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*Richard Aczel: In the Wake of Enlightenment: The Birth of Modern Hungarian Literature*

*Ambrus Miskolczy: Paradoxes of and about Nicolae Iorga*

*Ian Fairley: Lukács, Decadence and Modernity*

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# IN THE WAKE OF ENLIGHTENMENT: THE BIRTH OF MODERN HUNGARIAN LITERATURE

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Modern Hungarian literature was born of, and continues to embody, a fascinating fusion of broadly European and distinctively national characteristics and aspirations. To appreciate the ambivalent identity of Hungarian literature in perhaps the most formative period of its historical development (1772-1848), it is essential to examine the complex cultural historical context in which the national literature came to consciousness.

In the last century Ferenc Toldy traced the origins of Hungarian literary modernity back to the year 1772 -which saw the publication of four important works by György Bessenyei - and this date has been broadly accepted ever since by literary historians as a working point of departure. Linked to this periodization is a conventional perception of modern Hungarian literature as a child of the Enlightenment. Thus, according to the multi-volume *A magyar irodalom története* put out by the Hungarian Academy: "Művelődés- és irodalomtörténetünk első, tudatosan világi eszmei mozgalma a felvilágosodás volt [...] Bessenyei György felléptével 1772-ben indul meg a magyar felvilágosodás." (Vol. III, pp. 11-12, Budapest, 1965) The value of all such epoch-making dates is inevitably questionable, and resides above all in the type of historical understanding they render possible. If 1772 is, on this basis, as good a starting point as any, its equation with the concept of a Hungarian "Enlightenment" is considerably more problematic.

There are two key reasons for treating the conventional characterization of the period 1772-1795 in Hungarian literature as a "belated" age of Enlightenment with caution. The first concerns the content of the concept itself. While one cannot, in Edmund Burke's phrase, with a single term draw up an indictment against a whole century, there are certain social and intellectual constituents without which any working concept of the Enlightenment is meaningless. These would have to include a commitment to empiricism in scientific method, rationalism in the characterization of nature, universalism in the description of human nature, cosmopolitanism in intellectual formation and matters of taste, and a fundamental rejection

of the values and "superstitions" of the *ancien régime*. While there were undoubtedly isolated figures in late eighteenth-century Hungary whose concerns and aspirations shared much in common with the values of the West European Enlightenment, their achievements and influence do not provide a representative basis for a comprehensive and coherent reading of the period in Hungarian letters.

The case of Bessenyei is particularly illuminating here. His work increasingly reveals closer parallels with the cultural relativism and interest in national specificity of Herder, than with the intellectual universalism embodied in Voltaire's ideal of the *citoyen du monde*. Significantly, 1772 remains a crucial date for our understanding of just such a contrast. In this year Bessenyei published the first version of his *Az embernek próbája*, a highly revealing and ideologically charged *misreading* of Alexander Pope's *Essay on Man*, a classic compendium of some of the central aphorisms of the Enlightenment. The essential discontinuity between the two works is already anticipated by Bessenyei's title: for, in sharp contrast to the pragmatic optimism of Pope, Bessenyei will go on to describe human existence as an ultimately hopeless "trial" (*próba*), and closes with the distinctly counter-Enlightenment claim that: "tsak tudatlanság zúg az emberekbe." Indeed Bessenyei's whole career seems to characterize in microcosm the Hungarian encounter with, and relatively rapid retreat from, the cosmopolitanism and rationalism of the West European Enlightenment. Initially attracted by the ratio-empiricism of Voltaire, Bessenyei becomes increasingly preoccupied with questions of national language, identity and specificity, and ends his days, as the "bihari remete", deeply suspicious of the value of enlightened thought. As Kirakedes, Bessenyei's "noble savage" in his last major literary work, *Tarimenes utazása* (1804), says to Trezeni, the ruler of an "enlightened" state (with obvious echoes of Maria Theresa): "Oly igaz az, hogy mentül tanultabb, bölcsőbb az ember, annál kevesebb vígsággal élhet; ellenben mentül oktanabb, annál több örömök közt lakozik." The same disaffection with the Enlightenment's faith in human reason can be traced in the work of countless of Bessenyei's contemporaries.

The second problem with the designation "Hungarian Enlightenment" in connection with the period 1772-1795 is a historical one. By the end of the eighteenth century most of the important work of the Enlightenment had already been done, and Kant's famous phrasing of the question "Was ist Aufklärung" in 1784 is already at least partly retrospective. By the end of the century most of the key tenets and values of the Enlightenment were in crisis and a new intellectual moment and cultural sensibility was emerging. The Rousseau of *Émile* and *Les confessions* is no longer the confident *philosophe* of

the first and second Discourses, and the classical ideals of Pope and Voltaire are being displaced as literary models by "sentimental" works like Richardson's *Pamela*, Young's *Night Thoughts* and Goethe's *Werther*. There is a shift of focus from the head to the heart, from reason to feeling, reflected in Rousseau's famous statement from the *Lettres Morales*: "To exist for us is to feel; and our sensibility is incontestably anterior to our reason." In addition to this, the last third of the eighteenth century also witnesses a growing recognition of the importance of national character and traditions, which also finds expression in Rousseau's later writings, such as his *Considerations on the Government of Poland* (1770-71). Thus it is the crisis of the Enlightenment, rather than the Age of Reason itself, which forms the cultural-historical context in which Hungarian literature comes of age as a modern, self-conscious discourse. Indeed, far from seeking belatedly to rehearse the old arguments of the Enlightenment, the aspirations of the Hungarian *literati* prove to be remarkably in tune with the preoccupations of the new moment.

Historians of culture continue to debate the character, periodization and conceptual definition of this new cultural moment at the end of the eighteenth century. The terms of definition most commonly used - *Sturm und Drang*, "Age of Sensibility" and, more notoriously, "Pre-romanticism" - have, for a variety of reasons, all proved problematic. *Sturm und Drang* is too limited in local and historical focus to identify the continuities (across national boundaries) between writers as diverse as Sterne, Prévost, Goethe and Kármán; while "sensibility" - clearly a key term in the lexicon of the new age - remains too broad: what is, after all, at stake is a particular, and supposedly "new", kind of sensibility. The difficulty with "pre-romanticism", on the other hand, stems largely from the teleology it inevitably imposes by reading the second half of the eighteenth century through the achievements of the first half of the nineteenth. Perhaps the most productive characterization of the period is a contemporary one: Schiller's definition in *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung* (1795) of his own age as *sentimental* in contrast to the essential *naivety* of the ancients.

Schiller describes the "sentimentality" of the modern writer in terms of an alienation from nature, society, and the objects of his own discourse. While the Enlightenment had seen no tension between the workings of human reason and rational nature, between the interests of the individual and society, by the end of the eighteenth century man and nature, self and society, subject and object would increasingly be perceived as irreconcilable oppositions. This is the dilemma faced by Schiller's modern, sentimental poet. The sentimental poet's "feeling for nature is like that of a sick man for health." He is unhappy in his experience of humanity and "has no more urgent interest than to flee out of

it"; sentimental poetry marks "the birth of isolation." The sentimental poet is still further alienated from the world around him in that his mind "can suffer no impression without at the same time observing its own operation and what it contains, without placing it opposite and outside of itself by means of reflection."

For Schiller, the dilemma of the sentimental poet is essentially a *modern* dilemma: and it is precisely the modernity of the phenomenon Schiller describes which makes the sentimental, as a configuration of literary and cultural *topoi*, so pertinent to an awakening national literature keen to emulate and assimilate the latest achievements of European culture. This is particularly evident in the translation projects of the young Kazinczy. Kazinczy begins with Gessner's *Idyllen*, which Schiller, in *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*, had cited as an example of sentimental idyll. He then turns to J. M. Miller's *Siegwart*, again given special mention by Schiller as an example of sentimental elegy, and also translates various texts by Wieland, whom Schiller cites in the context of sentimental satire, praising him for his "seriousness of feeling" in contrast to the excess of "intellect" Schiller finds in Voltaire. Kazinczy had also intended to translate Goethe's *Werther*, considered by Schiller to be the one text in which "everything which gives nourishment to the sentimental character is concentrated", and, as Kazinczy himself states in his preface to *Bácsmegeyey*, it was only circumstance that forced him to translate Kayser's *Roman in dem Geschmack der Leiden Werthers* instead.

The significance of Schiller's concept of the sentimental for late eighteenth-century Hungarian literature is not, however, above all a matter of literary influence. For Schiller describes a cultural moment of which Hungarian literature is already an active part. The literary *topoi*, which Schiller's notion of alienated "sentimentality" seeks to understand, are all widely represented in Hungarian literature in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Thus the cult of solitude, born of the sentimental subject's sense of isolation, finds expression most famously in the poetry of Csokonai, but also, among countless others, in the work of Kármán and the later Bessenyei. The sentimental projection of the alienated self onto the objects of nature is a major characteristic of the poetry of not only Ányos and Dayka, but also the "classical" Révai. Furthermore, the sentimental alienation of subject from object, of the poetic self from the world he can never approximate, is also reflected in Kazinczy's preoccupation with style as a virtue in itself, over and above the objects of literary representation. Alienated from the natural and social world, the sentimental writer's experience of reality is always through the world of signs. Thus Werther's love for Lotte is mediated textually rather than sexually through the ecstasy the couple share in reading Klopstock, Gessner and Ossian. The most critical moment in the relationship



between Fanni and Józsi T. in Kármán's *Fanni hagyományai* is mediated through Józsi's reading of Gessner.

Poets "will either *be* nature, or they will *look for* lost nature" (Schiller). In the first case their poetry will be "naive", in the second "sentimental". The modern poet may try to overcome his sense of alienation by attempting to restore the "lost" and naive harmony enjoyed by the ancients with their "simple" and "natural" world, but this itself is an inherently sentimental impulse. The sentimental dilemma and the quest for its naive resolution are, as Schiller so persuasively argues, two sides of the same "modern" coin. Concomitant with the sentimental cults of solitude and subjectivity in late eighteenth-century Hungarian literature we can identify the inception of a search for a more "naive" sense of community and authenticity which was to prove particularly formative for the subsequent development of the national literature. The literary object of this search is probably best described by Herder's concept of *Naturpoesie*, although it must be remembered that Herder's influence in late eighteenth-century Hungary was highly mediated. For Herder, *Naturpoesie* embodies an organic unity with the poet's immediate community and national traditions, lost to the modern *Kunstpoe*t who is the product not of an organic, but an imitative culture, devoid of its own coherent and collective identity. In Hungary, especially after the centralizing and Germanizing reforms of Joseph II, the pursuit of such an identity would become one of the key cultural and political preoccupations of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In Hungarian literature it finds expression above all in three forms of "naive" recovery. First, we can observe it in the attempt to retrieve the lost or forgotten glories of the national past in order to foster a sense of collective historical purpose. Such efforts range from Bessenyei's historical tragedies, through Ádám Horváth's *Hunnias*, the epic "Conquest" fragments of Csokonai, Ráday and Virág, to the cult of "Mohács" poetry in the 1790s. Second, we can discern the pursuit of identity in the attempt to recover and cultivate national traditions and customs as a source of shared, common values. These undertakings run from Orczy's *A bugaczi csárdának tiszteletére* to Gvadányi's *Falusi nótárius*. Third, we can discover it in the attempt to restore a lost language of naturalness, simplicity and immediacy as opposed to the imitative, modern language of refinement (*fentebb stíl*) championed by the likes of Kazinczy. This language is increasingly modelled on the living example of Hungarian folk poetry, as an equation of the "authentically" national with the *völkisch* ("népi") becomes one of the key constituents of the national-cultural self-definition. From Révai's call for the collection of ancient and folk poetry in 1782 to Kölcsey's famous association of the national and the popular in *Nemzeti hagyományok* (1826),

the naive identification with the idiom and values of folk culture would lay the major foundations of a cultural populism that is still very much alive today.

