of the national assembly in November of 1945, Washington took exception to two significant events on the Hungarian domestic scene: nationalization—particularly the nationalization of the oil industry, in which American investment reached 59 million dollars, and the gradual elimination of political pluralism and of political liberty, a dictatorial tendency subsequently referred to as “salami-tactics” (i.e. the gradual whittling away of political and personal freedoms). The White House and the Department of State voiced their objections regularly at the meetings of the Committee, as well as at other bilateral and international forums. Still, as long as the Smallholders' Party held the majority of the seats in parliament, and Ferenc Nagy was the head of the coalition government, they considered the regime democratic and representative, and did not relinquish their support. There was, however, a permanent qualifier attached to this support. In the internal slang of the Department of State, it was “limited encouragement”. This meant that unlike the Mediterranean and other, economically or strategically important regions, Hungary was a place where Washington was determined to confine itself strictly to economic and political measures to maintain its influence in the country.<sup>67</sup>

That the United States would not go beyond “limited encouragement” was amply manifest in its loans and economic aid to Hungary between 1945 and 1947, as well as in the discussions preliminary to, and during the negotiations at the 1946 Paris Peace Conference. American support for Hungary's foreign policy objectives was strong against Romania and the Soviet Union in the matter of Transylvania, but, contrary to what one might have expected from the work of the Advisory Committee, was much weaker against Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.

The Potsdam Conference of July, 1945, was the last time that U.S. foreign policy objectives included an ethnically-based solution to the Czechoslovak–Hungarian and Yugoslav–Hungarian border disputes.<sup>68</sup> By the time the Allied foreign ministers met in London in September, the issue had received a new formulation. There, and from there on, the Allies were in

agreement in that "the frontier with Hungary should be, in general the frontier existing in 1938," and the only subject still in dispute was Transylvania, and the Romanian-Hungarian border.<sup>69</sup>

Several factors contributed to the Americans' abandoning the principle of ethnic fairness, which they had considered so important at the time of the peace preparations. The most significant was that contrary to Washington's expectations, the governments in Belgrade and Prague were most adamant against any kind of frontier adjustment. The same politicians who, in 1942-43, and even in early 1944, had considered the redrawing the Hungarian-Slovak border a distinct possibility, believed, from the summer of 1944, that the only way to resolve the border dispute between the countries was to remove the Hungarian population from Czechoslovakia. The Czechoslovak government-in-exile first expressed this view to the American government on November 23, 1944, and then reiterated its position from time to time after its return to Prague, at which time it also registered its claim on five Hungarian villages in the Pozsony area.<sup>70</sup>

Similar tendencies could be observed in Yugoslavia as well. The government in Belgrade asked for Allied permission to "exchange" forty thousand Hungarians, over and above those who had already fled to escape retaliation at the hands of the Yugoslav guerillas; it registered an official claim to a fifty square mile area of the Austro-Hungarian border region north of the river Drava; and emphasized in its propaganda the legitimacy of annexing other border-region Hungarian territories (mainly in the province of Baranja), and the necessity of preserving the "South Slavic character" of northeastern Yugoslavia.<sup>71</sup>

It is due primarily to the firmness of the United States Government that the Yugoslav claims were not satisfied, and the Czechoslovak demands were only partially met. The Department of State took exception to unilateral mass relocations even in the case of the German population. As far as the Hungarian and other East European populations were concerned, Washington strongly objected to solving territorial differences by punishing entire ethnic groups for the sufferings of the war. It took a particularly firm stand against the government in Prague, which, nevertheless, managed to get three of the five villages it had asked for, in exchange for giving up its notion of unilaterally relocating 200,000 Hungarians.<sup>72</sup>

The Truman administration, however, would not go so far as to follow the recommendations of the Advisory Committee in order to eliminate the possibility of future territorial disputes between Hungary and its neighbors. The fact that these issues did not even come up at the various rounds of the peace talks had very little, I believe, to do with the roles played by these

various countries in the course of the war. In the case of the Italian–Yugoslav dispute over Istria, for instance, Washington was quite capable—on the grounds of ethnic fairness—of siding with the ex-enemy, Italy, thereby moderating somewhat the excessive Yugoslav–Soviet demands. It is probable that if Hungary had been more important strategically—if, for instance, oil from the Near East got to Western Europe not through Gibraltar, but up the Danube—and if Washington had a military presence at hand to give weight to its proposals, as indeed it did in the case of Istria, the Advisory Committee's recommendations would not have been so soon forgotten. There is yet another reason why the matter of the Czechoslovak–Hungarian and Yugoslav–Hungarian borders never came up in the course of the postwar negotiations: Britain's attitude. The British government had decided to support the restoration of the 1938 borders even before the Potsdam Conference.<sup>73</sup> All the above being as it was, it would have been a Quixotic gesture indeed for the U.S. to insist on trying to implement the Advisory Committee's suggestions.

Unlike the Csallóköz and the Baranja-Bačka-Banat issues, the status of Transylvania remained uncertain until May of 1946, with the *status quo ante bellum* being finalized only in August. Washington had been irked by the Soviet-approved restoration of Romanian local government in northern Transylvania on March 9, 1945, and questioned the government's legitimacy. Accordingly, the American delegation in Potsdam recommended that “the three principal Allies proceed in the near future with preliminary talks concerning the establishment of a definite boundary between Hungary and Romania, and that favorable consideration be given to revision of the pre-war frontier in favor of Hungary on ethnic grounds”.<sup>74</sup>

When the preliminary talks were held at the September, 1945 meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers, the Soviet delegation made no secret of the fact that it wanted to see “the whole of Transylvania” go to Romania. The joint British-American stand, however, was for “examining the respective claims of the two States.” Secretary of State Byrnes noted in the course of the debate that “the change which he had in mind would not affect more than 3,000 square miles.” This was about five hundred square miles less than the minimum area recommended by the Advisory Committee in 1943–44, and there is no knowing how exactly Byrnes arrived at the figure. It is possible that he simply rounded down the original figure of 3,475 square miles. No decision was taken on the matter at the London session, and the Council agreed to adjourn the debate.<sup>75</sup>

The next time Transylvania was discussed was at the April, 1946 meeting of the deputy foreign ministers, likewise held in London. The Soviet government—which a few days earlier had the highlevel Hungarian delegation visiting

Moscow believe that Hungary's raising the matter of its territorial claims against Romania was something the Soviets considered to be justified—<sup>76</sup> insisted in London that the Trianon borders be restored. With Britain and France refusing to support it, the United States was not in a position to press its own revisionist plans, but did suggest that “provision be made to leave the way open for direct negotiations between the Governments of Rumania and Hungary with a view to adjusting the frontier so as to reduce the number of persons living under alien rule.” The Russians, however, refused to agree to even this.<sup>77</sup>

With no consensus forthcoming, the deputy foreign ministers submitted two—a Soviet and an American—recommendations to the May session of the Council of Foreign Ministers. Had he had British and French support, and Roosevelt to back him, it is possible that Byrnes would have insisted on at least a token compromise. Alone as he was, however, he judged the matter to be a lost cause, and did not want to further test Soviet—American relations, which were strained enough as it was, with insistence on having his way in a “third-rate” issue of this sort. In return for a trivial Soviet concession, he thus withdrew the American motion, and accepted the Soviet plan.<sup>78</sup>

Byrnes came in for a great deal of criticism for his permissiveness not only in this, but in other matters as well. Sumner Welles, a number of the senior members of the Department of State, and later even President Truman expressed dissatisfaction with his conduct of affairs. This gave some credibility to the American efforts to reassure the dejected Smallholder Government—which had been misled in Moscow and now felt itself abandoned by Washington—that the game was not yet up, that what they had agreed on was only a draft of the peace treaty, and that the conference itself would be the place to effect changes in it. This was the gist of what Philip Mosely told the Hungarian delegates to Paris on May 17, 1946, and this was the assumption that guided Arthur Schoenfeld, the American ambassador to Budapest, in his activities.<sup>79</sup>

Trusting that Mosely and Schoenfeld would turn out to be right, at the August 14 session of the peace conference the Hungarian Foreign Minister, János Gyöngyösi, asked that Romania surrender to Hungary an area of 22,000 square kilometers, and a population of two million people. A few days later, on American advice, he modified his demand to 4,000 square kilometers, with a population of less than half a million.<sup>80</sup>

The American support he had counted on, however, was not forthcoming. At the September 5 session of the Romanian territorial and political committee, where Hungary's demand was reviewed again for the last time, the U.S. delegate, William Averell Harriman, made the following statement about the

draft peace treaty: "The United States had not been a strong supporter of the proposed text but wished to make it clear that he would vote for it since it had been agreed by the Council."<sup>81</sup> With this, the issue of Transylvania—which Sumner Welles had called one of Europe's most pressing problems in his book published in 1945—was taken off the agenda, much to the dismay of the circle of American experts who realized that ignoring the problem would by no means make it disappear. "How can it be imagined", asked Welles, "that the cession of this entire region... to either Rumania or Hungary can ever result in anything but new conflicts, new complaints, new oppressions and a festering sore in the body politic of Europe?"<sup>82</sup> John C. Campbell, secretary to the American delegation, and the Advisory Committee's Transylvanian expert, concluded his article on the territorial settlement agreed at the peace conference by noting that the compromises born "did not conform to American hopes and American principles". This being so, "it should be possible for the world's statesmen to look again at the map of Europe and to make changes which are called for by the interests of the European peoples themselves".<sup>83</sup>

The defeat suffered by American diplomacy had its repercussions in Hungary, where, in June of 1947, Ferenc Nagy was forced to leave the country, and the systematic liquidation of the Smallholder Party got under way. The United States was outraged by the Hungarian Prime Minister's exile. President Truman called it a disgrace, and the Department of State spoke of it as a coup d'état. Once again, however, Washington's vehemence was soon spent. Some junior members of the Department of State did suggest that the Nagy case be brought before the United Nations, but the idea was rejected by the head of the European Department, H. F. Matthews, who did not want the matter to distract the Security Council's attention from the problem of Greece.<sup>84</sup>

As Americans saw it, in the summer of 1947, Hungary became one of the communist states of Eastern Europe. The country's short-lived democracy was commemorated by John F. Montgomery in a book published in 1947, probably with the State Department's approval. "For a second time within a decade, a small European country, Hungary, is being turned into a satellite of an overwhelmingly strong neighbor."<sup>85</sup>

Interestingly enough, American diplomacy never quite gave up on Hungary, nor on the rest of Eastern Europe. For over forty years, with but slight shifts of emphasis, it had on its agenda a goal first formulated in 1948: "The gradual retraction of undue Russian power and influence from the present satellite area and the emergence of the respective eastern-European countries as independent factors on the international scene."<sup>86</sup>

Far from being up, perhaps the game is just starting.