Evidence of a renewed interest in ancient and folk poetry can be found throughout Europe in the second half of the eighteenth century, from Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* to Herder's *Stimmen der Völker* and the widespread cult of Ossian. In English literature Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads* of 1797 are perhaps the supreme artistic achievement of a (in Schiller's sense) "naive" preoccupation with "rustic life" and the "language really spoken by men." Where the literary populism (irodalmi népiesség) of the Hungarian late eighteenth century and Age of Reform differs from the Wordsworthian project is in its conflation of the concepts of "naive" and "native". When Wordsworth, in his famous Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, relates his interest in "humble and rustic life" to a desire to reveal "the primary laws of our nature", his use of the first-person plural evokes not a national, but a *universal* human community. For Wordsworth, the poet is not a bard addressing his nation, but "a man speaking to men". The Hungarian interest in folk culture - especially in the first four decades of the nineteenth century - is more exclusively related to the revelation and cultivation of distinctively *national* values and identity. This is particularly clear in the work Ferenc Kölcsey who could claim in 1826 that "a való nemzeti poézis eredeti szikráját a köznépi dalokban kell nyomozni."

Kölcsey's own literary development provides an interesting illustration of the close relationship of naive and sentimental initiatives in Hungarian literature during this formative period in its history. While Kölcsey's earliest odes show the unmistakable influence of Csokonai, between 1808 and 1818 he falls under the markedly sentimental influence of Kazinczy. Kölcsey himself would state in retrospect that "1808-ban és 1809-ben sentimental-lyrisch voltam" and much of his best poetry of the 1810s continues to draw upon the lexis of Young and the tone and disposition of Ányos and Dayka. Kazinczy's values also inform many of Kölcsey's critical evaluations during this period, such as his admiration for "az új századok manierját [...] a sentimentalismust" and his dismissal in 1815 of János Földi's claim that "A köznépe az igaz magyarság, az idegennel nem egyveleges magyarság." The remarkable shift in Kölcsey's position after 1818 is largely the product of changing political considerations and the poet's crucial identification with, and contribution to, the political aspirations of the Age of Reform: the transformation of the feudal *natio Hungarica* into a modern nation state capable of representing the interests of all its citizens. In this context the ideals of literary populism represented a potential cultural basis for a common national identity extending beyond the boundaries of private property and social class. The task of the true Hungarian patriot, Kölcsey will argue, is to ensure "hogy az adózó nép

nagy tömege egyszer már a polgári alkotmányba belépjen." This liberal projection of national unity finds its most articulate and influential *cultural* expression in Kölcsey's most significant contribution to the discursive prose of the Age of Reform, *Nemzeti hagyományok* (1826). Here the influence is no longer that of the "sentimental" Kazinczy, but almost entirely of the "naive" Herder. In one important sense *Nemzeti hagyományok* actually goes a good way beyond Herder - for whom there had been no "Favoritenvolk" - in its insistence on the detrimental effect of foreign influences on the formation of the national character. Even the "heroic" age of the fifteenth century Hunyadis is criticised on this basis: "Fájdalom, mi már akkor is idegen befolyásnak adtunk helyet." The same attitude to foreign cultural influences, together with the association of folk and national literature, will resurface in the work of the next major theories of Hungarian literary populism, János Erdélyi.

By the 1840s, literary populism had triumphed as the most influential cultural ideology in Hungary. Its most accomplished poetic representative was, without doubt, Sándor Petőfi. Petőfi represents the epitome in Hungarian literature of Schiller's naive genius. He speaks the language of a community in which he appears entirely at home, and his diction is effortless and natural. Schiller claimed of the naive poet that he "is the Creation, and the Creation is He"; with Petőfi too it is almost impossible to mark the boundary between poetry and biography, art and life. It is as if, for Petőfi, all experience is inherently poetic, and poetry little more than the form and medium of experience. Unlike Schiller's sentimental poet whose work involves "the elevation of reality to the ideal", the naive poet is concerned with "the most complete imitation of the real." This imitation could be hardly more complete than in Petőfi's poetic descriptions of natural scenes. His nature poems are devoid of Romantic pantheism and have little in common with either the sentimental subjectivization of nature characteristic of Ányos and Dayka, nor the visionary and metaphorical transformation of nature we find in Vörösmarty. Both of these latter gestures are products of the alienation of subject from object, man from nature, which finds little expression in Petőfi's verse. In contrast with the folksong imitations of the *Aurora* circle in the 1830s, there is nothing "folkloristic" about Petőfi's identification with the common people and their culture. Petőfi does not collect folksongs as an outsider, but "inhabits" and extends their idiom from within. The work of Petőfi together with the early poetry of Arany represented the realization of the aspirations of Kölcsey and Erdélyi towards a new species of *national* poetry, which would both incorporate and further develop existing folk traditions.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the achievements of Petőfi and Arany in the populist vein had already achieved canonical status. Pál Gyulai, who

dominated Hungarian criticism for most of the second half of the century, coined the term "popular national" (*nép-nemzeti*) to denote what he saw as the most authentic, characteristic and desirable direction for the national literature, as evidenced in at least one aspect of the two poets he most admired. Offering its particular version of the past and standards of judgement and interpretation, the *nép-nemzeti* ideal has survived into our own century as both a descriptive and prescriptive tradition. Like all traditions it is the product of selection, exclusion and omission. Certain aspects of even its paradigmatic models have at times suffered neglect. These include Petőfi's remarkable *Felhők* cycle, which Gyulai dismissed as "dagályos", and the more experimental and ironical initiatives of Arany (from *Az elveszett alkotmány* to the great lyrics of the post-revolutionary period), which have little to do with populism and arguably represent the poet's most challenging and accomplished achievements.

Still more questionable, however, are the literary historical assumptions of the popular-national tradition concerning the character and significance of Hungarian romanticism. "A romantizmushoz [...] megkívántatik a hazaiság, népiesség mint annak első alapja és anyaga, melyből ahhoz-ahhoz képest kifejlődjék a nemzeti költészet a különböző népek jelleme és idoma szerint s a kor lelkének ihletése után." János Erdélyi's characterization of Romanticism (*Valami a romantizmusról*, 1847) laid the foundations of one crucial literary historical truism that has survived into our own time. Thus since the first extensive study of Hungarian Romanticism, Gyula Farkas's *A magyar romantika* (1930), it has generally been maintained that the first phase of Romanticism in Hungary is characterized by national historicism, while the second involves the politically motivated "discovery" of folk poetry. István Sőtér would even argue that "the special relationship with folk poetry can be regarded as the most significant mark of romanticism" (*The Dilemma of Literary Science*, 1973). In this way the concept of Romanticism has more often than not been subsumed under the broader literary category of the popular-national or national-classicist tradition, in a manner of which Erdélyi would almost certainly have approved.

Such an unequivocal equation of Romanticism with literary populism remains, however, highly problematic. While it is true that many Romantic poets throughout Europe took a serious interest in folk culture, it cannot be claimed that it is primarily the assimilation of an already given literary code or world of discourse that defines the "Romanticism" of their poetry. It is hard to conceive of a notion of the Romantic that does not highlight as one of its key, determining constituents the central role of the *individual, creative imagination*, inherently incompatible with the collective emphases of populism.

René Wellek's famous formulation of the three fundamental characteristics of European Romanticism continues to provide a valuable starting point for any properly comparative discussion: "imagination for the view of poetry, nature for the view of the world, and symbol and myth for poetic style." It is, of course, legitimate and important to identify local differences in the development of Romanticism in individual national cultures, but the supra-national context in which Romanticism was born and in which its theoretical legacy has developed since the end of the eighteenth century should never be lost sight of. As Mihály Szegegy-Maszák has argued: "lehetne azzal érvelni, hogy nemzeti romantikánknak főleg olyan jellegzetességei vannak, amelyek megkülönböztetik más romantikáktól - ez azonban fölöslegessé tenné magának a fogalomnak a használatát." This is not to deny that there is an important Romantic tradition in Hungarian literature, but rather to suggest that this tradition and the historical continuities it embodies have tended to be misread, when not altogether overlooked, within the popular-national approach to Hungarian literary history.

These continuities become more perceptible when one restores a comparative context to the analysis of Hungarian Romanticism. Wellek's identification of his three characteristics as "part of the great endeavour to overcome the split between subject and object, the self and the world" in itself suggests a link between Romanticism and the concept of the sentimental outlined above. A particularly revealing articulation of both the continuities and differences between the sentimental and the Romantic moments is József Teleki's pioneering essay of 1818, *A régi és az új költés különbségeiről*. While Teleki's depiction of ancient poetry in terms of "egyszerűség" and "természetesség" draws directly on Schiller's concept of the naive, his treatment of modern poetry adds to Schiller's account a consciously Romantic appreciation of the poetic imagination. Where the poetry of the ancients had described "amit láttak, tapasztaltak, éreztek", the moderns, with whom Teleki associates his own age, "magunknak először egy új, a jelenvalótól egészen különböző költői világot formálunk, s azt adjuk elő, amit abban látnánk, tapasztalnánk, éreznénk." Teleki agrees with Schiller in arguing that the mode of ancient poetry was "tárgyas (objektív)" while that of the moderns is "személyes (szubjektív)", but goes on to insist that the modern, Romantic poet transcends his sentimental alienation from the object world through the power of imagination.

Teleki's incisive account of the interconnections between the sentimental and the Romantic helps us to appreciate the crucial role of Ádám Horváth, Csokonai, and Berzsenyi as leading founders of Romantic theory and practice in Hungary. Horvath's neglected *Psychologia* (1792) contains a remarkable discussion of the concept of imagination, which clearly anticipates

the Romantic usage of that term, while a Romantic attitude to the imagination is also undoubtedly identifiable in the poetry of Csokonai (who celebrated Horváth's *Psychologia* in an ode to its author of 1792) and in Berzsenyi's profoundly original *Poétái harmonistika*. In spite of the manifest classicism of his prosody, Berzsenyi's highly individual and often visionary use of metaphor in his own poetry also points clearly towards Romanticism, and a poem like *A közelítő tél* finds its proper place among the great Autumn poems of the Romantics, such as Keats's *Ode to Autumn*, Lamartine's *L'Autome*, and Eichendorff's *Herbstweh*.