## Notes

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2. The biographical data are based on various lexicons.
3. For an analysis of these proposals see National Archives, Washington (hereafter: NA) RG 59. Notter File, Box 56. P-46. Proposals for the political reorganisation of Eastern Europe, August 19, 1942. For Ottó's and Beneš' programs, see Otto of Austria, "Danubian Reconstruction", and Eduard Beneš, "The Organisation of Postwar Europe", In: *Foreign Affairs*, January 1942, 226–241. and 242–252. Cf. Joachim Kühl, *Föderationspläne im Donauraum und in Ostmittel-Europa* (München, 1958), 108–110.
4. NA RG 59. Notter File, Box 55. P Minutes 10–12.
5. Loc. cit., Box 54. P-Doc. 24. An East European Union as considered to June 19, 1942.
6. Loc. cit., Box 57. P-Doc. 204. The feasibility of an East European Union, February 10, 1943.
7. Loc. cit., Box 54. P-Doc. 214. Tentative Views of the Subcommittee on Political Problems, March 12, 1943. Cf. Geir Lundestad, *The American Non-Policy Towards Eastern Europe, 1943–1947* (New York, 1975), 349–351.
8. NA RG 59. Office of European Affairs. M 1244/17. Negotiations with regard to Treaties of a Political Character which have taken place between the Soviet and British Governments since the outbreak of the German-Soviet War. Cf. Elisabeth Barker, *British Policy in South-East Europe in the Second World War* (London, 1976), 129; and Stephen Kertész, *The Last European Peace Conference: Paris 1946 – Conflict of Values* (University Press of America, 1985), 5–6.
9. Eduard Mark, "American Policy toward Eastern Europe and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941–1946. An Alternative Interpretation", *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 68. No. 2 (Sept. 1981), 317–320.
10. Philip E. Mosely, "Hopes and Failures: American Policy Toward East Central Europe, 1940–1947". in *The Fate of East Central Europe*, 62–63.
11. Walter Lippman, *U.S. War Aims* (London, 1944), 48–53.
12. Sumner Welles, *The Time for Decision* (New York/London, 1944), 254–255, and 332.
13. NA RG 59. Notter File, Box 84. R Minutes-12., 13., 14, February 4, 18 and March 3, 1944.
14. Loc. cit., Box 153. H-Doc. 104, Preliminary b., January 22, 1944.
15. Loc. cit., Box 54. P-Doc. 151-c. Tentative Views of the Territorial Subcommittee. December 7, 192, and Box 59. T Minutes-15 and 16, August 14 and 16, 1942.
16. Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park. Official File, Box 1. Folder 226. Roosevelt to Congress on June 2, 1942; and *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull* (New York, 1948), Vol. II, 1114 and 1576.
17. For the Czechoslovak census of especially 1930, its methods and distortions, see Gyula Popély, "Az 1930. évi csehszlovák népszámlálás végrehajtása", in *Magyarságtudat* 1988. Ed. in chief: Gyula Juhász; ed. by Csaba Gy. Kiss, (Budapest, 1988), 145–176.
18. NA RG 59. Notter File, Box 60. T-Doc. 21. The Slovak–Hungarian Frontier, 1918–1939. July 16, 1942; Idem T-Doc. 24. Hungarian–Slovak Frontier, July 21, 1942; Idem T-Doc. 48. Hungarian–Slovak Frontier, August 24, 1942; Idem Box. 59. T-Minutes 15, July 31, 1942.
19. Loc. cit., Box 59. T Minutes 19, September 4, 1942.
20. Loc. cit., T Minutes 38, February 5, 1943.
21. Loc. cit., T Minutes 39, February 12, 1943.
22. Loc. cit., T Minutes 40, February 19, 1943.
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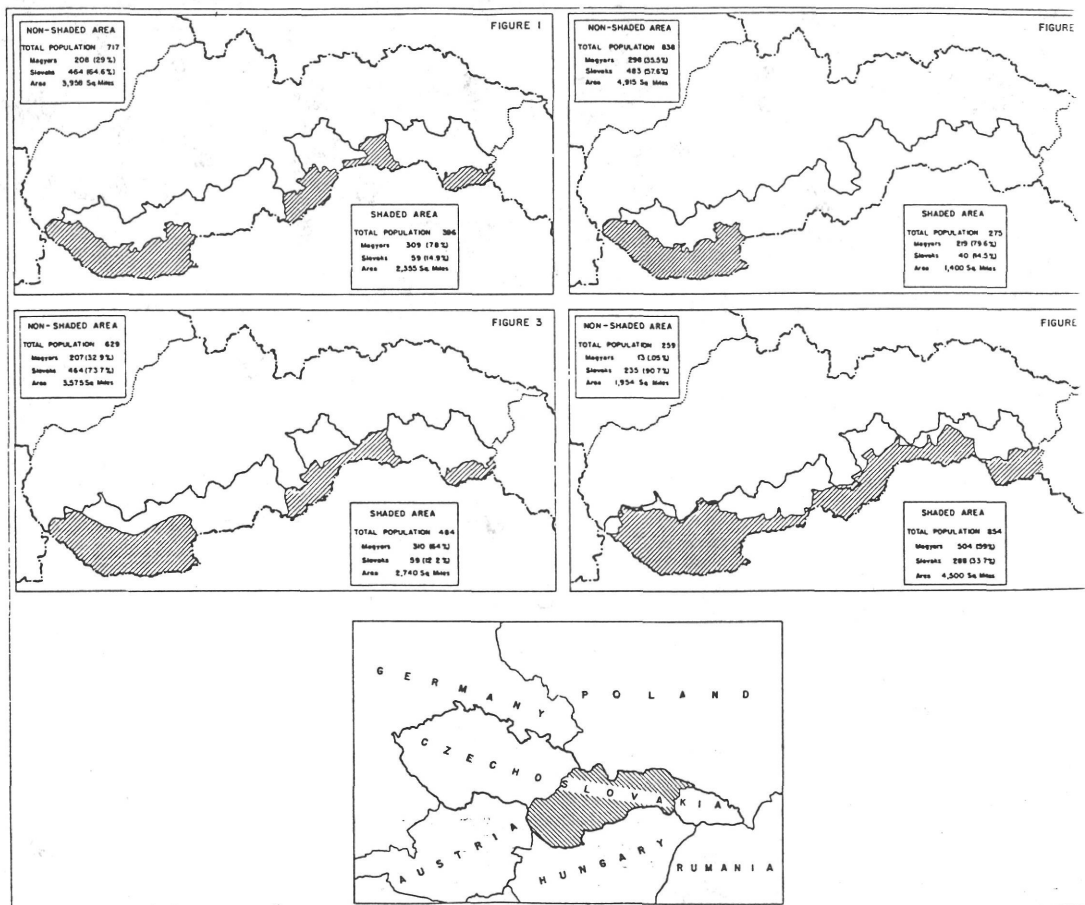


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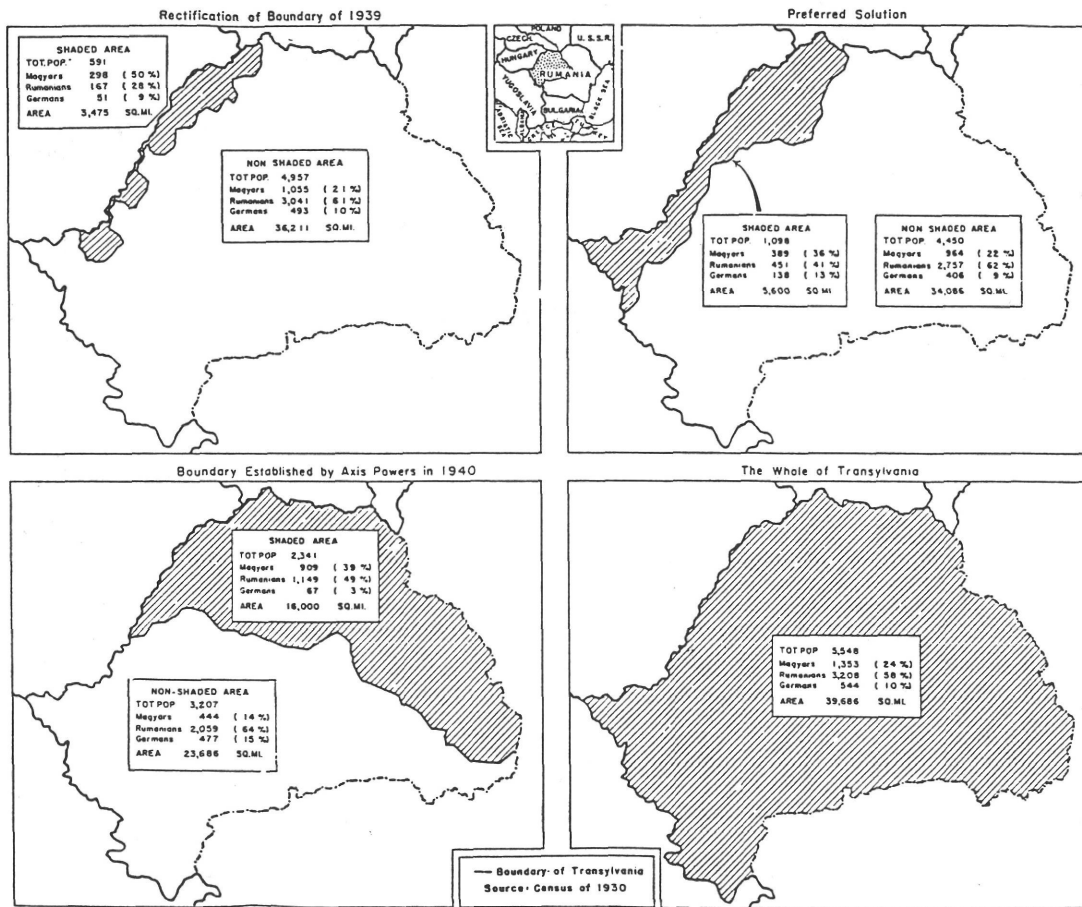
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— INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY 1939  
- - - - "CURZON LINE"  
NUMBERS IDENTIFY AREAS  
(EXPLANATION IN STATEMENT)

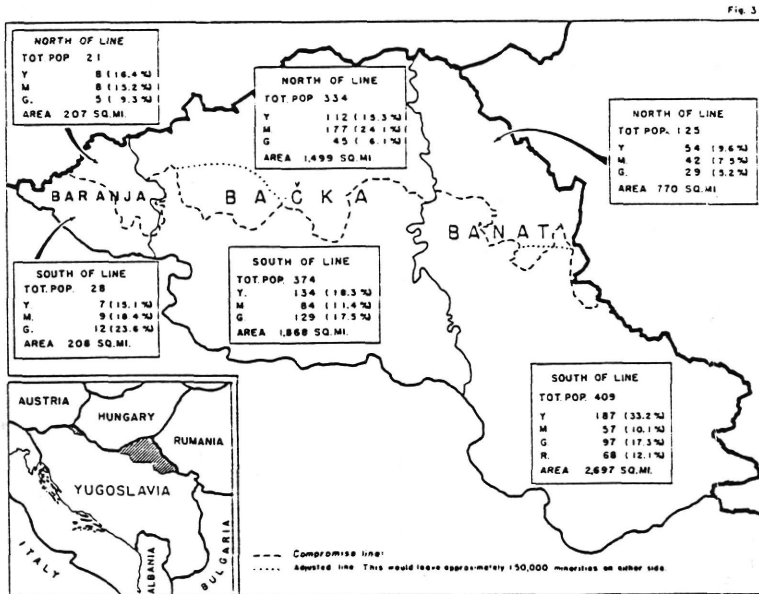
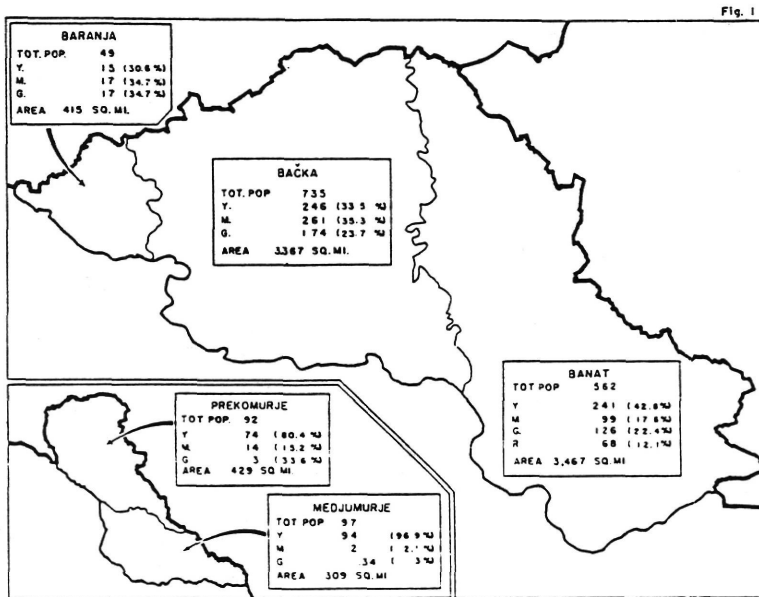




Map 2. Slovak-Hungarian frontier  
Population in thousands



Map 3. Transylvania  
Population in thousands



Map 4. Yugoslav-Hungarian frontier  
 Population in thousands  
 Mother tongue

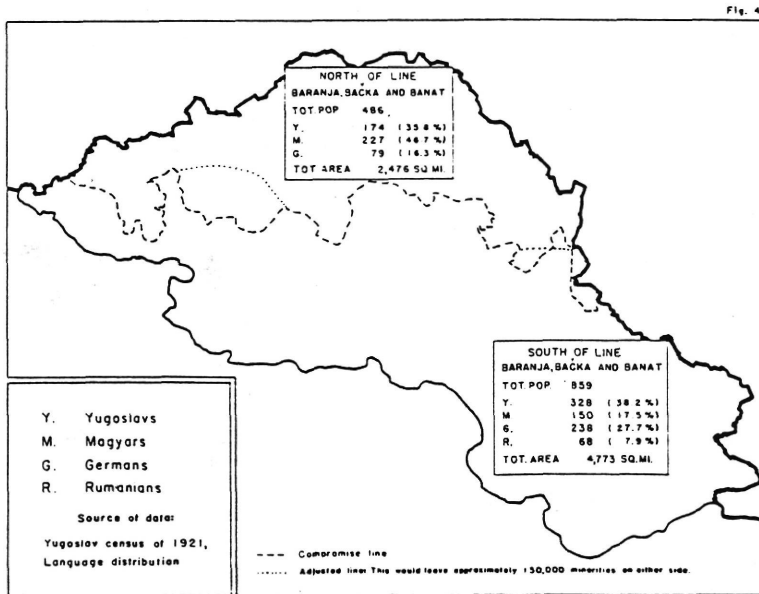
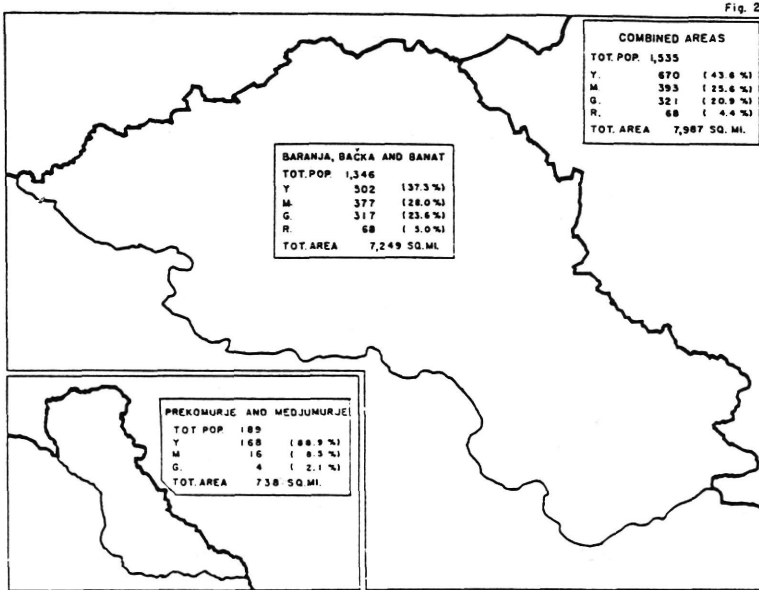


Figure 1  
PRE-MUNICH FRONTIERS

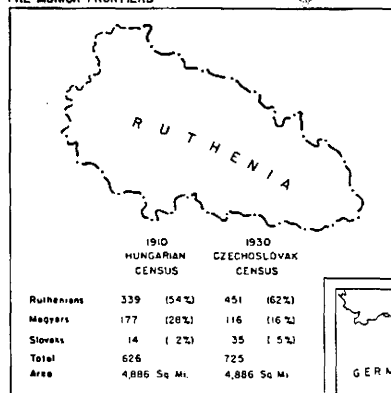
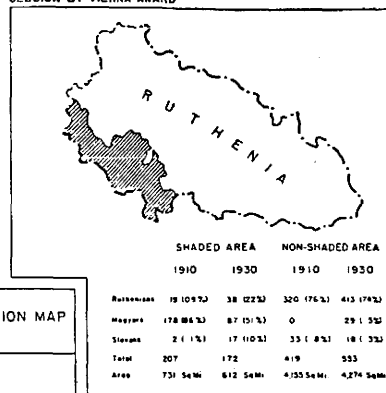


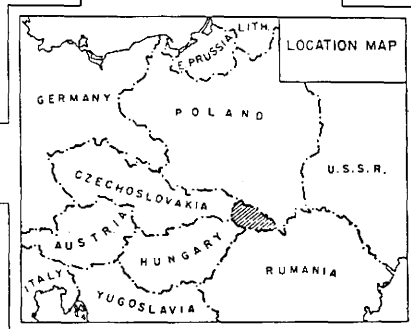
Figure 2  
CESSION BY VIENNA AWARD



	SHADED AREA		NON-SHADED AREA	
	1910	1930	1910	1930
Ruthenians	9 (10%)	30 (33%)	330 (82%)	421 (65%)
Magyars	78 (86%)	55 (59%)	99 (18%)	63 (10%)
Slovaks	0	4 (4%)	14 (3%)	31 (5%)
Total	89	90	537	635
Area	535 Sq. Mi.		4,331 Sq. Mi.	



Figure 3



	SHADED AREA		NON-SHADED AREA	
	1910	1930	1910	1930
Ruthenians	11 (5%)	4 (8%)	338 (86%)	447 (63%)
Magyars	17 (80%)	15 (71%)	163 (26%)	111 (16%)
Slovaks	0	2 (10%)	14 (2%)	35 (5%)
Total	19	21	607	704
Area	125 Sq. Mi.		4,781 Sq. Mi.	



Figure 4

Map 5. Subcarpathian-Ruthenian-Hungarian frontier  
Population in thousands



**BANDITS, HEROES, THE HONEST AND THE MISLED:  
EXPLORING THE POLITICS OF REPRESENTATION  
IN THE HUNGARIAN UPRISING OF 1956**

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USA

Introduction reflecting on this conference dedicated, as it was, to stock-taking the recent developments and possible future trends in Cultural Studies – a politically committed, activist mode of theorizing broad cultural and social issues – I sensed that the current Eastern-European metamorphoses had relatively scarce manifest impact on the intellectual agenda or even on the intellectual atmosphere of the event. To put it in another way, I sensed a curious tension in the conference constituted by the ‘said’ and the ‘not-said’. Stuart Hall talked about the imperative of cultural theory to come to terms with what he described as ‘a series of new times’ and ‘new conjunctures’; about the need to revise paradigms of the past which these ‘new times’ have ‘thrown open to inspection’. Even if my reading is not congruent with his intended meaning (which I hope is not the case), I regarded his statement as a reference to the Eastern-European ‘Other’, which, though not for the first time but perhaps more radically than ever before, has been urging Western Marxists and other leftists to re-theorize their positions. Apart from a few other isolated remarks concerning particular aspects of Eastern-European societies, little else was said on this subject. Since the theoretical framework of Cultural Studies was developed in Western Europe and North America, it is natural that its primary focus has been advanced capitalist society. Additionally, because of the presence and impact of anthropology on this multi-disciplinary inquiry into cultures and – not unrelated to this –, the political pull of the so called Third World, Cultural Studies have had a lot to say on the dominated or colonized ‘Other’ as well, on the cultural interaction between capitalist and traditional societies. It is all the more interesting how those societies which up to quite recently had been the site of what was called ‘existing socialism’ are left virtually unexplored by Cultural Studies. I have wondered whether this apparent lack of interest might be due to western leftists’ ambivalence towards these societies perceived as sites of a compromised, abused and now eventually defeated utopia? Could there have been a fear that a critical stance towards these political systems (while they were still socialist) would threaten the

distinctive political edge of Cultural Studies and western leftism in general, vis-a-vis the 'mainstream' dominant discourse on socialism in their own society? Whatever inhibitions constituted the so called Second World as a virtually blank space, it is obvious that fundamental contributions to cultural studies related to this part of the world should primarily come from researchers located in Eastern and Central-Europe. The Hungarian revolution of 1956 is an event of special significance not only for Hungarians, who have recently elevated it to the rank of a national holiday, but also for the western socialist and communist movements. Referring once again to Stuart Hall's talk at the conference, 1956 Budapest marked the beginning of the disintegration of Marxist theory and, as well-known, the beginning of a crisis within the international Labor movement. In contemporary Hungarian historical consciousness the predominant meaning of the revolt is somewhat differently inflected. Rather than signifying crisis and breach, it enjoys moral approval as an act of resistance and defiance against an oppressive tyrannical order. The present paper is an attempt to capture the initial discursive construction of the uprising in the public political domain.

### From 1956 to 1989

We must be ready to receive every moment of discourse in its sudden irruption; in that punctuality in which it appears, and in that temporal dispersion that enables it to be repeated, known, forgotten, transformed, utterly erased, and hidden, far from all view, in the dust of books. (M. Foucault)

The timeliness of a close investigation of the Hungarian national uprising of 1956 is evidenced by its recent official reevaluation. It does not seem unnatural that a new regime, which came to power as a result of free elections early this year, (in April 1990), would rewrite national history and its special events. The reassessment of 1956, however, had been initiated by Imre Pozsgay, an eminent reformist within the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (at the time a state-party) a year before. To the astonishment of many of his comrades, Mr. Pozsgay proposed to qualify the 1956 events as a 'national uprising', thus dismissing the officially still effective label of 'counterrevolution' expressing the political views, sentiments and interests of an ever shrinking minority of communists, who had been rapidly losing political control even inside of the Communist Party. A set of significant events inevitably followed from the renaming of what in colloquial speech had been merely referred to as 'fifty-six'. The oppositional parties demanded that

October 23rd, the initial day of the uprising be commemorated as a red-letter day (paid holiday) and replace the imposed-upon celebration of another October Revolution, the one which had brought about the first socialist society in Russia in 1917. The leading figure of the 1956 events, Prime Minister Imre Nagy came to be rehabilitated. Imre Nagy was himself a Communist leader whose political orientation would classify him a reformist in our days. However, in the early 1950s, during the Rákosi era<sup>1</sup> he was pushed aside with the less benign label "revisionist" and was even excluded temporarily from the Communist Party. As the revolution commenced, however, there was a massive pressure to appoint him Head of the Government. He enjoyed the support not only of the revolutionary crowds but apparently that of the Hungarian and even the Soviet Communist Parties (Kopácsi, 1986). Nevertheless, two years after defeat of the revolt, Imre Nagy was executed as a result of a death sentence brought at a secret trial. Together with hundreds of predominantly rank-and-file participants, he came to be buried in an unsigned mass prison graveyard. In her study of the political culture of the French revolution, Lynn Hunt (1984:34–38) has discussed its successive stages in terms of theatrical genres. She has argued that comedy was followed by romance, which eventually grew into tragedy. Analogously, I would suggest that the Hungarian uprising conformed to the script of a tragedy. More particularly, the circumstances and the mode of Imre Nagy and his comrades' execution revived a theme known from ancient Greek tragedies. Sophocles' *Antigone* may come to one's mind, a piece in which the tyrant Creon forbids the protagonist to bury her father, a victim of Creon's lust for power.<sup>2</sup> No wonder that during the thirty-two years of the Kádár regime (1956–1988), the name of Prime Minister Imre Nagy was hardly ever mentioned, and his undignified death was known to, and remembered by, only a small politically active minority. However, as a doctrinaire Communist control over the definition of 1956 had been removed, a bewildering multiplicity of previously muted or suppressed voices came to be heard, literally, through the mass media as well as via the printed word. In the spring of 1989 the streets of Budapest were flooded by books – exhibited on temporary news stands –, great many of them dedicated to this subject. The releases included other 'classics' – previously on index – and more recent writings; local and foreign publications; memoirs and archival materials, facsimile re-issues of contemporary newspapers and so forth.<sup>3</sup> Imre Nagy and the politicians closest to him thus joined the lines of publicly recognized national heroes, a process culminating in a grandiose funeral ceremony where each of the several hundred victims of the post-revolutionary terror were individually commemorated. The extent to which definitions of the revolt affected the very basis of the political system is

indicated by the choice of the day of October 23 for the declaration of the Republic of Hungary. Substituting for the denomination People's Republic, a shorthand term for proletarian dictatorship, the new name signifies the restoration of pluralist democracy abandoned in 1948. The eventual acknowledgement of the 1956 events as a national democratic revolution was of great symbolic significance not only in shattering the old socio-political system but in establishing and cementing the one arising in its wake. As the rivalry between the major new parties grew into nasty confrontations, particularly during the election campaigns, it became imperative to emphasize images and events evoking a sense of unity and bond between as diverse political forces as represented by conservative Christian Democrats and Radical Liberals, Reform Communists and Peasant Smallholders. The memory of the revolt proved sufficiently powerful in the Hungarian collective consciousness to serve such a purpose. As a headline of a local daily paper has recently announced, '1956 is the grounding of our future'. The use of concepts 'revolution' versus 'counter-revolution' defining the nature of the revolt does not only signify opposing political interests, ideologies, sentiments, but also stand for competing narrative accounts of what actually took place between October 23rd and November 4th of that year. The conspiracy theory, which János Kádár resorted to in an attempt to legitimize his Soviet backed power, persisted in official political publications even as recently as 1986. Thus, for example, János Berecz's book (1986) issued on occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the event, attributed the uprising predominantly to the organized conspiracy of the inner and outer enemies comprising western imperialist and local fascist elements. Contrarily, most 'unofficial' accounts have emphasized the spontaneous character of the revolt. During the Kádár era the validity of the 'conspiracy-theory' could not overtly be challenged. Yet on the level of choice of words denoting 'fifty-six', an implicit debate and negotiation had been going on for a long time.<sup>4</sup> As a result, voices on both sides, adversaries and supporters of the revolt, tended to avoid names explicitly qualifying it. In the official domain the more neutral phrase 'tragic event of '56' was gradually replacing the term 'counterrevolution' connoting violent retaliations and the betrayal of the cause of independence. In other sites of public discourse, the term 'uprising' had gained legitimacy. Imre Pozsgay's proposal of 'popular uprising', denoting a cautious acknowledgement of a rightful cause, aimed at creating an alliance between those more or less reform minded communists who had feared or refused to name 'fifty-six' a revolution or a freedom fight, and those diverse, increasingly visible political groups who have been struggling for the sanctification of this event.