The nature of Berzsenyi's reputation in Hungarian literary history was for most of the nineteenth century determined by the failure of his critics to appreciate the Romantic metaphoricity of his finest verse. Kölcsey, who would go on to attack the "irrationalism" of Romantic philosophy in his essays on mesmerism and animal magnetism, saw in Berzsenyi's "exaltait képzelődésnek exált képei" little more than turgid affectation working against meaning. While Erdélyi, writing from a more fully elaborated popular-national position, suggests that Berzsenyi's "festő költészete" is largely the product of regrettable German influence. Arany too would censure Berzsenyi's "dagályosság", and in the criticism of Gyulai and Riedl Berzsenyi's work occupies the disturbing space of a conspicuous silence. It is only with János Horváth's penetrating study of 1924, *Egy fejezet a magyar irodalom ízlés történetéből: Berzsenyi Dániel*, that Berzsenyi first receives serious critical attention - and, what is more, as an essentially *Romantic poet* - from a champion of Hungarian "national-classicism".

The one Hungarian poet in the first half of the nineteenth century who was able fully to appreciate and indeed build upon Berzsenyi's achievement was Mihály Vörösmarty. Vörösmarty is Hungary's greatest Romantic poet in the fully European sense of that term. A Romantic concept of imagination already informs his early epics *Tündérvölgy* and the unfinished *Délsziget*. Both of which anticipate the essentially tragic vision of the ungratifiable nature of human desire in Vörösmarty's mature verse. The source of this tragic vision lies in precisely the sense of the incommensurability of subject and object, self and world, which Wellek sees as not only the central torment of, but also the crucial challenge to, the Romantic imagination. In his great lyrics, *Előszó* and *A vén cigány*, for example, the poet's rich and highly individual metaphors serve less as substitutes for a set of finally retrievable objects than as the contours of a new poetic world. For all the individuality of its mode of expression, however, Vörösmarty's tragic vision repeatedly transcends the boundaries of the personal. In poems like *Gondolatok a könyvtárban* (1844), and *Az emberek* (1846), tragedy is expressed in universal human terms, while

in *Csongor és Tünde* (1831) and *Előszó* (1850) it is projected onto a superhuman, almost cosmic level.

Vörösmarty enjoyed a high reputation in his own lifetime, but himself complained that his verse was more widely praised than read. Celebrated as the author of the first major epic on the Hungarian Conquest, *Zalán futása* (1825), he had already fallen into poverty by the 1840s, unable to find a wide readership for his work. "Verseimmel úgy bánik a közönség," he complained in 1845, "mint a vízzel: dicséri s bort iszik helyette." This paradox was often to be reproduced in Vörösmarty's subsequent reception in Hungarian literary history. Gyulai, for example, saw Vörösmarty's importance in the degree to which he supposedly paved the way for the real architects of the popular-national tradition, Arany and Petőfi. At the same time he objected to what he saw as the "dagályosság" of a Romantic masterpiece like *A vén cigány*.

One might be tempted to conclude that "dagályosság" served the emerging popular-national disposition in the nineteenth century as a kind of all purpose term of anti-Romantic criticism, and that its ultimate referent is any deviation from what was perceived to be the authentic lexis and idiom of "the people" (*a nép*). Both the cultural ideology it serves, however, and the literary discourse it rejects, can certainly be seen as products of, and responses to, the same intellectual crisis identified by Schiller in his *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*, which affected most of the cultures of Europe at the end of the eighteenth century, and from which modern Hungarian literature itself was born.





# PETÖFIS POETRY IN SLOVAK TRANSLATIONS (186W918)

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Requiring practically one hundred and fifty years in the Slovak cultural environment, the reception of Alexander Petőfi's poetry (1823-1849) has passed through various peripeteia. Periods of unconcern, reserve and even inimical refusal alternated with stages of a positive attitude towards his work. This was apparent both in the impulses which it gave to some Slovak poets, particularly at the start of their literary career, and in the number of translations of his poems that appeared in journals or books.

This ebb and flow of interest cannot be explained through literature alone. The relationship of the Slovaks to Alexander Petőfi's personality and work was determined right from the beginning by extraliterary factors which had their roots in the Slovak-Hungarian political, national and cultural contradictions and conflicts of the time.

The relationship of the Slovaks to Petőfi was partly conditioned by this Hungarian poet's Slovak origin, partly by the strong Magyar nationalistic charge of his poetry and partly by his key position in the development of Hungarian romantic poetry. Slovak intellectuals with a deep sense of national consciousness could never forgive him his "treachery" - his becoming a "renegade" - the fact that he, the son of Slovak parents, Stefan Petrovič and Mária Hruzová, had changed his name to Sándor Petőfi and became one of the foremost representatives of Hungarian national, political and cultural efforts directed against the existential interests of the Slovak nation. These facts affected Petőfi's reception in Slovakia from the forties of the last century until 1948. It was only the so-called socialist internationalism which for the next forty years controlled the social thinking in this country and in our southern neighbour that helped to span the chasm between Petőfi's Slovak origin and his vehemently declared Hungarian nationality.

By 1861, when the first translations of Petőfi's poems appeared in Slovak, his work had been concluded. He died during the revolutionary fighting of 1849. During his lifetime he published several poetic collections, which in 1847 he included in a volume *Petőfi Sándor összes költeményei*.<sup>1</sup> It is comprised of poems

from 1842-1846 and appeared of in a second edition one year later. His works from 1847-1849 came out posthumously in 1858 under the title *Petőő Sándor újabb költeményei*.<sup>2</sup> However, censorship excluded over eighty revolutionary anti-Hapsburg poems. Many of the others were mutilated or altered. After a few incomplete editions, the Hungarian reading public could become acquainted with Petőő's complete works only in 1877. A scholarly edition appeared only in 1890. Then followed a critical edition of Petőő's works in six volumes<sup>3</sup> which naturally carry with them the ideological orientation of their authors, evidenced by a disorientation and befuddlement of his revolutionary poetry and concealment of or passing over in silence their utopistic-socialist design.

Alexander Petőő, the principal representative of a populist-national movement\* in Hungarian literature, wrote his poetic work between 1842 and 1849. During these seven years he produced over eight hundred and sixty poems of diverse poetic genres and eleven shorter epic compositions. His poetic career, prematurely ended in a heroic death, is divided into four main developmental periods.

The first stage, bracketed by the years 1842-1844, witnessed the process of crystallization of the popular nature of literature. A new type of a lyric hero was born, one moulding reality from a meaningful aspect and from people's emotions. Petőő reevaluated or renewed all the poetic genres that he pursued at the time: genre images, artificial folk songs, natural and amorous lyricism, versified epic, etc.

The second period includes the year 1845 and the first half of 1846. These are months of a mental and artistic crisis. His effort to express his interior restlessness with the condition of the society gets into contradiction with the results of his work, and this disrupts the poetics and aesthetics of his poetry.

In the third stage of his poetic development from the middle of 1846 until 1848, Petőő develops on a higher plane all that he had artistically achieved until then. He extends the frontiers of his poetry. He sees contemporary events against a background of history, he joins the fate of the Hungarian people with that of nations of the whole world. Love of life again revives in him, a desire of social activity, a revolutionary ardour. New procedures and genres appear in his poetry. He enriches his work with new motifs. Petőő's poetic revolution grew into a political one. With his poetry he takes hold of all the aspects of this topical circuit.

In the fourth stage of Petőő's work during the revolutionary years 1848-1849, political poetry became the axis of his writings. The poet's radicalism attained the extreme limits: his social programme expressed the interests and goals of a leftist, Jacobine wing in the Hungarian revolution. However, he simultaneously preaches the idea of social justice and freedom for

all the nations of the world. Yet, his poetry was not uniquely reduced to the political topic, but dealt with all the aspects of life.

His death at the battle of Fehéregyháza put a premature end to his work. Nevertheless, the latter constitutes a mature and meaningful whole which won him the fame of being the greatest Hungarian poet and opened for him the way into world literature.

The first Slovak translator of Petőfi's poetry was V. Paulíny-Tóth, a poet and an eminent cultural representative. In 1861 he published three poems in the humoristic-political journal *Cernokňaznik*, published in Pest: *Piesne moje* (My Songs), *Bud' mužom* (Be a Man) and *Pomätenec* (Madman). All three belong among the poet's mature works. The last one was written early in 1846 in the second stage of the poet's creative career marked by his ideological and artistic crisis. The other two are from his third developmental stage.

V. Paulíny-Tóth made fortunate choices. *My Songs* are a self-characterizing expression of the artistic picturesqueness of the author's poetry, and its motivation by life circumstances. In the *Madman* he made use of free verse to capture the striking associations of a lunatic's thinking and fantasizing. In the stream of his monologue, the poet expressed his deep deception in life and in public affairs, his bitterness and contempt of the world. *Be a Man* is from the circuit of poems in which the author suggestively moulds the character of the man whom the impending fight for freedom will demand. Such a man should have a resolute attitude towards life, must be a man of action, faithful to his ideals, incorruptible and inflexible.

Published in the first volume of the journal *Krajan*, one more translation of Petőfi's poem is known from the mid-sixties of the last century. The anonymous translator translated the merry love poem *Povedál bi* (I should say) from the author's first period of writing.

Two further translations of Petőfi's poems appeared in the journal *Sokol* half a decade later (in 1869): *Zreje žitko* (Wheat's Ripening) and *Život a smrt'* (Life and Death) - both in Lužansky's translation. The former runs in the spirit of a folk song, the latter speaks aphoristically of two contrasting values, such as wine and love on the one hand, death for one's country on the other.

A further translation - a prosaic one this time - was published in the journal *Orol* five years later. In 1874 this journal published an extract from Petőfi's diary from 1848 under the heading *How Petőfi wanted to be a senator*, in a translation by A. Trúchly-Sytniansky in which the poet describes his unsuccessful attempt to be a senator of the Hungarian parliament. The following year, two translations appeared in *Orol*. Under the pen name Podolský, V. Paulíny-Tóth again published the poem *Piesne moje* (My Songs) and Martin Medňanský, under the pseudonym Divinkov-Svedernik, a translation of the

poem *Nerozumie mi svet* (The World Does Not Understand Me) on the poet's love to his sweetheart and his country. In 1878 C. Gallay published in Orol the poem *Básnici XIX. storocia* (Nineteenth-Century Poets), the poet's earnest view of a writer's mission. We know yet another translation from the seventies which appeared in the literary monthly *Dunaj* published in Pest. A. S. Osvald translated one of Petöfi's humorous genres of images from the popular milieu *Jazdi ovčiar na oslu* (The Shepherd Rides an Ass).