### Discourses of oppression and liberation and the French revolutionary tradition

The debate over the name and the meaning of the October events did not start after the revolt had been put down. From the very first sign of civil unrest, the contest of diverse political forces over the definition of the participants' political goals and actions was apparent. This contest was not merely running parallel to, or reflecting the events. The interpretations and reinterpretations of what was taking place seem to be integral and directly relevant to the revolutionary process as a whole. In attaching special significance to revolutionary rhetoric, to speaking and naming, I am drawing on Lynn Hunt's aforementioned discussion of the political culture of the French revolution. Hunt has been interested 'in the logic of political action as it was expressed symbolically', in the ways people 'put the Revolution and themselves as revolutionaries into images and gestures' (*ibid.* p. 14). Symbolic practices, including rhetoric speech, have been seen by her not as epiphenomenal to non-linguistically constituted realities. Hunt has viewed them as practices shaping the actors' consciousness and their resulting intentions, interests and activities. This methodology shares its basic assumptions with constitutive theories of human activity in treating language as an active political force (for an overview of constitutive theory, see Mehan et al. 1990). However, the specific relevance of Hunt's study for my present investigation lies in her application of post-structuralist theories to revolutionary discourse. Hunt has contended that the very concepts of modern politics and ideology were forged by the French revolutionaries in the sense that they 'managed to invest these concepts with extraordinary emotional and symbolic significance' (*ibid.* pp. 2–3). Extending this line of thought I would like to argue that public discourse in modern non-democratic and non-pluralistic political contexts – exemplified by any unitary language, revolutionary and totalitarian alike – follows distinctive rules. First of all, the relative significance of discursive practices vis-a-vis non-linguistic/non-symbolic ones is greatly enhanced. In other words, representation assumes an unproportionate amount of autonomy in relation to social praxis. As Hunt has observed, 'the crumbling of the French state let loose a deluge of words,' to make talk the 'order of the day' (*ibid.* pp. 19–20). However, as Francois Furet has emphasized, 'speech substitutes itself for the power' and 'the semiotic circuit is the absolute master of politics'. This is explained by the disruption of what he has considered 'the normal relationship between society and politics'. Therefore, according to the logic of this argument, 'politics becomes a struggle for the right to speak on behalf of the Nation. Language becomes an expression of power, and power is expressed by the right to speak for people' (quoted by Hunt, *ibid.* p. 23).

The French revolution has, in my view, established a double-faced tradition. In its struggle against royal tyranny and its fervor to establish civil rights and bourgeois freedoms, the revolution showed its liberatory and democratic face. On the other hand, as the process of radicalization moved – to borrow Hunt's metaphors – from comedy and romance towards tragedy, a distinctly different face, an increasingly oppressive one made itself visible. With its paranoid obsession to detect conspiracy; with the elevation of denunciation of civil duty, as well as with its repeated re-writings of history, the Terror laid the grounds for twentieth century totalitarian political systems. Typically, in admitting to their indebtedness to the French example, revolutionary movements tacitly identify it with its liberationist face. Hungarians acted so in 1848 for the first time, struggling for bourgeois democracy and national sovereignty. In 1956, because some of the most crucial of those 19th century demands had not been met (civil rights) or became topical once again (national sovereignty), the French revolution became once again an empowering model to follow. The inclusion of the Marseilles among the revolutionary musical repertory indicated how the liberationist ethos of that tradition helped shape a new collective consciousness.

In my close analysis of the Hungarian Radio's broadcast programs I am attempting to trace and identify elements of two modes of discourse viewed as constituting as well as articulating the two facets of the revolutionary tradition: a liberationist/democratic one and an oppressive/terroristic one. Ironically, in Hungary of the mid-1950s, the liberationist efforts – as part of the broader process of de-Stalinization throughout Eastern Europe – were being directed at transforming a system that had perceived itself as revolutionary. Hence, the controversy over designating the revolt as revolutionary versus counterrevolutionary. The spokesmen of the Stalinist regime were bound to speak the language of terror, even under the radically changed circumstances of the uprising. Instead of the passive or compliant acceptance, typical for the times of uncontested domination, their rhetoric was now received as provocative and prompted violent forms of resistance as well as opposing accounts of reality. The revolutionary voices spoke diverse dialects of what I will call 'liberationist' language. Although feeding on national historical traditions of liberation movements, the unity of this discourse was extremely precarious for having been based upon very different understandings of democracy, freedom and 'Hungarianness'. The relative strength of this popular alliance was ensured and enhanced by the anti-Soviet theme, dramatically foregrounded throughout the course of the events, due to the initial intervention of the Red Army, their unceasing presence, and the threat of a total invasion. It is important to note, however, that individual voices representing particular social groups, political

forces or institutions cannot be neatly classified along the variable of 'liberationist' versus 'terroristic'. Firstly, as I have tried to point out, both modes of discourse were of totalizing character in the sense of claiming to represent the whole nation. This involved the predominance of a dichotomous value system, a black-and-white world-view underlying meaning construction. Certain inflections of the national theme, in particular, which had started as part of liberationist discourse, assumed elements of terroristic rhetoric. Speakers of the Stalinist status quo, on the other hand, attempted to coopt the 'liberators' nationalistic rhetoric. It follows that liberationist and terroristic modes of expression were not fixed with particular ideologies. The diverse articulations and elaborations of central concepts and themes such as national independence and unity or the democratic renewal of socialism involved a constant flux of value-emphases and incessantly changing accents and refractions of meanings. Additionally, acts of genuine conversion were also the order of the day. This can be captured in the extremely dynamic formations and re-formations of what may be called discursive alliances. Following Foucault's idea of the unities of discourse (1969), I view these alliances as carriers of relations that are not arbitrarily imposed, yet tend to remain invisible for conventional political analyses operating with pre-given categories. What themes and issues defined the formation and rearticulation of discursive alliances? How were particular political goals translated into revolutionary rhetoric? How did the revolution create its own myth and what kind of myths did it feed on? Before attempting to answer these questions, I need to discuss the special role of the Hungarian Radio as a preeminent site of public political struggle during the revolt.

### **Radio, action and discourse**

During the 1950s in Hungary, the radio was the only electronic mass medium and, as a state monopoly, it functioned primarily as a political institution. Therefore, the struggle for the control of the Radio was of great symbolic and strategic importance. How crucial the mass media had become for totalitarian systems was first remarked upon by Horkheimer and Adorno (1972:159) arguing that the wireless was as instrumental to the National Socialists' cause in Nazi Germany as the printing press to the Reformation. A tragic dimension was added to the liberationist struggle to abolish the Stalinist monopoly of this medium by the fact that the incident around the Radio building on October 23rd served as a spark in turning the peaceful and

disciplined demonstration, led by the students, into an armed confrontation. The students, having listed a set of demands of the Government, marched to the premises in the hope that these would be broadcast. Instead, they found themselves intimidated by the arms of the Secret Police (Kopácsi, *op.cit.*). Their demands addressed, among others, such civil rights issues as the freedom of speech (Fabó, 1957:12). It took another week for the rioters to liberate the Radio, which signalled not only the elimination of the Communist Party's censorship, but also the expulsion of Stalinist voices from the Radio personnel. Attempts were made to establish the guidelines for a new democratic broadcast policy (Nagy, 1984). Radio Kossuth marked its renewal by inserting the distinctive 'free' into its name. From the start, however, the Radio assumed a direct and active political role, unusual in times of peace and order. Due to the permanent flux on the top echelons of the Communist Party and the Government, the Radio served as a loudspeaker for the leaders to address the 'people out there'. These speeches and the various public notices – threats, promises, warnings – had a special urgency with their intent to directly interfere with the armed fights. In a sense, the Radio belonged to the community of the nation – not because it was to be used by anyone or everyone, but because it addressed people as members of a collective rather than casual listeners. From time to time, in order to address the fighters directly and immediately, listeners were requested to place their sets out in the windows. This act spatially reinforced a specific communicational arrangement whereby the atomized individual households or families, typical contexts for radio use, were dissolved into one undivided space. In this sense, the radio with its modified purpose may have helped shape a new kind of collectivity with a special force. The frequently recurring metaphors for the nation as 'family' or a 'wounded body'; or the description of the armed clashes as 'fratricide' thus may have grown closer to people's lived experiences than in pre-modern eras, when communications technology was not essential to political life. With all its preeminent role, the Radio did not represent the public discourse of the revolt in its entirety. The most extremist voices speaking the brutal language of revenge and lynching, anti-Semitism and chauvinism, did not make it to the studio. Certainly, accounts of those bound to perceive the events as counterrevolution, exaggerated the presence of right wing extremism. Nonetheless, the repeated appeals by respectable personalities to the public to preserve their sobriety and restrain from the lynch-law indicates the existence of a revolutionary underworld (Fabó, *op.cit.*).



### **Discursive alliances at the beginning of the revolutionary process**

This afternoon an enormous youth demonstration took place in our capital. Perhaps you, Hungarians living abroad will be surprised to hear this piece of news. We, the witnesses of this wonderful ferment, having manifested itself in passionate assemblies and newspaper articles over the past few weeks, have been expecting it to happen. (Fabó: 15)

The enthusiastic and sympathetic report portrayed the youth's symbolic evocation of the War of Independence of 1848 by reference to their songs, national banners, cockades and emblems. It further recounted their demands, which addressed a range of political and economic issues. All this was located in the context of the past few years' democratic movement aiming to 'purify' the 'sacred ideals of socialism' from the 'sins' attributed to the Hungarian Communist Party leaders. The emergence of this voice was significant in that it conveyed the political and moral concerns and passion of the university students and the intellectuals, initiators of the revolution. In identifying himself with the demonstrators, the radio reporter assumed the historically informed rhetoric of the revolution in emphasizing its central symbols and metaphors in statements like 'Budapest celebrating a new March 15th in the October spring'.<sup>5</sup> The report was aired on Radio Freedom, a state-run station airing programs for Hungarians abroad. Half an hour later, the First Secretary of the Communist Party (named Hungarian Workers' Party and abbreviated HWP) Ernő Gerő delivered a speech denouncing the youth's movement as 'poisoned by chauvinism' and 'reactionary'. In a similar vein, he condemned their manifesto's call for pluralism and civil rights for allegedly pointing to bourgeois rather than socialist democracy (Fabó: 16-18). These two voices set the tone for the confrontation and negotiation taking place between two discursive alliances during the initial stage of the uprising: one comprising predominantly socialist reformist 'liberators' empowered by a particular reading of national history; the other representing the Stalinist ruling elite. This tone radically altered as the Stalinists and subsequently the communists in general were losing ground. Already months prior to the outbreak of the revolt a relative tolerance for different, though not openly contesting voices characterized the Radio's broadcast policy (Scarlett, 1980: 31). It is worth noting that the youth demonstration itself was officially approved by the Minister of Interior. Nevertheless, until they were removed, the Radio Party leadership had exercised overall control in setting the agenda and providing the definitive interpretations for the actual situation. The representation of active political forces was distorted and censorship was in effect. The chronicling of the events blatantly contradicted many observers' and participants' experiences. Alternative accounts, which I will discuss later in this paper, surfaced only after

successive changes had taken place in the composition of the Party administration and the Government. The distinction which I have suggested between the liberationist and the terroristic mode of language is based upon their contrasting statements in attempting to make sense of what was actually happening, as well as on the different style and nature of their rhetoric. I will attempt to capture these differences in three closely interrelated areas of debate: a) the definitions of the actions and the identity of the actors as to their socio-political status, interests and intentions; b) the general moral/cultural frame underlying the fight between opposing political forces for the meaning of such quasi-religious notions as 'honesty', 'sin', 'sacredness', 'pollution' and 'purification', and c) the 'national issue' where differing constructs of patriotism and forms of national historical consciousness were set against one another. Who were the revolutionary actors and in what activities were they involved? The struggle on this issue between the 'liberationists' and the Stalinist rulers had started before the demonstration had turned into a bloody conflict. What the radio report described as 'wonderful ferment' (Fabó:15) was referred to by the Party Secretary Gerő as 'evil nationalist poisoning' (Fabó:18). The two texts suggested incompatible concepts of national history and identity. As I have argued, the reporter drew on the ethos of 1848 so as to promote a sense of unity through reviving and reliving history.<sup>6</sup> In contrast to this, Gerő implicitly identified Hungarian history with that of the local communist movement, even though it had represented a rather inconsequential political force until the end of WW2:

We, communists are Hungarian patriots. We were patriots in the prisons of Horthy-fascism<sup>7</sup> during the hard decades of illegality... (Fabó:17)

Both voices foregrounded the youth as centers of the present movement. Whereas the reporter projected an image of them modeled after the legendary revolutionary youth of 1848, celebrated by successive generations, Gerő claimed that these young people were merely acting under the influence of certain inimical forces. The sinister abstractness of the phrase 'enemies of our people' (Fabó:17) curiously contrasted with the radio report's empirical everyday concreteness in depicting the actual adherents of social and political change. Speakers of totalitarian and terroristic discourse typically employ abstract sociological categories or labels to refer to social subjects ('working class', 'peasantry', 'intelligentsia', 'imperialists', enemy of the people'). As opposed to this, the reporter substituted a spontaneous classification for the established one and that was based upon demographic, occupational and situational roles – all to the overall effect of articulating, and at the same time,

promoting an emerging collective identity. Naming the actors as 'young workers, pedestrians, soldiers, old people, high school students, conductors' suggested a diversity in a developing unity of action (Fabó:16). The following morning the Hungarian Cabinet announced to radio listeners that 'fascist reactionary elements' had launched an armed attack against what was referred to as 'our public buildings' and 'our armed forces' (Fabó:21). The voice of the Ministry of Interior spoke about 'looting counterrevolutionary groups' (*ibid.*). Many more notices reported on the outbreak of the revolt in a similarly terroristic manner. Significantly, the act of taking up arms against the establishment earned the insurgents not only the nastiest political label available in the existing vocabulary ('fascists'), but also the stigma of ordinary criminals attached to it. 'Counterrevolutionary bandits', 'hordes' etc. were accused of murdering 'ordinary citizens, soldiers and secret policemen' (Fabó:22). Through this minor manipulation of facts – arranging the classes of victims in a particular order –, the official voice suggested nothing less than the fighters were mindless killers. Additionally, the defeat of the 'counter-revolution' was declared to be the sacred goal of the nation and 'every honest Hungarian worker' was summoned to condemn the 'bloody ravage' (*ibid.*). This mode of criminalizing political adversaries and commanding unconditional loyalty on a moral basis remained a decisive feature of terroristic discourse, despite its subsequent re-adjustments. October 24th witnessed important personnel changes in the State and Party apparatus. Imre Nagy became appointed to the post of Prime Minister and called back to the membership of the Central Committee with a few other previously silenced and persecuted Party leaders. Nagy proclaimed the institution of summary justice for the fighters, but the deadline of granting amnesty to those unwilling to lay their arms had to be repeatedly extended. A communicational rearrangement occurred when radio listeners were requested to place their sets out in the windows so that fighters could be called on directly to end the shootings. This was a remarkable turn in that revolutionaries, up to then stigmatized as criminals and enemies, came to be acknowledged and addressed as members of the body social. From that moment onwards, the Radio was exploited by the power elite as a major tool of negotiation with the insurgents. Rather than calming down, the fighting became ever more intense. The intervention of the Soviet Red Army troops, unexpected and incomprehensible even for some members of the ruling elite, prompted many to take sides with the revolutionaries, including entire units of the Budapest Police and the Army (Kopácsi, *op.cit.*). Official public notices displayed signs of pressure to recognize elements other than 'counterrevolutionary' such as 'drifting and misled young people'. This ideological concession was compelled by the Party and Government's

immediate need to exert influence on the armed masses and have them surrender by means of persuasion. Imre Nagy's speech later during the day added a respectable voice of support to the uprising. Firstly, his informal and inclusive mode of address made no distinction between the fighters and the general public: 'People of Budapest' were meant to include the insurgents as part of the city's community. Secondly, while rhetorically constructing this unity, he claimed to be part of it rather than distancing himself as a leader. Thirdly, for the first time, the complexities of the situation were addressed by way of distinguishing between three groups of revolutionaries: the young 'peaceful demonstrators', the 'good-willed workers' and some unspecified 'hostile elements'. Although qualifying the workers as 'good-willed' was not exempt from a tint of condescension, Nagy no longer used the omniscient terroristic language of the Party elite. Lastly, the Prime Minister refused to condemn the revolt by labelling it; he simply referred to it as the 'fight'. This speech made a shift towards redefining the Stalinist rulers' agenda. Despite his call for reconciliation and peace, Nagy's idea of restoring order was proposed as a means rather than an end in itself. He saw it as a precondition of carrying out what he called 'our sacred national program', one of consistent democratization in every domain of the political and economic life – a program he had proposed as early as 1953. By transferring sacrality from the Party's objective of merely restoring order, the Prime Minister made a political as well as a moral commitment for social change. A believer in peaceful reforms, Nagy regarded the armed confrontation as a moral threat:

... we must not allow that blood pollute our sacred national program. (Fabó: 23)

The Communist Party's hard-liners applied various discursive strategies to enhance their communicative efficacy and regain control. Firstly, they appropriated certain elements from Nagy's speech, for example in making clear distinction between the students' demonstration and the activities of hostile forces who were persistently designated as 'robbers', 'murderers' and 'counter-revolutionary bandits' (Fabó: 24–29). Secondly, they coopted a nationalist style of rhetoric removed from the cause of sovereignty. The Hungarian Popular Front, a mouthpiece of the Party, for example, crowded its text with the adjective 'Hungarian' ('shed Hungarian blood', 'Hungarian future') to appeal to as broad masses as possible. It subverted itself, however, due to the contradiction inherent in the right wing fascistic connotations of its phrasings and the left wing extremism carried by two elements of the text: the brutal, derogatory language decrying the 'provocateurs' and the de-historicized concept of national identity. As exemplified by Gerő's speech, this mode of

de-historicized discourse carried with it the assumption that the existence of the country was entirely a communist accomplishment.<sup>8</sup> As a result of confusing the Hungarian people's interests and history with those of the Party, the insurgents emerged in this construct as a threat, not to the regime but to the survival of the nation as a whole (Fabó:34). Thirdly, the Party targeted specific segments of the population via pseudo-autonomous organizations controlled by itself. The address of the National Council of Hungarian Women represented perhaps the most militant and aggressive version of terroristic speech (Fabó:24). Apart from indiscriminately labelling the fighters as 'murderous provocateurs', 'slanderers' and 'liars', the short notice was packed with threats and commands. Like the appeal of the Popular Front, this rhetoric was also bound to fail. The very idea of calling on women to hold back their relatives from street battles was to appeal to women's assumed domesticity and instinctive rejection of violence. The militant tone undermined the effectiveness of such a strategy, which was, by the way, out of line with the communist ideology of women's emancipation. The National Peace Council issued a similar notice appealing to women's traditional roles and attitudes, but now in a sentimental redressing: 'Wives, mothers, Hungarian women!... Wives, mothers! You must know what the blessings of peace are. Help so that bloodshed be ended...' (Fabó:25)

A fourth discursive strategy on the part of the Radio Party leadership consisted in publishing a host of telegrams reportedly received from work collectives and student committees. These texts displayed a striking uniformity in content and style. The recurring motifs included the condemnation of the 'counterrevolutionary provocation'; greetings for the newly elected Central Committee of the HWP and the Prime Minister; the approval of his program of renewal; lastly, the assurance of the State and Party leaders of the collective's loyalty and trust for them. It would be difficult to detect the authors of these telegrams. Interesting to note, nonetheless, that they were aired in quick response to the Party's official call to 'every honest worker' to 'condemn the bloody ravage of the counterrevolutionary gangs'. This leaves scarcely any doubt as to the pre-existence of a script, after which these standardized texts were modeled, presumably by low-level Party committees, on behalf of particular communities, which were apparently excluded from the process. The desired consensus was thus translated by the Party into fiction, into a simulacrum of political representation. Broadcasting these telegrams epitomized how far the world of public discourse had been detached from the world of experiential realities, and yet invading it. The terroristic politics of representation tended to reduce people into passive characters, if not puppets, of a very real script, written by distant authors according to inscrutable rules. This voluntaristic political practice – one which deliberately confuses a desired

state of affairs with the actual one – is seldom effective in molding people's perceptions and judgements of reality, but it is definitely self-defeating when discourse is not monopolized by one speaker. The credibility of the telegrams was seriously undermined by more balanced accounts. One of these, the Journalists' National Association argued for a massive working-class participation in the revolt. Rather than finding excuse for them for having been 'misled', the journalists claimed that their struggle was 'just and perfectly justified' (Fábó:31). With this reading of the uprising, however, the Association's aim was to make a more powerful case against the perceived minority of 'hostile provocateurs' disrupting the revolutionary process. For, at this point, the Stalinist and the 'liberationist' speakers did not merely compete for the discursive control of the situation, but also shared some common goals resulting from apprehension and fear as to where all the fighting would lead to; how far the right wing forces would push the angered masses. To put an end to the combats was seen by both groups as the most important immediate goal. The appointment of Imre Nagy and the formation of a new Government must have felt a disturbing concession for the Stalinist elite and an encouraging prospect for future change in the eyes of the intellectuals and the students. Contrarily, the masses of workers, especially in the countryside, were less trustful and tended to see Nagy as 'just another Communist' who could only deserve credit by ridding his Government of its predominantly compromised personnel and shake off Soviet domination. Therefore, the discursive construction of Imre Nagy by 'terrorist' and 'liberationist' speakers alike as a wise ruler capable to restore order expressed a shared interest of speakers having access to the Radio. The difference between the two political forces lay in their differing motivation of supporting him. The Stalinist elite adhered to him for strategic reasons, while the democratic reformers promoted the image of a trustworthy leader out of genuine conviction. Transferring the leading role of administration to Nagy, however, involved shifting the center of power from the Party to the Government. In fact, this was compelled by the Party's acute crisis of legitimation. The unpopular First Secretary Gerő resigned (and escaped to the Soviet Union) to be replaced by János Kádár, who attempted a cautious departure from the Stalinistic agenda.