This was a very modest translation harvest for two decades. In sharp contrast to this was Petöfi's reception in other national literatures in which they already began to translate him during his lifetime. The first to discover him was German literature and this is due to the German press in Hungary, which abundantly contributed to the propagation of his works in the entire German-speaking area. And through the intermediary of German translations, Petöfi reached other nations of the world.

There were several reasons for Petöfi's slow and delayed penetration into Slovak literature. One of them was - as has already been noted - the author's alienation from his Slovak extraction. Slovak scholars repeatedly expressed their regrets that such an extraordinary talent from Slovak blood had through his works made another nation famous in the world, not his own. A second reason was that the Slovak intelligentsia and many Slovak burghers had an excellent command of the Hungarian language and thus could read him in the original. Of great significance was also the fact that there were few Slovak journals and magazines. For instance, in the sixties *Sokol* was the only Slovak literary journal publishing belles-lettres and translations.

More contributions to make Alexander Petöfi's poetry available in the Slovak environment came from Magyarophile Slovak newspapers, journals and calendars which were either published or financed by the Hungarian government. Their role was to spread and promote Hungarian patriotism among the Slovaks and propagate art, which could help this goal. They formed a counterbalance to Slovak national efforts. They strove to paralyze the Slovak national movement and its press organs and prevent the spread of Slovak national consciousness. These were times of a sharpened Magyarizing pressure following the Austro-Hungarian compromise of 1867. The Hungarian government set itself the aim of creating a unique Magyar political nation, introduced compulsory teaching of Hungarian as a State language at schools, and founded cultural clubs that were to spread Hungarian culture.

This category also included the paper *Slovenské noviny* (1886-1919) edited by Viktor Hornyánszky in Budapest, the weekly *Krajan* (1904-1918) published by "Vlastenecké spisy rozširujúci spolok" at Banská Bystrica.

These periodicals often carried translations of Hungarian authors, among them also those of Petöfi. He was frequently translated by anonymous

translators, or people who appended their initials or pen-name. They gave priority to Petőfi's patriotic poems, such as *Pieseň vlastenca* (A Patriot's Song), *Pieseň národa* (A Nation's Song), etc. There was no shortage of poems from the other topical areas. The standard of the translations varied from dilettantish to more successful ones. For the most part, however, they fell short of the stricter artistic claims.

Some Slovak poets and translators also cooperated with these journals, e.g. D. Bachát-Dumný, F. O. Matzenauer, E. Podhradský, R. Uram-Podtatranský and others. They contributed most to the spread of Petőfi's poetry among the Slovaks in the eighties and nineties of the nineteenth century. Their translation activity was probably related to the Hungarian cult of Petőfi, which was especially propagated during the last two decades of that century. But of course, the period's interpretation of Petőfi's work did not derive from its revolutionary meaning, but was tailored to suit the excessive, extravagant nationalism that had frenetically taken hold of Hungarian social and cultural life.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, various selections and anthologies of Petőfi's poems appeared in large numbers in illustrated and exclusive editions. These formed the basis for Slovak book editions.

The translator and editor of the first selection of Petőfi's works was the Evangelical parson Karol Hrdlička, who published *Sándora Petöbho Spisy Básnické* (A Petőfi's Poetic Writings) at Békéscsaba in 1890.<sup>5</sup> The publication consists of two slender brochures, containing sixteen lyrical poems, predominantly from 1843-1844 and a versified story *Hrdina Ján* (The Hero John). Most of them are from the poet's first formative period. They stand out by their imagery and the melodiousness of folk songs. Hrdlička only partially succeeded in transmitting their fresh style. The same also applies to *Hrdina Ján*, translated for the first time into Slovak. His translation is primarily of literary-historical significance and documents a new stage in the reception of the Hungarian poet.

In 1893 two publications with Petőfi's poems appeared. One was Alexander Petőfi's *Lyrical Poems* in F. O. Matzenauer's translation.<sup>6</sup> The latter took assumed an unusually demanding task: it intended to translate Petőfi's entire writings; planning to publish a series of cheap brochured editions and thus making him accessible to the Slovak reading public at large. However, Matzenauer succeeded only partially in his plans: he published but three brochures. In two hundred and ninety-six poems he published, without any selection, his verses written from 1842 up to about the mid of 1845.

The first brochure presents a rather comprehensive biographical study by Lajos Györffy about Petőfi. The author introduces the Hungarian poet in

conformity with the romantic notions which Hungarian literary scholarship had created about him towards the end of the nineteenth century: a genial world-renowned Hungarian poet ardently loving his "motherland", freedom, and truth, all of these ideals interpreted in a sense different from the way the revolutionary poet understood them.

By his design to translate Petőfi's lyrical work without Matzenauer's anthology, Hrdlička set himself a task difficult to resolve: how to cope in a complex manner with a heterogenous style, composition, strophic and metric structure of the author's poems. He succeeded in this primarily with poems utilizing the poetics of the folk song. However, the specificity of Petőfi's style becomes often lost in translations of poems with a more complex rhythmic and strophic pattern.

A more deliberate and rounded concept of translation was applied by E. Podhradský in his selection from Petőfi's works. His book *Selection from Alexander Petőfi's Poems*,<sup>1</sup> comprised of one hundred and eleven selections, aims to give a rounded image of the poet's work, trying to show his richness of style and genre. These efforts, however, are made less effective by the fact that Podhradský anxiously avoided dealing with Petőfi the revolutionary.

R. Uram-Podtatranský's *Alexander Petőfi's Poems*<sup>2</sup> (1911) is also a brochure edition, several of which were planned to appear. However, probably because of the unfavourable Slovak critique, the translator did not continue the work.

The booklet comprises fifty-four poems, predominantly from the period 1843-1845, with occasional overlappings into the following years. The translator arranged them in thematic entities. He began with a few patriotic poems, thereby exploiting Petőfi's work to imbue the Slovaks with a spirit of Magyar patriotism. Included are also certain poems advocating freedom, family and amorous lyric, genre and nature images, reflexions on poetry, etc. Just as in the preceding selections, the poet's image is deprived of its antimonarchistic and socially revolutionary aspects. Of all the book editions of these translation, those by Podtatranský have the lowest artistic standard.

The above four selections from Petőfi's works, despite their individual drawbacks, helped to broaden the view of this poet. However, the breadth of this view was determined by the period's typical interpretation of his personality and work. The outcome was a mutilated image of the poet, deprived of his revolutionary character. From the artistic aspect they also were little more than modest contributions to Slovak translations.

Of quite a different quality were the translations from Petőfi's works by P. O. Hviezdoslav. They appeared in *Slovenské pohiady* in 1903, 1904 and 1905, and comprised forty-two poems which he had selected from the years 1841-1849. Besides these, he also translated for the *Petőfi Almanach*<sup>3</sup> the

poet's lifelong creed Freedom, Love and his ardently amorous poem *Chvie sa ker* (The Bush Sways). In this selection he paid tribute to the favourite poet of his youth. He himself says so in a letter to Jozef Skultéty dated 24th January 1903: "For the second number... you will receive 12 poems translated from Petőfi... I wish to submit at least twice as much from Petőfi, that is to say, a matter on which my youthful mind had formerly tenaciously clung: I feel pleasure seeing them in Slovak, in which language they in fact ought to have originally been written; and I flatter myself that I render them here fairly accurately."<sup>10</sup> Hence, this meant a personal choice of poems that had long ago deeply interested the translator and still preserved their charm for him.

Hviezdoslav had translated Petőfi back in 1869 as a student at the Kežmarok Grammar School. His translations of the poems *Horký život, sladká ľúbosť* (Bitter Life, Sweet Love) and *Šialenec* (Madman) have been preserved in manuscript form. He returned to the former of them after practically thirty years, but left the Madman out of this selection. In Hviezdoslav's poetic débuts, Petőfi had a multi-faceted influence on his attitude towards natural and social reality and some of his poems show traces of the Hungarian poet. Hviezdoslav preserved his respect and love of this Hungarian poet even in his old age.

Hviezdoslav strictly adhered to a temporal sequence. Work from 1842 is represented by a single poem *V domovine* (In the Homeland). Likewise, from 1843 he also chose but one poem. Production from the subsequent years is represented more abundantly: 10 poems from 1845, 6 from 1846, 14 from 1847. 1849 again just one poem *Na smrt' rodičov* (On the Death of Parents). Thus we see that this translator focused on the work of the mature Petőfi.

The topic of the poems is picturesque, their genre structure and artistic form vary. There are poems moulding various forms of love: love of the native land, of parents, of a sweetheart, of the simple folk. On the opposite pole is hate: hate against tyranny, all forms of bondage, misery of the people. Like Podtatranský, Hviezdoslav also leaves aside his radical, revolutionary and anti-Hapsburg poems, which are in harmony with Petőfi's conviction insisting on universally humanistic social justice. He therefore translated the poem *Básnici XIX. storočia* (Nineteenth-Century Poets), which is in agreement with Hviezdoslav's social ethics. However, in his translation of the poem *Palác a chalupa* (Palace and Cottage), he left out the third strophe depicting a vision of doom for the rich who were robbing the simple folk of the fruit of their work. And in general, he made his choice of verses so as to make a "classic" of the Hungarian poet, to create a balanced ideal form. There is a lack of lighter genres, as e.g. poems about wine. Neither are there any selections from Petőfi's times of crisis.

Hviezdoslav was a mature master and a great poet with a specific poetic character. Therefore, he was congenially able to translate many poems. Such are,

for instance, *My Songs*, *Nineteenth-Century Poets*, *Wasteland in Winter*, and others. The age difference between the young poet and his substantially older translator, perhaps also differences in temperament, resulted in a toning down of the emotional spontaneousness and dynamism of certain poems, their shift toward objectivity, e.g. *V dym posty'plán* (Plan Gone up in Smoke). A further difference is due to a certain discrepancy between the romantic style of the original and the realistic style of the translation. What is outlined lightly and with flourish in Petőfi, Hviezdoslav, as a rule, elaborates upon and completes or rounds off. The number of words and verses in the translated texts is thereby increased.

Hviezdoslav's translations from Petőfi's lyrical works constitute an outstanding achievement. In comparison with the sporadic translations from the sixties and seventies of the last century, they gave a rounded image of Petőfi's lyrical works. In contrast to the book editions by K. Hrdlička, F. O. Matzenauer, E. Podhradský and R. Uram-Podtatranský, which comprised translations of a very heterogeneous nature and often of a rather low literary standard, Hviezdoslav's translations meant an artistically balanced and professionally well mastered whole. Of course, the translator's crystallized, personal poetic style imparts itself to the poems. In their time, however, their greatest significance lay in that they helped to create a fuller image of Petőfi in Slovak culture, and to assign it positive values Slovak literary translation.