### **Purity, unity and the rhetoric of the national democratic revolution**

On October 25th an abrupt change occurred in the general tone of the Radio. At this point, the Radio seemed to get into the very center of the revolutionary process. The communique issued on Kádár's appointment to the post of First Secretary was repeatedly broadcast and followed by a call

addressing 'Hungarians' to celebrate and put out national flags. They were summoned to return to their homes and workplaces from street demonstrations. Reports were subsequently aired on people's ecstatic mood as they were hooraying, kissing and embracing in the streets. The national Anthem and the Marseilles were played. Broadcasters created the impression of the revolt having arrived at a turning point, if not at victory. Without relying on other sources, it is difficult to unravel whether these reports were edited and orchestrated rather than reflecting people's mood. In any case, the program served to introduce and accentuate Kádár's and Nagy's upcoming speeches. Keen to adjust himself to the 'liberationist' or 'national democratic' mode of rhetoric, by now the dominant one, the First Secretary of the Party seemed desperate to formulate a differentiated and balanced account of the past few days' events. To abandon the overall derogatory tone of his predecessor, at the same time expressing his serious reservations about the politics of the movement as a whole, seemed like dancing on a tight-rope:

The demonstration – honest as to most of its goals, – in which part of our youth was involved in; a demonstration starting out peacefully degenerated, in a matter of hours, into an armed revolt against the state power of the People's Democracy – according to the intentions of counterrevolutionary elements, enemies of our people. (Fabó:56)

For Kádár, the People's Democracy, that is, the monopolistic Party rule 'remains and must remain sacred' (*ibid.*). To support this claim, he gave a twist to the notion of 'liberation' as understood by forces supporting Imre Nagy. It was the socialist dictatorship which Kádár saw as the guarantee of freedom from the 'old yoke', a popular communist metaphor for the semi-feudal capitalist system characterizing Hungary during the pre-WW2 era. Contrarily, the Prime Minister shifted the accent from the counterrevolutionary elements to the workers and justified their participation by contextualizing it:

A small number of counterrevolutionary instigators launched an armed attack against the order of our People's Democracy. They enjoyed the partial support of the workers of Budapest, who had been desperate over the prevailing conditions in our country. This desperation was aggravated by the severe political and economic mistakes committed in the past, the redemption of which should be an imperative both regarding the country's situation and the general wish of the people. (Fabó:56)

Such a portrayal of the process did not only invalidate the Communist Party's 'theory of deception', which had denied coherence and meaning to the mass' activities, but established an obvious causality between the destructive political practices of the regime and the revolution. The crucial moment of the

speech, however, was Nagy's promise to start negotiations with the Soviet Union on the withdrawal of their troops from Hungarian territories. Embracing the theme of independence, eventually leading him to declare Hungary's neutrality at the United Nations, earned Imre Nagy a genuine mass following. This manifested itself in his ability to terminate the combats by the last days of October. With the Stalinist voices suppressed, the Radio reflected as well as helped shape a democratically organized national unity across the multiplicity of voices now demanding to be heard. A host of new organizations erupted nationwide on grass-roots level such as workers' councils, various national and youth guards, committees etc. Political parties, churches, professional associations, silenced and banned since the communist takeover in 1948, re-emerged to welcome and influence the revolutionary proceedings according to their widely differing political visions. Organs up to then controlled by the Stalinists like the Radio itself or the Communist Party's daily, the 'Szabad Nép' (Free People) etc. aligned themselves behind the country's new leaders. Purges began in order to replace compromised figures holding key positions. The revolution started to weave its own myth. The unity and power of it originated from a variety of sources. It was increasingly drawing on the national historical mythology but also on the day-to-day expressions of international solidarity. On the negative side, it also gained strength from an acute sense of being threatened and from the painful awareness of lost lives sacrificed in the fighting. Although endangered by its own excesses (purges, lynch-law, anti-Semitism), the uprising was acquiring a certain tragic dignity. Many of those initially protesting against the Stalinist/terroristic misrepresentation of the revolt were now concerned to retain and discursively elaborate this sense of dignity, or, with their own words, the 'purity of the revolution'. Naming and re-naming remained central throughout the twelve days of the uprising. At this stage redefinitions were vital to the moral dignity and political self-perception of the revolutionary participants. It was a kind of meta-discourse discrediting the claims made by the spokesmen of the defeated regime in earlier broadcastings. Re-inscribing the 'story' by challenging the crude or condescending clichés imputed by them had a number of motives. First, it may have been an instinctive gesture of self-defence. People had been conditioned during the Rákosi-era to fear imposed upon political labels ('kulák', 'imperialist agent' etc.) because of their arbitrariness and fatal consequences. Attributing counterrevolutionary intentions to anyone implied a death sentence – which were actually produced on mass scale during the post-revolutionary terror. Additionally, people must have felt a genuine desire to restore the disturbed relations between what constituted their sense of truth based upon the experiential reality and the official representations of reality. Label-like categories, as I argued earlier in this paper, were connected with particular, in many



cases fabricated, narratives. The editorial of 'Szabad Nép' (October 28th) read out on the Radio provided the first passionate and eloquent defence of the insurgents and their cause:

We disagree with those globally evaluating the events of the past few days as a counterrevolutionary and fascistic coup attempt. (...) The uprising started with the rallies of the college youth. Yet it would be a grave mistake to view them as expressions of merely a youth movement. The young people of Budapest articulated the sentiments and noble passions to be found in the hearts of the people as a whole. At last, we must recognize that in our country a great national democratic movement has evolved embracing and uniting the whole nation (...) Especially later in the afternoon, some dissonant voices joined the demonstration whose demands no longer related to socialist democracy. It must be noted that at this stage, a number of students undertook to convince the blinded and the extremist elements that the struggle was being carried for socialist democracy and not against the social order. (Fabó:89)

By voicing the participants' viewpoints and motives, marginalized up to then, the author suggested a narrative of the proceedings of the first day dissimilar from the 'terroristic' accounts. With respect to the explosive moment of the revolution, the journalist emphasized the role of the First Secretary Gerő's speech, which, in displaying unresponsiveness towards the revolutionary demands, caused considerable disappointment among the public. A new aspect of the 'story' was thus uncovered, namely, the Party leaders' accountability in letting the demonstration grow into armed clashes:

By then the street atmosphere had been extremely tense. At various points of the city shootings began. Let me add that even during the second and third days protesters marched in front of public buildings with slogans such as 'Independence! Freedom! We are no fascists!' (*ibid.*)

The indiscriminate imposition of the 'fascist' label in 'terroristic' speech – even though in some cases derived from a genuine dread – had served to create a sense of hideous threat. In contrast, simultaneous charges of petty burglary had set an equally dishonoring tone of mockery and despise for the insurgents. In order to purify the revolutionary actors from such accusations, the journalist recalled the sight of untouched goods behind broken shop-windows: a favored and lasting image signifying '56 as a 'moral revolution'. Certain words and metaphors, increasingly solemn and religion-based, such as 'purity', 'blood', 'brotherhood', 'sanctity', 'sin', 'sacrifice', 'conversion', 'resurrection' etc. flooded the public rhetoric. In the discursive construction of the youth, as leaders of the democratic movement and fighters or even martyrs of the uprising, the road leading from 'purity' and 'honesty' to 'sanctity' was short. The

ideology of democratic renewal found a 'natural' symbol in them. As I have pointed out, onto this 'natural' symbolism was grafted an historical one, that relating to 1848 and its celebrated youth. As the writer Gyula Háty stated, this was the revolution of the young and those 'young in spirit' (Fabó: 57). In its repeated calls to end the fighting, the Government, too, appealed to the preciousness of young lives. Reformers emphasized the need of saving lives for the future to carry out the program of democratization. The nationalist argument was built upon the idea that Hungary as a small nation could not afford to waste her young in what was experienced as a 'fratricide'. Rhetoric notwithstanding, the confrontations lasted and many died. The tragic sense of lost lives became essential in the evolving myth of the revolution. And as the metaphor of 'family' for nation grew prevalent (even implicitly in the form of addressing the public as 'my Hungarian brothers'), biblical images of blood sacrifice – Christ and first-born sons – came to be evoked as well. The exalted atmosphere in which the young were glorified as heroes and saints of the uprising is tellingly illustrated by a piece of writing authored and read out by the ex-Stalinist poet Zoltán Zelk; in his tortured cry he addressed them to be granted absolution from his sins and a communion with them (Fabó: 131). The grief over the young people's death also prompted the rise of anti-communist terroristic voices calling for revenge. Such speeches, some of them occasioned by the Memorial Day funerals (commemorated in Hungary on November 1st), oddly mirrored – that is, echoed with reversed meanings – the Stalinist discourse with its name-calling and brutal language.<sup>9</sup> The revolution created new alliances and dissolved old ones. A great number of communists abandoned the old faith as the Party had cut off its own head – ever more intensely denounced as the 'evil' and 'sinful' Rákosi/Gerő clique. The new leaders' legitimacy of rule depended on what was seen as their 'honesty' and 'true Hungarianness'. The construction of Imre Nagy and, to a lesser degree, of János Kádár as trustworthy leaders is of interest not only for the role of rhetoric in soliciting popular support but also for the odd convergence of ethical and ethnic purity in public speech. Nagy had started to build his credibility as the focus of the democratic movement already back in 1953. Temporarily, he was excluded from the Party as a 'right wing revisionist'. Kádár had been jailed for some time during the early 1950s. The autobiographic moment of being victimized by the Rákosi regime had a key function in generating trust and loyalty for both leaders. In general, persecution provided the moral capital for many more newly appointed directors and secretaries in diverse political and cultural institutions. Obviously, the recurrent phrases of 'true Hungarian' or 'true patriot' communicated two things about the persons thus described: on one level it denoted moral integrity and a commitment to serve national interests against the Soviet Union; on another, it coded

ethnicity, and in the given context Hungarianness was invested with a special value in itself. To illuminate the complexities of this context, involving the relationship between ethnicity and political ideologies in 20th century Hungarian history, would lead me too far from my topic. Yet it is fair to say – even without discussing this issue to any depth – that a disproportionate number of Jews had served in the highest positions of the Communist Party. Therefore they were distrusted by certain groups of ethnic Hungarians as the importers of Soviet communism since the most prominent leaders had been exiled in the Soviet Union during the 1930s, and, indeed, they established socialism in Hungary after the Stalinist model and backed by their military presence. This historical fact proved to be sufficient for the survival, and even the re-invigoration of anti-Semitism, an inherited component of ardent nationalism since the early 20th century. The perception of Jews as aliens and agents of an alien power had barely been affected by other facts; a number of them turned the opponents and/or victims of the Rákosi regime, including followers of Imre Nagy (Judt, 1990). As I have argued, the Radio provided no access to overt anti-Semitic (neither to any chauvinist) propaganda during the uprising. It remained contained by the double entendre of nationalist rhetoric. Besides, or maybe due to, his ‘true Hungarianness’ – understood in this case as identifying completely with a particular historical and cultural tradition –, Imre Nagy was able to command a distinctive style of speech. First, as I argued earlier in this paper, he had the talent to address his public without the typical restraint and remoteness characteristic of other communist leaders. Second, he spoke the language of a historically grounded romantic nationalism, although without any recognizable anti-Semitic overtones. It was in his speeches that the interrelatedness of the three key issues: the self-definition of the revolutionary acts and actors; the ethos of the uprising (the ‘moral’ theme), and the historically located concept of national unity (the ‘national’ theme) can be identified in the most explicit form. In his oratory delivered on October 28th, these themes had cohered into something close to ‘master script’ of the revolution. The Prime Minister started off by setting up a three-layered temporal framework; the events of the ‘past week’ were placed in the perspective of the ‘past decade’; further, all of this he embedded in the context of ‘our one-thousand-year old history’ viewed as abounding in tragic blows. Thus a sense of continuity with the past was established; a past portrayed as a site and sequence of negative historical experience. The uprising, suggested to be unprecedented in its severity, appeared as both a disruption and a tragical climax in Hungary’s history. The evocation of the idea of the one-thousand-year old Hungary carried a great emotional weight for it had been deeply engrained in people’s minds by the pre-communist hegemonic ideologies. It conveyed a ‘structure of feelings’ vital to a tragic-heroic sense of national identity. Although the phrase had been overused and abused in

conservative rhetoric, in the given context, it was bound to resonate with the actual sentiments of diverse constituencies:

During the last week murderous events followed one another with tragic speed. It is the fatal consequences of the past decade's horrendous faults and sins that have surfaced in these misadventures which we are now witnessing and in which we are participating. In the course of our one-thousand-year old history our Fate has not spared our people from trials and tribulations. Yet a shock comparable to this one has ever befallen to our country... (Fabó:93)

Followed by this introduction, his denunciation of the views that had qualified the uprising as a counterrevolution sounded particularly sharp and emphatic. While acknowledging the presence of some criminal and reactionary forces – note his distinction –, Nagy asserted that in the fighting a 'national democratic movement' had developed 'with elementary force': one encompassing and uniting our whole people'. He distinctly established the Party rulers' moral and political responsibility not only in the growth of a democratic oppositional movement, but in the actual outbreak of the revolt. In appreciating the national unity produced by the revolutionary acts Nagy reinforced the historically based sense of collectivity to which he initially appealed. In this manner, he managed to discursively create the foundations of legitimacy for his new 'independent and socialist Government', proclaimed to serve as a 'genuine expression of the people's will'. (*ibid.*) Along with his radical political moves and gestures – the declaration of Hungary's neutrality, the institution of the multi-party system, the dissolution of the Secret Police (ÁVH), the encouragement of the workers' councils' activities etc. –, Imre Nagy's communicational skills may have had a profound effect on the growing cult surrounding him. Already during his life-time, he came to be elevated on the pedestal of a prophet:

He was the man who, harassed and stained, has always persisted with the Hungarian people's demands; even when the country's situation became truly severe (...), he assumed responsibility to lead the nation out of the catastrophe. (Fabó:118)

As is well-known, Imre Nagy eventually lost control over the course of events. On November 4th the Soviet authorities arrested him together with his Cabinet. Simultaneously, Kádár announced the establishment of the Hungarian Workers' and Peasants' Government. Historians may only speculate on the extent to which the utopia of an independent socialist democracy could have been upheld in case the revolution had survived. Yet despite its precarious political unity and its recognizable shift of accent from a socialistic democratic

towards a more conservative nationalist discourse, the revolution succeeded in creating an identity of its own. I have attempted to show how this identity was linguistically shaped by the acts of re-defining the very nature of the events and by producing and celebrating its heroes: its charismatic leader Imre Nagy and its martyrs, the youth.

### Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to investigate the discursive construction of the Hungarian revolt of '56 through the interaction and confrontation of diverse political forces as displayed by broadcast Radio, during the twelve days of the uprising. I was primarily interested in the process in which two distinct types of rhetoric – termed as 'terroristic' and 'liberationist' – attempted to take and keep control over the definition of the situation, that is, of the revolt itself. The struggle was initially constrained by the institutional arrangements characterizing totalitarian political systems. Although this system had had some cracks in it when the revolt broke out, public speech was barely open to contestation, not unlike the unitary belief-system which it articulated and attempted to shape. The discursive space of public life, the official domain, had been considerably detached from the non-public or non-official sphere, as well as from social praxis. Most of the official accounts of the proceedings of the revolution (including reports on people's responses to them) were voluntaristic and arbitrary, that is, constructed according to the dictates of pre-existing scripts or immediate tactical needs. Representation was typically perceived by the public as misrepresentation. Furthermore, this domain grew beyond its own 'normal' boundaries, not solely to mould but to overshadow or substitute for the world of everyday experience. In my analysis I have sought to point to the inflexibility and crudeness of the terroristic language. Those employing this language were not prepared to defend their validity claims when questioned by the opposition's own accounts of the revolt. They were no more prepared to integrate perspectives other than their own. That is how various speech elements taken over from the opposition rendered themselves so easily identifiable as coopted: neither did they accord with the basic ideological assumptions nor with the style of rhetoric typical of the Stalinists' scripts. The revolt of '56 may be regarded as a complex intertwined system of discourse and action. Paradoxically, the struggle to dominate representation was far too essential to have stayed within the confines of verbal contestation. From this point of view, it is of symbolical relevance that the list of revolutionary demands contained the demand of liberating speech. In other words, a principal

thrust of the uprising aimed at restoring a 'normal', interactive relationship between public and private discursive spaces, between representational practices and experience. The 'liberationist' voices, by virtue of their very presence, challenged the legitimacy of the whole system of public political discourse as best exemplified by such symbolic acts as the re-naming of the Radio Station or by announcing on October 28th: 'Today the papers already write the truth.' (Fabó: *op. cit.*) Owing to the fact that the right of speech had not been pre-given, much of the debate over the meaning of the events assumed the form of a meta-discourse: retrospectively, 'liberationists' discredited the claims made by the Stalinist speakers, who had been silenced by then. I would like to contend that this was primarily a counter discourse in that it tended to mirror the terroristic language. In re-inscribing the uprising, the insurgents employed the same moral and quasi-religious vocabulary as the Stalinist ruling elite. In fact, the debate implicated a struggle to relocate the 'sacred center' of the social system from the Party to the Nation – represented by the Government – and to invest notions of 'honesty', 'sin', 'stain', 'brotherhood' or 'patriotism' with new oppositional meaning. The concept of patriotism leads to the uses and meanings of history in the revolutionary practices of signification. Most interesting is the mode in which the cause of self-determination was linked to the celebration of the national past, and on the re-living of a particular chapter of it, the Independence War of 1848. As Martha Lampland (1986) has suggested, the insurgents spoke the 19th century language of their predecessors and revived a whole symbolic system (names, emblems, cockades, forms of manifesto etc.) attached to that revolution. The everyday language spontaneously incorporated full verses from the romantic revolutionary poet Sándor Petőfi's poems as if the past would have been projected unto the present. There may be a number of possible explanations for this phenomenon. It may be viewed as a protest to the Stalinist practices which systematically de-historicized and emaciated the Hungarian national identity.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, the degree of embracing the tradition of 1848 also speaks to the political culture of the Hungarian society of the time. In the mid-1950s there existed no other language available than that of the past. Just as the political issues raised by 1848 (civil rights, independence) had not been properly settled over the following one hundred years, their re-emergence brought with it the rhetoric in which they had originally been voiced. The importance of this phenomenon is difficult to overestimate in the light of contemporary analogous developments in Eastern-Europe, following the collapse of communist governments (Judt, 1990). Because these countries have had very weak or no Liberal parliamentary traditions whatsoever, at present they also find themselves lacking the appropriate language of modern pluralist politics. As Tony Judt had observed:

All they could look back to – and herein lies the problem – is exactly what they're now getting: nationalist rhetoric, a strong emphasis on the identity of the nation and religion. (*ibid.* p. 14)

The revolution of '56 also drew on national rhetoric embedded in the oppositional or dominant ideologies of different regimes over the past two centuries. For the 'last' available movement combining demands of democracy and independence, the insurgents needed to reach as far back as 1848. And this also explains why the French revolution, as mediated by the Hungarian 1848, proved such an empowering example to follow with its strong emphasis on a unitary language invested with high moral passion. France at the end of the 18th century was no different from 20th century Eastern-European societies in one sense, namely that she, as Hunt (*op. cit.* p. 43) has contended, also lacked the 'Whig science of politics' on which to base democratic institutions and practices. Without pointing to this parallel in the nature of political structures – with the corresponding similarities in social structure such as the lack of a solid bourgeois class (Moore, 1966) – it would be difficult to account for the French Revolution's impact on a society located in radically different historical times. In a further research on this subject it would be interesting to explore the tension within the liberationist discourse, a tension arising from its commitment to bourgeois democratic values on the one hand, and the emotionally infused nationalist rhetoric burdened with conservative authoritarianism, on the other. That this was sensed by many witnesses of the uprising as a real threat to its original goals, is indicated by the fact that even a non-liberal writer such as László Németh voiced his anxiety, a mere three days before the Soviet tanks had invaded Budapest:

The day before the revolution had broken out, I moved to the countryside with the resolution that I would only be concerned with working on my unpublished manuscripts. After the days of awful anxiety, I only had one night to struggle with my joy. Since then I have merely been feeling the pressure of responsibility, which must be a concern of every intellectual today. (...) I still had seen no more than what the radio and the events in the countryside had allowed me to see, but then already I clearly perceived the danger, the immediate threat that the nation, in her sacred impulse, responding only to her emotions, would commit something irredeemable. And looking ahead a little, I was worried that, while the fighters' attention was focused on the withdrawal of the Soviet troops, others expecting the return of their old glory would elbow their ways to the new positions, thus turning the revolution into a counterrevolution... (Fabó:249)

\*

I wish to express my thanks to Hugh Mehan, Ákos Róna-Tas and Martha Lampland for their insightful suggestions and comments on the drafts of this paper.

## Notes

1. Mátyás Rákosi was the leader of the Communist Party from 1941 to 1956. On returning to Hungary from Soviet exile, he became Secretary General of the HCP. He was State Minister (1945–49), Deputy Prime Minister (1952–53). In 1953 he ceded the premiership to Imre Nagy but remained First Secretary until July 1956 when he emigrated to the USSR. In 1962 he was expelled from the Hungarian Communist Party for his political crimes. (Kádár, 1985, 156)
2. Having finished the draft of this paper, I came across with a publication containing Ferenc Fejtő's speech commemorating the 30th anniversary of the execution of Imre Nagy and his fellow-martyrs, and inaugurating their symbolic memorial in Paris, June 16, 1988. Fejtő, the émigré writer and President of the Hungarian League of Human Rights, also referred to the ancient Greek literary parable in his speech entitled: *Our Creons Violated the Laws* (Tóbiás, 1989, 529).
3. To name a few of the most significant publications: Bill Lomax: 1956 – Hungary (trans. from the original English language version: London, 1976); *United Nations Report of the Special Committee on the Problem of Hungary*. General Assembly, Official Records: 11th Session (New York, 1957); *A forradalom hangja* (The Voice of the Revolution). Radio Broadcastings of Hungary between October 23–November 9, 1956. in: *Századvég Füzetek 3* (Budapest, 1989); *1956 – A forradalom sajtója* (The Press of the Revolution). Assembled and introduced by E. Nagy (Gyromagny, 1984); *Az igazság a Nagy Imre ügyben* (The Truth in the Nagy Imre Case). Re-issue of first edition; Bruxelles, 1959. in: *Századvég Füzetek 2* (Budapest, 1989).
4. The history of designating the '56 events in official and colloquial speech was briefly but perceptively remarked on by György Csepeli in his lecture 'The Twilight of State Socialism in Hungary' given at the University of California, San Diego, Department of Sociology, April 1990.
5. March 15th was the day when the War of the Independence and Freedom commenced in 1848.
6. For a fine analysis pertaining the attribution of meaning to past actions in the 'making' of history, see Lampland (1986).
7. Miklós Horthy was the Regent of Hungary (1920–44). Although he allowed a certain freedom to parliamentary forms, the system was essentially authoritarian (e.g. Horthy banned leftist parties). In 1944 he ceded power to the fascist extreme right Arrow Cross Party.
8. For a discussion of the historical roots of such communist assumptions in Eastern Europe, see Judt (1990).
9. In line with the more right wing attitudes prevailing in the countryside, the radio stations in the provincial towns showed more openness to anti-communist 'terroristic' propaganda than those in Budapest.
10. The Rákosi regime did not entirely dispense with the Hungarian history and culture. It is more appropriate to say that Stalinist politics was ambivalent and abusive towards this heritage. In the arts, for example, indigenous folkloristic forms were used to convey 'socialist' ideological contents, thus ruling out modernist cultural influences. As regards history and the appreciation of the revolution of 1848, the latter was canonized as part of the 'progressive tradition', yet March 15th was wiped out as a national holiday. This ambivalence may be explained with the rulers' apprehension about the obvious potential of March 15th to articulate national resistance.



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# POST MODERN TECHNIQUES IN PÉTER ESTERHÁZY'S *HELPING VERBS OF THE HEART*

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When an English translation of Péter Esterházy's *Helping Verbs of the Heart* appeared in 1990, American critics responded with mixed reviews, some with praise, others with disfavor. Almost always, though, the critics admitted to an inability to fully digest the work. What one critic called Esterházy's "unorthodox expedients" have baffled and also irritated more than one reader to be sure. John Simon of *The New Republic* wrote in his review, "I don't mind admitting that I can follow this program only dimly." Perhaps this essay will lend readers a bit of light.