Of course, just as other translators, Hviezdoslav also impoverished Petőfi's image with certain characteristic traits, particularly his radical democratism, his revolutionary and utopistic-social ideals.

The year 1918 marks the end of the Slovak reception of Petőfi's poetry under the socio-historical conditions of Magyar Hungary. It was a complex process of Slovak culture getting even with this Hungarian poet of worldwide renown, who was born of Slovak parents and had purely Slovak ancestors. This process went through certain stages, beginning with the period of sporadic journal translations, through the first book publications that gave a broader view of his work, up to Hviezdoslav's translations on the pages of the representative literary organ of the cultural centre at Turčiansky Svätý Martin-Slovenské pohľady. Hviezdoslav ensured an adequate and definitive place to the work of this Slovak-born Hungarian poet in Slovak literary culture.

A new significant stage in the reception of Alexander Petrovič alias Sándor Petőfi in our Slovak culture opened early in the fifties of the 20th century. Only then did his work flash in all its versatility and entirety, as well as in adequate poetical translation. This, however, constitutes another chapter in the investigation of his Slovak reception.



## Notes

1. *Petőfi Sándor Összes költeményei* [Sándor Petőfi's Collected Poems] (Pest 1847).
2. *Petőfi Sándor újabb költeményei* [Sándor Petőfi's Newer Poems] (Pest 1858).
3. *Petőfi Sándor összes művei* [Sándor Petőfi's Complete Works] 6 vol., with an introduction by Mór Jókai (Pest: Havas Adolf, 1892-1896).
4. The popular national trend in Hungarian literature considered the language of the farming population and folk poetry as the source of national literature. The norms and the value system of national literature were derived from them.
5. *Sándora Petőfiho Spisy básnické* [S. Petőfi's Poetic Writings] (Békéšska Caba: Corvina Printing House, 1890).
6. *Alexandra Petőfiho Lyrické básne poslovenčil Fr. O. Matzenauer (Beňovský)* [Alexander Petőfi's Lyrical Poems, translated into Slovak by F. O. Matzenauer] (Trnava: A. Horovitz, 1893).
7. *Výber z básni Alexandra Petőfiho preložil Emil Podhraašský. Spodobizrnou básnikovou. Pod tlač usporiadal I, Ž.* [Selection from Alexander Petőfi's Poems, translated by E. Podhradský. With a Portrait of the Poet.] (Banská Bystrica: Singer Sonnenfeld, 1883).
8. *Básne Alexandra Petőfiho* [A. Petőfi's Poems] vol. I (Lipt. Mikuláš: Izidor Stein, 1911).
9. *Petőfi-Almanach* (Budapest, 1909).
10. P. O. Hviezdoslav's Correspondence (Bratislava: SASc Publishing House, 1962, 183).



# THE MYSTERY OF TEXTUAL SYMMETRY DISCLOSED OR SELF-STRUCTURING AND SELF-CLOSING TEXTUAL STRUCTURES IN 19TH CENTURY HUNGARIAN LYRICAL POETRY

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I do not intend to deal with "poetic closure" in the same sense as Barbara Herrnstein Smith, who referred the problem to thematic solutions and to some extent to the idea of the aesthetic whole.<sup>1</sup> Nor shall I deal with "verse closures" in a similar general sense.<sup>2</sup>

This means that I am not quite satisfied with the answer Barbara Herrnstein Smith gives to a question she poses. "Are there not, in real poetry, formal structures which in themselves create the sense of closure at their conclusions? Is there no poem in which a termination point is implied by the very principles that generate its formal structure?"<sup>3</sup> Having considered the alternatives of the sestina and the rondo in this regard (the claim for a "sense of closure" is noticeable), her answer is, "What we must emphasize at this point is that there is no formal principle which in itself can prevent a poem from continuing indefinitely."\*

This answer is correct, as no sensibility is ever obliged to keep the laws of logic or formal linguistic construction. Yet if there are any, one may try to trace them by textual analysis. My purpose is (a) to explore *textual wholes* describable in formal terms and (b) to call attention to the cultivation of self-closing textual schemes in 19th century Hungarian lyrical poetry, especially that of János Arany (1817-1882).

## 1. The Self-closing Logic of Thomas Sebeok's *Cheremis Sonnet*

Inspiration to find self-closing forms came first from a Cheremis folksong analysed by Thomas Sebeok. In Sebeok's translation:

1. Sky's cuckoo, my father, remains.
2. Cuckoo wing, my mother, remains.

3. Sky's swallow, my elder brother, remains.
4. Swallow wing, my elder brother's wife, remains.
5. Summer butterfly, my younger brother, remains.
6. Butterfly wing, my younger sister remains.
7. Summer flower, myself, I depart.
8. Flower blossom of mine, remains.

Sebeok explains that in odd-numbered lines the subject is a male and in even-numbered lines a female member of the family. His interpretation assumes that "flower blossom of mine" refers to the "essential inward being" of the departing recruit and to his wish to remain, spiritually, with his parental family. He seems to be saying, "my thoughts of you and your memory of me - stay here at home."<sup>5</sup> But, in keeping with the overall scheme of the male - female division according to odd- and even-numbered lines, line 8 refers to a female character who is not a "wing" yet but a "blossom" (the *petal* of the flower) because she, the boy's girlfriend or bride, is not yet a wife and thus an integrated member of the family.

Sebeok refers to Lévi-Strauss's formulation, "repetition has as its function to make the structure of the song apparent; the structure seeps to the surface, if one may say so, through the repetition process."<sup>6</sup> In my view systematic repetition here also constructs a formal and logical closure to the song. (Sebeok employs the term *sonnet* "in its genetic sense," with the genre including "the medieval Sicilian strambotto, out of which the sonnet familiar to Western literary tradition developed. Sung by minstrels, these verses were eight lines in length, and were divided into groups of two lines each...")<sup>7</sup>

The textual structure of the *Cheremis Sonnet* seems to be self-closing by its pattern of logical dichotomy. But the pattern does not terminate the poem at any definite point, after a certain length, or a determinable number of repetitions. Or, does it? A catalogue of the members of a nuclear family is, of course, finite. Yet it is not sensible to make the list complete, i.e. to add or detract relatives depending on the actual size of the family of the singer. The catalogue of the *Cheremis Sonnet* must be representative as it is. In folklore 77 (or 99) stand for infinite amounts. Spells send the evil to 77 (or 99) places to disperse and perish. Similarly, the *Cheremis Sonnet*, with its representative list, expresses the anguish of any conscript.

This communal or cultural limitation of the length of the catalogue is of no consequence for the self-construction of the poem as a textual whole, or the logical means with which it prepares its closure from the beginning.

It seems obvious that the same rules structure the closure as the catalogue, which (a) is concerned only with members of the nuclear family, (b) follows a definite order: (a) from couples standing close to or representing the "nucleus"

to less representative couples: ( $\beta$ ) the hierarchy of sexual status in the individual couples. These two rules of selection define the algorithm of progress, but they do not limit the length of the catalogue. In other words they support no self-concluding textual stratagem.

The conclusive turn is due to a *quasi algorithmic* "twist." The enumerative sequence preserves a semblance of the integrity of the algorithm. Nevertheless, a deviant step is taken as the sweetheart or bride is not a member, she counts only as an eventual future member of the family. This "would-be" status appears under the guise of "flower blossom," which is, at the same time, a thoroughly correct metaphorical proposition, with no deceptive implication because the girl is not referred to as a "wing," the metaphor for a wife or a sister. This quasi familial status of the recruit's sweetheart is acceptable to the village community (the "interpreting community"), which is, of course, aware of the "trick."

The algorithm of the catalogue does not offer a "self-closing" textual strategy. But the capacity of the "twist" to close the process is rooted in the logic of the algorithm, or, more precisely, in an innate anomaly of the system. The "twist" fills a gap that is open in a stable synchronic, ^temporal hierarchical pattern of family relations, which is unable to take into account a would-be member, someone in the present status of the young man's sweetheart. To eliminate the anomaly a "fuzzy system" of asynchronous temporality is needed but such a system would not conform with the community's need to maintain stable and fixed family relations. Asynchronous temporality involves terms like "not yet but almost," or "this looks like a conclusive arrangement for the future," or other terms reflecting a time (and fate) dependent transition from secret and illegal through half secret and semi-legal to publicly acknowledged and legally affirmed partnership. With the transgression of the boundaries of the two logical systems, i.e. with the "deconstruction" of the rigid dichotomy of the stable formal system and the recognition of another plane of logic, the sequential form of the song becomes "self-closing" and the text of the poem (with its metaphorical solution) wins the status of a kind of "kenning" or "riddle."<sup>8</sup>

## 2. Forms of Inclusion

Internal growth is structurally developed in forms based on "framing" or "inclusion."<sup>9</sup> *Ábránd* (Fantasy, 1843) by Mihály Vörösmarty consists of a hierarchical system of "inclusions."

Szerelmedért  
 Feldúlnám eszemet  
 És annak minden gondolatját,  
 S képzelmem édes tartományát;  
 Eltépném lelkemet  
 Szerelmedért.

For thy love  
 I would lose my mind,  
 All my thoughts  
 And the sweet province of my fancies;  
 I shall tear my soul to pieces  
 For thy love.

Szerelmedért  
 Fa lennék bérc fején,  
 Felölténém zöld lombozatját,  
 Eltűrném villám s vész haragját,  
 S meghalnék minden év telén  
 Szerelmedért.

For thy love  
 I shall be a tree on a cliff,  
 Clad in green foliage,  
 Suffer the wrath of lightning and tempest  
 And die annual winter death  
 For thy love.

Szerelmedért  
 Lennék bérc-nyomla kő,  
 Ott égnék földalatti lánggal,  
 Kihalhatatlan fájdalommal,  
 És némán szenvedő,  
 Szerelmedért.

For thy love  
 I shall be a mountain-pressed bulk of stone,  
 Burn in subterraneous flames  
 And suffer silent  
 Immortal pain  
 For thy love.

Szerelmedért  
 Eltépett lelkemet  
 Istentől újra visszakérném  
 Dicsőbb erénnyel ékesítném  
 S örömmel nyújtanám neked  
 Szerelmedért.

For thy love  
 I shall reclaim  
 My torn soul from God,  
 Embellish it with more glorious virtues  
 And delighted give it to you  
 For thy love.

As units of an extended metaphor (a Romantic *conceit* indeed), stanzas 1 and 4 create a "frame," a formal "*inclusion*" of the enclosed individually elaborated inclusions of stanzas 2 and 3. The two interlocked stanzas do not enter the dramatic context of the Triangle (the Poet with his soul, God and the Lady) of the conceit in stanzas 1 and 4. It is doubtful whether they are capable at all to share in the structural energy of the "frame." The close relationship of stanzas 1 and 4 is loosened and space is opened for "internal growth," practically for any number of excessive Romantic statements between the opening and closing stanzas.

*Hymnus* (1823; the words of the Hungarian national anthem) by Ferenc Kölcsey has a similar structure: while a sequence of emblematic scenes depicts an abbreviated history of the nation, the framing stanzas are a prayer to the Lord claiming a better future for the Magyars on the right that they have already paid a penalty not only for the past but also *for the future*.

### 3. Textual Symmetry

Symmetrical forms (*inclusion* also implies symmetry) arise on any structural level (from the literal or phonematic to the thematic planes) and are coexistent with, or responsible for, the organization of the poem as a whole.

#### A) Thematic Symmetry

On thematic levels symmetry may appear "spontaneous," yet it is reducible to formative techniques and principles. A unique example is *Plevna* (1877) by János Arany.

There is a close thematic symmetry in the first nine stanzas of the poem. Stanzas 1-3 and 7-9 discuss in the old rhetorical tradition the unworthiness of the poet for the high task of greeting the victory of the Turkish army at Plevna. In Arany's eyes the proper person to equal the task would be Sándor Petőfi, the great poet who died in action in 1849 during Hungary's War of Independence. Stanzas 4-6 deal with the actual historical event trying to explain why the people of Hungary, a country which suffered Turkish occupation for 150 years in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, welcome a Turkish victory against Tsarist Russia. People in the Balkan, "enchanted by the dragon's magic," expect Russia to free them from the Turkish yoke. *N. B.* The Hungarian War of Independence was defeated by Russian intervention and Hungarians were deeply concerned with the threat of Pan Slavism. (Arany's exultation over a Turkish victory at Plevna was premature: the battle was won by the Russian army.)

(The typographic lay-out serves the illustration of thematic symmetry; normal stanzaic sequence is indicated by numeration.)

1. A Haemus ormán s a Dunánál,  
ím, óriások harca foly:  
S az én múzsám - kisebb magánál -  
A porba' játszik, ott dalol.
2. Hát hol van a magasztos ének,  
Mely a győzőt megilleti:  
Hogy két világra zengenének  
Neve méltó dicséreti?
3. Hol van lant, melynek húrja váltson,  
S ne a nagy letteknél alább?  
S a harc zaján is túlkiáltson:  
"Csak diadalra!... Csak tovább!..."
4. Ki zsarnok volt s Európa réme,  
Most *ezt* nagy rémtől menti meg,  
S a népszabadság szent nevébe'  
övé a zászló, mely lebeg.
5. Mert így jutnak, idő lejártán,  
Magok a szerencsétlenek  
Szabadsághoz, kik most a sárkány  
Szemétől megszédültének.
6. Elvész, bizony, varázsa, büve,  
Miképp hatalma megtörött,  
S ez a győzelmi zászló műve,  
Mely leng a vérmező föl őlt.
7. Azért e zászlónak dicsőség!  
S *magyar* ajakról kétszeres!...  
Ha volna költő - volna ő még,  
Kit vágyunk holtan is keres!
8. De én lantom bágyadt idegjét  
*Addig* íészíteni nem merem,  
Habár olykor elhagyja szegjét  
S unalmat űzni dalt terem.
9. S nem szólok népem - a magyarhoz,  
Tán meg sem ismerné szavam;  
A *szebb* napnak, mit e vihar hoz,  
Őrülök csendesen, magam.
10. Szabad, egy még érző tetemnek,  
Síríg szeretni a hónát:  
S e diadal-nap életemnek  
Megaranyozza alkonyát.



1.

High on Haemus, down by the Danube  
 Giants' struggle is on.  
 My Muse, smaller than herself,  
 Playing in dust sings a song.

2.

But where is the song sublime,  
 Worthy of the winner,  
 Sounding proper praises  
 In both worlds, here and there?

3.

Where is the lute tuned  
 To equal the deed?  
 Rise above the battle noise-  
 "Forward! Triumph!... Proceed!..."

4.

Late tyrant, Europe's terror,  
 Saves *her* from tyranny,  
*His* flag flutters in the sacred  
 Name of people's liberty.

5.

For thus, in time, freedom  
 Reaches those tragic  
 Nations still enchanted  
 By the dragon's magic.

10.

A corpse with live senses,  
 Faithful to my country till death:  
 This day of triumph crowns  
 My sunset with golden wreath.

9.

I sing no call to my Magyar s-  
 They'd fail to recognize my voice;  
 At a *clearer* day this storm brings  
 I, silent and single, rejoice.

8.

To *that* key I dare not tune  
 The weakened chords of my lute  
 Which only leaves its holder  
 To ease my solitude.

7.

Therefore to that flag "Glory!"  
 And from *Magyar* lips, twice!...  
 Were but the Poet alive whom  
 We wish from the dead to rise!

6.

The charm will vanish  
 Just as his powers yield  
 To the flag of triumph  
 In the bloodstained field.

The concluding two lines, creating a "frame," mirror the two opening lines. The words, "struggle of giants," evoke a mental sight of a landscape ("High on Haemus, down by the Danube"), and in the closing lines "day of triumph" is synchronous with a metaphorical sunset in a spiritual landscape. By the end of the poem the Muse, who in the overture is reported to be "smaller than herself," rises to the occasion with a song, not hortatory or jubilant but passionately meditative. "But where is the song sublime" in stanza 2 is consonant with "I sing no call to my Magyars" in stanza 9, and the praise sounding "in both worlds" contrasts with the poet rejoicing "silent and single." Tuning the lute occurs in stanzas 3 and 8, the stanzas which also contrast the mighty call of the lute powerful enough to "Rise above the battle

noise" and its intimate, soft melody "to ease my solitude." Stanzas 4 and 7 repeat the "flag" theme while the phrase, "the sacred Name of people's liberty" is a near quote from Petőfi. The pivoting stanzas (5 and 6) develop the same theme repetitiously as if expressing two reflexive symmetrical aspects of one idea: a) "thus" (i.e. thanks to the flag of freedom in stanza 4) those nations which are still bewitched by the eyes of the dragon will, "in time," win freedom; b) the charm of the dragon will be broken just as its power has been thanks to the flag of triumph fluttering over the bloody field.

The symmetrical form parallels the dual antithetical development of the subtheme of the poem:

1) *growth* from the declaration of the un worthiness of the poet to sing the victory, through the struggle with the idea that the only worthy singer is dead, to the "solution" that Arany who is "dead" too (a live corpse) finds an adequate way (or grown up to the task in the very verses he is writing) to praise the triumph, which crowns the sunset of his life with golden ("golden" means "arany") rays;

2) *decrease* from the sonorous invocation and high mythological reference, through somewhat subdued meditations, reflections and hesitations about the historical lessons of the event and the seclusion of the poet, to the closing scenes of silence and quietude.

### B) *Figurai Symmetry*

Symmetry also appears on "lower" levels of poetical structure. *Palindromes* (texts which read the same backwards or forwards) are based on letters (phonemes), syllables, words, phrases or verse lines. Technically all these forms are self-closing, they end as soon as the sequence of their units reiterates the initial item.

Anagrammatic textual structures (acrostics, onomasticons, chronograms, chronostichons etc., etc.) are figurai. If a sequence of symbols is produced in a given communicative dimension, the sequence that structures the text of the anagrammatic message will evolve in topological space, i.e. rely on another dimension of communication.

It is doubtful if the text of a figurai poem like *La colombe poignardée et le jet d'eau* by Apollinaire is self-closing despite its close definition by the figure. Anagrams may occur in textual forms with no spatial regulation but spatially organized, consequently figurai, anagrammatic poems have a pre-fixed literal structure. The text is destined to fill in spaces the anagrammatical spatial

positions leave open. If the pre-fixed structure of a figurai poem defines the whole text with all its elements, it will give up all its textual complexities, e.g. shrink to a single word or name, and become a kind of linguistic arabesque in a purely decorative context as in cabalistic cubes. Anagrammatic poetry, acrostics, onomasticons, chronograms, chronostichons etc., (as a rule) open a room for free play around the symbols standing for the concept anagrammatized.

Anagrams are not limited to alphabetical writing, they occur also in lexigraphy. Professor Eugene Eoyang (Indiana University, Bloomington) reports that in a poem printed in the Chinese newspaper *People's Daily*, March 20, 1991, the Chinese characters running diagonally through the poem read "Li Peng (Chinese Prime Minister) step down, mollify the people's anger."<sup>10</sup> The anagrammatic manoeuvre is based on the lexical fact that the pair of characters standing for the statesman's name has a meaning: "li" is "plum" and "peng" is the name of a mythological bird.

To close the poem the poet added a line which is structurally independent from the anagram. This again indicates that anagrammatic structures do not necessarily imply self-closing stratagems.

#### 4. Non-Formal Central Ordering by Structural Conceit

Almost any aspect of the thematic structure of the poem may serve as a starting point to study the poem as a textual whole: a central theme, a conclusive story, an ordered description of a subject, an accomplished allegory, a well-organized sequence of variations, or any of the classes of "Thematic Structure and Closure" as exemplified in Barbara Herrnstein Smith's study (paratactic, sequential, associative and dialectic structures).<sup>11</sup> Thus it is no surprise that certain closely knit poems are based on a single conceit or extended metaphor. Classical examples are *The Flea*, *A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning* or *The Extasie* by John Donne. In *The Flea* the substantial poetical gesture is the varied extension of the argument while sustaining the complex metaphorical image which is not the flea as such but the idea of a strange and unholy *trinity* ("three lives in one flea"). Again in *A Valediction* the central metaphorical image roots in an abstract ideal, that of the synchronical distance and union of two loving souls, and the extended metaphors of the foliated gold and of the movement of the compass are only instances of the argument evolving the main conceit. Similarly, *The Extasie* develops a trinitarian mystery of love with the idea of the union of two souls and the birth of a new one.