In an appropriated excerpt at the bottom of page 104, a frustrated Esterházy pleads with his reader, "CAN'T YOU SEE I'M DIGGING A GRAVE?" The tone is somewhat desperate. This line is crucial to an understanding of the novel for two reasons. First, it is pirated from an undetermined source. Esterházy includes plagiarized material throughout the book. This tactic will be discussed in detail in subsequent sections of this essay. More importantly, this single line embodies the meaning of the entire book. *Helping Verbs* is exactly what Esterházy insists here. It is a grave into which Esterházy pitches many of the conventions and most of the notions of the modern novel. One might also imagine Esterházy laying at the bottom of this grave pulling armfuls of dirt onto himself. Indeed, *Helping Verbs* is also Esterházy's attempt to bury his own failures, both literary and emotional.

Some might argue that *Helping Verbs* approaches Nihilism. Americans, in particular, recoil at this thought. One wonders what value this display of impotence might have. These fears are unwarranted. There is a rejuvenated sense of hope at the end of this novel. At the bottom of the last page, after the words "The end," the narrator, returned from oblivion, promises aloud, "SOME DAY I'LL WRITE ABOUT ALL OF THIS IN MORE DETAIL." Esterházy borrowed this line from Peter Handke, but no matter. It creates real power in its transplanted appearance. Esterházy buries the failure and humiliation which accompany him throughout the novel. A resolved, though weary, voice remains.

It is possible that Ludwig Wittgenstein shared this same voice when he wrote, "He who can hope can speak, and vice versa." This quote precedes

Esterházy's foreword and also appears on the back of the jacket. In his foreword, Esterházy insists that any book "should radiate a kind of lightness." Indeed, *Helping Verbs* does exactly that. It is a strange and powerful work. Esterházy incorporates a slew of radical techniques and devices which ultimately reveal the limitations of his medium and of the human capacity to produce art which accurately reproduces the soul's inner dialogue. Still, the novel succeeds because it is at once a grave and a source of "lightness." The discussion now turns to the tools which Esterházy employs to hollow this strange grave.

John Simon titled his review of *Helping Verbs*, "The Stunt Man." Simon meticulously describes experimental techniques and complains that these "shenanigans" illuminate nothing, and instead, make for an uneven fragmented failure. To Simon's credit, "failure" is the key component in *Helping Verbs*. Unfortunately, Simon seems to have missed the point. The techniques which Simon blames for the novel's failure are, indeed, disruptive; but these tricks and stunts are well controlled devices which mark the limits of the modern novel as an art form. The author and his text do fail intermittently, but Esterházy pursues these moments of impotence so that the reader might begin to question the capacity of his medium. Esterházy pinpoints the deficiencies of his medium and devises a number of tricks to accentuate them. It seems that the novel fails Esterházy. Simon would have one believe that the author is to blame. In fact, the responsibility lies with both the author and his medium. Esterházy makes no effort to hide this fact. Instead, he devises a number of tactics which exaggerate the fact. These techniques, then must be considered equally, if not more important than the contents of the novel. With this in mind, *Helping Verbs* becomes a model piece of post-modernism.

Structural experimentation is the constant feature of *Helping Verbs*. There are four techniques which demand attention and analysis. The first and most obvious has already been mentioned. Esterházy includes at the bottom of most pages a running subtext which appears in all capital letters to distinguish it from the primary text and to remind the reader that it has been pirated from an outside source. Esterházy's second device appears on every page of the novel. A thick, black line frames the contents of every page. This frame serves more than cosmetic ends. Third, Esterházy leaves large portions of the novel blank. A generous estimation would allow that the text, if printed continuously, could fill seventy pages, as it stands, *Helping Verbs* is a 115-page effort. Finally, the identity of the narrator shifts in two instances, one intensely dramatic, the other less so, but still meaningful. (The sub-text is not considered here. The reader might decide that each of the pirated excerpts is delivered in Esterházy's own voice.) These radical techniques do indeed disrupt and

disorient the reader, but they are certainly not accidental. Nor are they weaknesses. They complement, perhaps supersede, the content of the book, and become a separate dialogue in their own right.

The capitalized sub-text has an immediate effect on the reader. There have been numerous theories as to its significance. This essay offers yet another. In his foreword, Esterházy writes, "The text includes quotations, either literal or distorted, from, among others..." There is a list of forty-three authors which follows. The reader can assume that the majority of these quotations appear in the capitalized sub-text. Though, Vince Passaro of *New York Newsday* warns, "you can't be sure." What does one make of the capitalized text at the bottom of each frame?

James Marcus of *The Philadelphia Enquirer* complains that "grief makes the narrator inarticulate." Esterházy, himself, complains of a "lethargic wordlessness" in his foreword. This foreword, though, Esterházy tells the reader, was written prior to the novel; not inserted after its completion. It is clear, then, that Esterházy must cope with this "wordlessness" as he writes this piece about the death of his mother. When the pain of his loss renders him speechless, he resorts to other author's work to express his sentiments. Where grief has muted Esterházy, he inserts what comes closest to his own feelings. Esterházy may experiment for his own amusement, but more likely, he experiments out of necessity. His mother's death cripples him and impedes the flow of insight. Consequently, he is forced to borrow the work of others in his quest for meaning. The reader's perception of the author and of the novel change drastically. The story (at least initially) is told by a self-admitted failure, a writer who admits freely that he is unable to approach the meaning he aspires to illuminate. The author is removed from his pedestal, and so is his novel. Esterházy inserts the pirated passages where the conventions of the novel and of language fail him.

The bold, black line which frames each page's text is another of Esterházy's experiments. This device, like the use of external sources, affects the reader's primary experience of the novel. The frame reminds the reader that the text does not do full justice to Esterházy's inner vision. One wonders what might exist outside of the page's frame. What ideas was Esterházy unable to give form? Again, this is a subtle admission of failure. Esterházy convinces his readers that the novel, as a forum for self-expression, is at best an incomplete, diluted version of the author's raw experience of the events s/he wishes to recreate. The sub-text on page eighty-four reads, "EVERYONE HERE, MYSELF INCLUDED, IS SO DISGUSTINGLY NORMAL." If "HERE" is taken to mean the confines of each frame, it becomes clear that Esterházy is deeply disappointed in his work. Esterházy admits that his works neither

depicts nor exceeds the reality of his experience. One expects art to yield more than life, to reveal the ultimate and infinite truths which are ordinarily obscured from view. Perhaps these expectations are unrealistic. With the use of the black frame, Esterházy hints that his novel lacks this infinite power to heal. Perhaps the story Esterházy hoped to write still floats outside of the black frame. The black frame allows Esterházy to deepen the grave he pursues in *Helping Verbs* so that he might put his failures to rest and the reader might bury his/her romantic ideas about the power of literature.

The blank sequences throughout the novel serve the same purpose. Why not insert the pirated passages into a steady text? Why leave unfilled space? These blank areas, in all cases, precede the sub-text. So, one thinks of them as impasses or terminal points, beyond which Esterházy cannot venture. They mark the points at which words fail the author. Esterházy is honest enough to admit his failings and inventive enough to accentuate them. Esterházy makes the limitations of his medium all too clear. Perhaps these blank segments would house the magic words which will float forever outside of Esterházy's black frame. On page fifty-seven, the narrator whines in frustration and desperation, "... I have no freedom, I don't write what I want, I write what I can..." What a powerful moment when the author discredits himself this way and subverts the significance of his art. It seems that the novel, in its traditional form, cannot replicate Esterházy's inner dialogue. He turns, therefore, to unique post-modern techniques to express his grief and frustration.

What does one make of the two instances where the narrative voice shifts from son to mother and then back from mother to son? One page forty-six, three acidic sentences appear in white print on an otherwise black page. The white print reads, "I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal! I hope you all rot. I hate you." This page, with its reversed fields, marks Esterházy's surrender to the "wordlessness" which plagues him. Our first narrator suffers a death-like silence after this stunt. Perhaps this is Esterházy speaking from a dark grave. Or perhaps less dramatically, it is an indication of the narrator's inability to shed light on the subject matter. After pages of frustration, the narrator simply resigns to end his agonizing fit of impotence. He lowers himself into this figurative grave, hoping to put his failure to rest. It is a sort of literary suicide; the narrator, in a sense forfeits his existence. The son relinquishes the reins, the pen that is, into the hands of his mother. Simon describes this as an interior monologue, but really, Mother assumes complete responsibility for the work. She is willing, though somewhat inept. Shortly, her narrative degenerates and dissolves. Mother is unable to create any sense of cohesion or direct the storyline. The text erodes into unrelated snippets of nostalgia and fantasy. After fifty pages of Mother's convoluted chronology,

the son, somewhat unwillingly, reclaims the narrative. He resumes his duties, but only manages to record the essential action and dialogue. There is no further explication. The text resembles a screenplay at this point, not a novel. The narrator offers no insight and his voice is completely withdrawn. Still, these are some of Esterházy's most successful moments. No longer does the reader suffer the intrusion of a failing, embittered narrator. Esterházy creates ingenious devices to compensate for his own limitations and the limitations of his medium. The two dramatic shifts in the narrative voice are perfect examples.

*Helping Verbs* is a novel about failure, but it is far from failure itself. Esterházy, in a courageous self-critique, lays bare all of his artistic shortcomings. Simultaneously, he exposes the weaknesses of his medium. The result is a powerful, brutal work which rockets the reader into contemplation and forces him/her to re-evaluate the meaning and capacity of art and literature. To achieve this effect, Esterházy invents a number of techniques and devices which subvert his work, but more importantly, challenge our assumptions about literature. For those who, like Simon, confuse these well-controlled experiments with meaningless acts of desperation, Esterházy promises to continue his struggle against silence and hopelessness should quell their criticism. Esterházy, back from the grave promises not to be enslaved in life by the spectre of death; "SOME DAY I'LL WRITE ABOUT ALL THIS IN MORE DETAIL." He even leaves some blank pages at the end for this purpose.





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The history of Transylvania is a history of three nations who lived side by side for centuries. This region's past is important for each of them for a variety of reasons. There was a time when the principality was the last sanctuary of Hungarian political life and culture. The Romanians also see it as the cradle of their nation, where the first Romanian book was published, and Romanian national feeling was born. The Transylvanian Saxons lived here, as the easternmost outpost of their people, a world totally different from their original one to which they contributed much, bringing a western life-style, and from which they learned much, shaping their own distinct culture.

The centuries-long coexistence resulted in both understanding and differences. These differences have in part been solved by time, yet have in part become stronger, even turning to hatred. The most important corner stone of national consciousness is history: most of these differences are, whether real or imagined, of an historical context. Today, when the rights of individuals or communities, the securing of a future, have become key issues for the civilized world, a centuries-long coexistence like this and the historical tensions which accompany it certainly have a strange fascination that goes beyond the general teachings of history.

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# **Die Ungarn, ihre Geschichte und Kultur**

Edited by L. Kósa

Ein hervorragendes Autorenkollektiv unternimmt hier erstmals den Versuch, den Leser über alles, was zur Hungarologie gehört, zu informieren. In diesem Werk sind sämtliche das Ungarn und Ungarn betreffenden Kenntnisse kurz und knapp zusammengefaßt. Nach einer Einführung in die Hungarologie, ihrer Begriffsbestimmung, der Anzahl und territorialen Verbreitung der Ungarn in der Welt folgt ein Überblick über die ungarische Sprache, deren Verwandtschaft und Perioden. Das Kapitel über die Geschichte Ungarns beginnt bei der ungarischen Urgeschichte und erstreckt sich bis hin in die neueste Zeit. Die Literatur und Künste werden ausgehend von der ältesten ungarischen Dichtung nach Perioden und Themenkreisen bis in die jüngste Vergangenheit hinein behandelt. Die Ethnographie, die ungarische Volkskultur, deren historischen Schichten und Stellung in Europa bilden den Schluß dieses umfassenden Werkes. Die Bibliographie enthält in den Weltsprachen erschienenen Studien und Bücher, die zur weiteren eingehenden Orientierung verhelfen.

Das Buch wendet sich an alle, die sich mit der ungarischen Sprache befassen und die Vergangenheit sowie Kultur der Ungarn kennenlernen möchten, es richtet sich an jene, die zwar ungarischer Abstammung sind, aber nicht in diesem Kulturkreis aufgewachsen sind oder leben, und es ist für all die von Interesse, die mehr über Ungarn wissen möchten, als ein Reiseführer vermittelt. Gleichzeitig bietet es das erforderliche Grundwissen für ein ausführliches Ungarnstudium.

*Readership:* historians, undergraduate students, general public

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