It can be seen that an abstract notion, that of the mysterious unity of separate spiritual entities, is a metaphorical structure as it stands. It acts as an extended metaphor rather than the central theme of the argumentation, as it informs complex textual wholes as a single source of theorization and also intermediary metaphors. There is however a textual formation in which a central metaphor informs individual parts of the text without lining them into a sequence of arguments (argumentation is ingrained in Donne's poetry).<sup>12</sup> In such cases the extended conceit appears as *a structural complex of metaphors* as in *Kortársam R. A. halálán* (On the Death of My Contemporary, A. R., 1877) by János Arany.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>1. Kidölt immár sok ép, erős,<br/>Ki velem indult és haladt;<br/>Kevés itt fenn az ismerős:<br/>Oh, mennyivel több föld alatt!</p>          | <p>1. Many who started with me fell<br/>Though they appeared all safe and sound.<br/>Few whom I knew have stayed above,<br/>Oh, more are gone under the ground.</p> |
| <p>2. Reményem - elzárt völgy-fenék,<br/>Nincs onnan út, kivezető;<br/>Emlékezet üdülne még -<br/>De az meg egy nagy temető.</p>               | <p>2. My hope is a closed valley where<br/>The roads recurve in symmetry.<br/>Memory could refresh me yet,<br/>Were it not a vast cemetery.</p>                     |
| <p>3. Olt fekszenek távol, közel;<br/>Egy-egy külön sír jeleli<br/>Futó harcban hol estek el -<br/>Mint a Horácok elleni.</p>                  | <p>3. There they lie all, one far, one near,<br/>Their separate graves signify<br/>They dropped in a running battle like<br/>The foes of the Horatii.</p>           |
| <p>4. S én a pályán vagyok ma még,<br/>Leggyöngébb a futók között;<br/>Fenntart egy szálnyi tartalék,<br/>Bár testem és lelkem törött.</p>     | <p>4. I am still on the track to date,<br/>The weakest runner of them all,<br/>Held by a thin thread of reserve<br/>Though broken are body and soul.</p>            |
| <p>5. Még elkerült ásó, kapa -<br/>S tán engem a sors arra tart,<br/>Hogy visszanézve, mind csupa<br/>Sírhalmot lássak, ravatalt.</p>          | <p>5. Spared by the speedy spade and hoe,<br/>Fate keeps me up here to look back<br/>And see, as I pass, every grave,<br/>Every tomb, every catafalque.</p>         |
| <p>6. Most a tiédet hantolák:<br/>Im tőlem is rá e göröngy!<br/>Oh! hitte volna egy világ,<br/>Hogy <i>te</i> elébb búcsút köszönj?</p>        | <p>6. It came now to your burial:<br/>I drop <i>this</i> clod on your grave.<br/>You bid farewell ahead of me<br/>Though this the world cannot believe.</p>         |
| <p>7. Egy nap derült volt rád s reám:<br/>Nem várhatál még keveset?...<br/>De sírunk sem lesz messze tán,<br/>Ha bölcsőnk oly közel esett.</p> | <p>7. Our day of birth was one and same:<br/>Why, had you no time left to lose?<br/>Nay, our graves will not lie far<br/>If our cradles rocked so close.</p>        |

The central metaphor of the poem cannot be defined in terms of a single image or notion. Perhaps the image or notion of *succession* is of some help: succession in space and time and also a sequential order based on a difference of physical strength and endurance. Whatever it is, it preserves its unnamed status while it informs the poem at least on five different levels of imagery: (1) a temporal sequence of the deaths of one's contemporaries; (2) the spatial sequence of the graves in a graveyard; (3) the classical reference to the "running battle" of the Horatii and Curiatii, in which the dead bodies (and later, the graves) of the fighters milestoned (4) the "race-course" of the battle; (5) the race-course as a biblical reference and as a metaphor for contrasting the weak and the strong participants of the life-race.

This means that the poem unifies, and the individual stanzas elaborate, a series of logically interwoven metaphorical instances, an intellectually and poetically amplified *structural concetto*. Its substance, the parallelism of spatial and temporal sequences on various planes of life, is inexpressible in prose paraphrase, and, save for its latent omnipresence, it is left unexpressed in the poem.

It is interesting that the succession of the individual stanzas of the poem is not defined closely by the direction of the argumentation or the operation of its central structural *concetto*. Some of the stanzas are interchangeable or omissible. Stanza 2 is presentable as an independent piece of poetry, stanzas 1 and 5, or 1-5, or 1, 3-5, or 1, 4-5, or 1-3, 6-7 also make a poem on their own. Were the poem concluded with stanza 1, it would leave the reader with the haunting vision of a Dantesque multitude in subterranean vaults.

In *Anyátlan leányka* (Motherless girl, 1843) by Mihály Vörösmarty textual structure results from a shifting movement from one metaphor to another. The central metaphorical principle is an *algorithm of metamorphoses*, a sequence of change inherent in the individual metaphors. Thus the adjective "flower-eyed" implies the blue of spring flower and sky. From the union of the sky and the spring flowers "a ray of charm" issues and the metamorphosis of the mother's soul, which in the shape of a flower appears in sky-blue clothes brought from heaven and finds her earthly heaven in her daughter's eyes, whose blue stands for hope and memory in romantic flower symbolism (the violet and the forget-me-not).

Hadd lássalak, le kis  
Virágszemű leány;  
Szemedben ég van-e  
Vagy tavaszi virány?  
Vagy ég és a virány  
Úgy egyesültének,  
Hogy bájvilág gyanánt  
Szemedben égjenek?  
Anyádnak lelke tán  
Virággá változott,  
S a honbul, melybe kelt,  
Égszín ruhát hozott?  
S most e világra vált  
Kis mennyben itt mulat,  
Folytatni üdv gyanánt  
A földi napokat?  
Nézz vígan kis leány.  
Mosolygjon kék szemed;  
Szent fény, mi benne ég:  
Remény s emlékezet.

Let me enjoy your looks,  
You flower-eyed little thing;  
Is the sky in your eyes  
Or the blossom of the spring?  
Did sky and blossom fuse  
And finally arise  
As brilliant rays of charm  
Gleaming bright from your eyes?  
Perhaps your mother's soul  
Has now become a flower  
And from the realm where she passed  
Brought sky-blue clothes to wear?  
Does she dwell in that small  
Heaven transformed to this  
World to spend earthly days  
But in heavenly bliss?  
Be cheerful, little girl,  
Eyes smiling merrily,  
Their light is sacred light:  
Of hope and memory.

## 5. Linear Order Ordered

### *Catalogue as Form*

Catalogues are perhaps the simplest formulaic texts in which self-construction leads to self-destruction by an actual or symbolical exhaustion of the stock. The symbolical regulation of the length and order of Psalm 119 by the Hebrew alphabet or the numerical structure of the *Divina Commedia* may be considered as secondary developments of the catalogue form.<sup>13</sup>

#### *A) Spells*

In analogical magic a linear progress of utterances on increase or decrease (with incidental reference to numerical sequences) models the mobilization of healing or destructive powers.

#### *B) Formulaic Chain Stories*

The algorithm of formulaic chain stories<sup>14</sup> genders formally endless continuity with a more or less arbitrary ending or turning point. Then, with a systematic change, the algorithm is reversed to trace back the sequence of events

to where they started from. E.g. a turning point with a logical (or, rather, paralogical) reason: the cloud which did not give rain changes its mind when the frog begins croaking, and thus the events that led up to this point are re-wound, and the cow will not eat the flower. (*The Cow and the Flower*, an Indian folktale.) In a collection of folktales (1862) by László Arany (János Arany's son) we find *The Bush and the Little Bird*. The little bird asks the bush to rock her. The bush will not rock her. Next she asks the goat to eat the bush. The goat refuses. The wolf would not eat the goat, and the village would not hunt down the wolf. The little bird turns to the fire, the water, the bull, the stick, the worm, and the cock. Finally the cock cannot resist temptation and eats the worm. This triggers a reel-back of events: the worm pierces the stick, the stick slays the bull, the bull drinks the water, the water extinguishes the fire, the fire burns up the village, the village hunts down the wolf, the wolf eats the goat, the goat chomps the bush, and the bush begins to rock the little bird. This series of fantastic reversals (the *dead* bull drinks the water which, then, extinguishes the fire etc., etc.) is an ironic version (disclosing the irony of the scheme) of the ordinary chain-tale pattern in which such astonishing reversals do not necessarily occur.

Except in pieces written for children such formulaic patterns do not seem to be cultivated in "high poetry." A number of successful folk-tale imitations on this mood were written by Pál Gyulai, a close friend of the Arany-family.

## 6. Permutation

A good instance for the purely technical regulation of self-closing textual progress in verse form is the *sestina*.

In his book, *The Skin of the He-Wolf*, Csaba Szigeti reflected on the belated entry of the form into Hungarian poetry.<sup>15</sup> As to the form itself, he seems to be convinced that the permutative organization of verse also informs the total meaningful structure of the poem as it defines an actual sequence of meanings with its regulation of the sequence of line-ending words. His conclusion is that "the *meaning* of the poem cannot be explored without an exploration of the nature of organization."<sup>10</sup>

In the case of the *sestina* and its kindred forms "arbitrarily accepted rules prescribe the size of the poem in an algebraic way in contrast to the sonnet whose fixed length was set by culture and tradition."<sup>17</sup>

The permutative linear structure in a poem like *Fughetta* (1956) by Sándor Weöres appears as a conceit-like organizing principle of imaginative dynamics revealing how phasic snapshots of spatial movement bring into being their own metaphorical space.

egy gerenda legurul  
 piros csörgők tündökölnek  
 kék tojások énekelnek  
 tarka csigaszarvak lengnek

a beam is rolling down  
 red rattles glitter  
 blue eggs sing  
 dappled snail horns sway

piros csörgők összetörnek  
 egy gerenda legurul  
 kék tojások énekelnek  
 tarka csigaszarvak lengnek

red rattles break  
 a beam is rolling down  
 blue eggs sing  
 dappled snail horns sway

piros csörgők összetörnek  
 kék tojások szétfeccsennek  
 egy gerenda legurul  
 tarka csigaszarvak lengnek

red rattles break  
 blue eggs splash  
 a beam is rolling down  
 dappled snail horns sway

piros csörgők összetörnek  
 kék tojások szétfeccsennek  
 tarka csigaszarvak tűnnek  
 egy gerenda legurul

red rattles break  
 blue eggs splash  
 dappled snail horns disappear  
 a beam is rolling down

## 7. Parallel Structure

### *A) Self-Closure by Concurrent Linguistic and Musical Sign-Components*

In "Some Aspects of the Analysis of Verbal Works of Art" János S. Petőfi presents an elaborate terminology for the linguistic description of certain textual structures, i.e. for the description of "texts taken in a narrower sense (obtained by projecting the musical and the linguistic component on one another)."<sup>18</sup> The "musical component" consists of "a phonetic and a rhythmic subcomponent," while the "linguistic component" consists of "a syntactic and a semantic subcomponent." His analysis of *Őszi dal* (Autumn Song) by Sándor Weöres is based on the status of these components as constants and variables in the two stanzas of the poem.



őszi ködben  
 zúgó ötven  
 nyárfa,  
 ötven dal van  
*törzsetekbe*  
 zárva.

In autumn's fog  
 booming fifty  
 poplars,  
 fifty songs are  
 closed  
*in your trunks.*

őszi csöndben  
 nyíló ötven  
 láda,  
 ötven szív van  
*deszkákba*  
 zárva.

In autumn's still  
 opening fifty  
 cases,  
 fifty hearts are  
 closed  
*in your planks.*

(English translation by János S. Petőfi)

He points out that in the Hungarian text both composition units (both stanzas) have an identical structure which, taken into account the syllabic qualities of individual words, is representable in a graph (blanks correspond to word boundaries):

2	2	2	2	2
2	11	4	2	

This reveals that "the structures of the linguistic and musical sign-components are concurrent" (...) "This concurrent structure links the two units."<sup>19</sup>

The same concurrent structure may, of course, link any number of units, but - in Weöres's materialization of the form - two are enough to exemplify (or exhaust) the range of the formal compositional principle of the poem.

This is, virtually, a non-conclusive (or endless) form of text-construction, almost like any stanzaic form of which numberless samples are issued. Yet it involves the problem of "saturation"<sup>20</sup> or that of exhaustion. After a number of stanzas the poet runs out of contextually meaningful rhyming words and, after a while, of a sensible context for words that meet the demands of the form, and the only way out is transition to nonsense verses.

Poems with this kind of parallel stanzaic structure and elaborate pattern of linguistic and musical components extend, as a rule, only to a few stanzas. Close parallelism of two successive stanzas develops a dual form, which, though not completely symmetrical, repeats an image of the model first introduced. What emerges as textual novelty in the second stanza must have the power to exhaust the chances of poetical variety.

A poem by Katalin Ladik, entitled *a kés* (the knife, 1988),<sup>21</sup> illustrates how exhaustive or conclusive is the parallel pattern of a second stanza if its

meaningful textual context implies jumping to a conclusion by an extreme observation of the rules of the game.

*a kés*

ha kettévágjuk a körtét  
a piros hajú kislány  
nem fog sírni többé

ha kettévágjuk a kislányt  
a piros hajú körte  
nem fog sírni többé

*the knife*

if we cut the pear in two  
the red haired little girl  
will not cry any longer

if we cut the little girl in two  
the red skinned pear  
will not cry any longer

In the Hungarian text the only variables are "körtét" and "kislányt" as "haj" means both "skin of a fruit" and "hair." In the English version "haired" and "skinned" also appear, by necessity, as variables. Mechanical application brings out the full irony of the scheme (like the mechanical reversals in a chain tale) and helps stanza 2 land in the realm of nonsense poetry.

Parallel structure prepares the closure in *Down by the Salley Gardens* by William Butler Yeats.

Down by the salley gardens my love and I did meet;  
She passed the salley gardens with little snow-white feet.  
She bid me take love easy, as the leaves grow on the tree;  
But I, being young and foolish, with her would not agree.

In a field by the river my love and I did stand,  
And on my leaning shoulder she laid her snow-white hand.  
She bid me take life easy, as the grass grows on the weirs;  
But I was young and foolish, and now am full of tears.

*Identical phrases ("constants") in both stanzas'.*

.....my love and I did ....

.....snow-white.....

She bid me take.....easy, as the.....grow(s) on the.....

But I...young and foolish.....

In the two stanzas lines 1 and 3 have the same syntactical structure. The *variables* also represent parallelism in kind, as sentence-elements and as natural equivalents, e.g. "meet - stand," "feet - hand," "leaves...tree - grass...weirs." The variance is greatest between the five word long phrases at the end of stanzas 1 and 2: "with her would not agree" and "now am full of tears." These are antithetical statements. Together they accede to the irreversibility of

temporal order and causality: the tears of memory or repentance fall in consequence of, and to annul, a past disagreement of the lovers. With this single "twist" or "turn" the movement of the poetic thought reaches a standstill and one may wonder at the distinct and thorough precision with which the conclusion is advanced at the end of stanza 1. The "turn" in the last phrase to the *present* and to a *nostalgic mood*, which arises as a consequence of the past, comes about as a meaningful utilization of the chances of self-closure inherent in the logical and musical structure of the poem.

Barbara Herrnstein Smith quotes *Down by the Salley Gardens* to illustrate the role of temporal sequence in a *sequential structure* (her term). It is obvious that she is less interested in textual than in thematic structures. In this particular case she explains that "narrative lyric" based on a sequence of past events "will usually conclude with some comment very much in the present"<sup>22</sup> and it is common to have "a poem that develops for a certain portion through the narration of past event, but concludes with a »turn« that breaks out of the strictly narrative mode, or simply continues beyond it in some other way."<sup>23</sup> She adds that "temporal sequence in such a poem presents no problem for closure because time is stopped *before* the conclusion and, as in nonliterary anecdote, the speaker concludes by explaining its significance, adding some general or reflective comment, or otherwise »framing« the anecdote with some indication of why he told it in the first place."<sup>24\*</sup>

### B) Forms of Thematic Summary

A summary of themes mentioned or developed in earlier parts of a poem is another formula of conclusion. The idea is comparable with the *reprise* in pieces of music.

There are quite a few lyrics written by Pál Gyulai in the form of "theme summary":

*Virágnak mondanálak (1846)*

Virágnak mondanálak,  
A rózsza, liliom,  
Mint egy tőnek virági,  
Virulnak arcodon.  
De a virág nem érez,  
Ne légy virág nekem...  
Maradj kedves leánynak,  
S légy hű szerelmesem!

Csillagnak mondanálak.  
Mely est koránya lett,  
Virasztva édes álom  
S édesb titok felett.  
A csillagfény hideg fény,  
Ne légy csillag nekem...  
Maradj kedves leánynak,  
S légy hű szerelmesem!

Hajnalnak mondanálak,  
Mely hogyha felkőszönt,  
Ég és föld mosolygva  
örömkönnyüket önt.  
A hajnalláng múltó láng,  
Ne légy hajnal nekem...  
Maradj kedves leánynak,  
S légy hű szerelmesem!

Vagy légy virág s virulj fel  
Itt híved kebelén;  
Légy csillag, fényt sugárzó  
Balsorsom éjjelén;  
S hajnal, mely harmatot hoz,  
örömkönnyűt nekem:  
Oh légy a nagy világon  
Egyetlen mindenem!

*I'd Call You Flower*

I'd Call You flower,  
The lily and the rose  
Like two flowers on one stem  
Are blooming on your face.  
But flowers are senseless things,  
Be not a flower to me...  
Remain a darling girl, true  
Through all eternity!

I'd like to call you star,  
The dawn of night who is  
Vigilant on our sweet dreams  
And sweeter mysteries.  
The star's light is a cold light,  
Be not a star to me...  
Remain a darling girl, true  
Through all eternity!

I'd like to call you dawn  
Who greets the sky and earth  
And they return her greeting  
With bright dew - tears of mirth.  
The flame or dawn will vanish,  
Be not the dawn to me...  
Remain a darling girl, true  
Through all eternity!

Or be flower, on the bosom  
Of your sweetheart to bloom  
Be star, the only radiance  
In the night of my doom;  
Or dawn to bring bright dew and  
The tears of mirth to me:  
Oh be for me all in one  
Through all eternity!

Out of the repetitive organization (constants) of each stanza emerge the thematic words "flower," "star" and "dawn" (variables). In the closure of the poem the thematic words and phrases form a sequence which revocates the earlier negative thematic statements.

A similar but simpler construction, stripped almost to the skeleton of the formula, occurs in *Nyíló rózsza...* (Rose in Bloom..., 1861):

Nyíló rózsá, nap sugara  
 Csalogánydal, lepke szárnya  
 Mind oly szép, úgy szeretem.  
 Oh de, lásd, te csalogányom,  
 Rózsám, lepkém, napsugárom  
 Egyben együtt vagy nekem.

Rose in bloom, radiant sunlight,  
 Nightingale's song, butterfly's wing  
 All so nice. I love them all.  
 Oh but, see! you, my nightingale,  
 My rose, my butterfly, my sunlight,  
 You are for me all in one.

The summary of the themes, though it certainly creates a kind of closure, does not necessarily coincide with the end of the poem. (Nor does the *reprise* in a piece of music.)

Petőfi's poem, *Az erdőnek madara van...* (1847) gives us a hint how thematical summary, instead of being used as a closure in itself, is developed, by antithetical division, to singling out as winner one thematic component, the "lad":

Az erdőnek madara van,  
 És a kertnek virága van,  
 És az égnek csillaga van,  
 S a legénynek kedvese van.

Flower belongs to garden,  
 Bird belongs to wood,  
 Star belongs to sky,  
 Lassie belongs to lad.

Virítsz, virág, dalolsz, madár,  
 És te ragyogsz, csillagsugár,  
 S a lány virít, dalol, ragyog...  
 Erdő, kert, ég, legény boldog.

Flower blossoms, bird sings,  
 Star gleams overhead,  
 The lassie blossoms, sings and gleams:  
 Happy are all: garden, wood, sky and lad.

Hej elhervad a virágszál,  
 Csillag lehull, madár elszáll,  
 De a leány, az megmarad,  
 A legény a legboldogabb.

Hey! flowers vanish  
 Birds leave, stars fall,  
 But the lassie is faithful,  
 And the lad is happiest of all.

Though the structure of thematic summary is crystal clear in a lyrical episode of *Buda halála* (Buda's Death, 1863), a long heroic poem by János Arany, it is not conclusive in the sense of creating a poetic closure; instead, with a single phrase, it recurs to Etelë and the events of the narrative:

Ébredj deli hajnal, te rózsá-özönlő!  
 Már lengeti keblét hűs hajnali szellő;  
 Ébredj puha fészkek melegén, pacsirta!  
 Már tetszik az égen hajnal elő-írja.

Támadj koronás nap! már zeng neked a dal;  
 Serkenj hadi kürtszó, költs sereget zajjal!  
 Fuvalom, hajnal, kürt, pacsirta, had és nap,  
 Ébredjelek mind, mind! Etele ím gyorsabb.

Awake, Thou gracious Dawn, flooding with rose-blossom!  
 A coolish morning breeze sways her gentle bosom.  
 Awake, Skylark, awake, from thy warm nest rise high!  
 Early purple light tints the brim of the dark sky.

Solemn song wakes thee, Sun, Radiant Crowned, rise!  
 Blow Thou, Warring Trumpet, stir the armed crowd's noise!  
 Breeze, Dawn, Trumpet, Skylark, Army, Sun, wake all ye!  
 Wake, though loo late for the long awake Etele.

János Hankiss quotes a four liner from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* to point to an implied summary of themes:

Der Himmel ist mein Hut,  
 Die Erde ist mein Schuh,  
 Das heilige Kreuz ist mein Schwert,  
 Wer mich sieht, hat mich lieb und wert.

The text is completed by line 4, which is "a consequence and an atmospheric climax (I am not really poor, as I own the sky and the earth and the cross, therefore anyone who sees me will love and honour me)."<sup>25</sup>

The rhetorical power of closure by thematic summary lies in the similar progress of two parallel enumerations of which the latter is usually accelerated by the concentrating effects of the summary. The parallel antithetical development of themes is rhetorically effective even if there is no formal summary in it, or when the summary is only a slightly abbreviated repetition of the enumeration. Thus enumerations may underline simple antithetical statements as in Eve's words in Book IV of *Paradise Lost*

With thee conversing I forget all time,  
 All seasons and their change, all please alike.  
 Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,  
 With charm of earliest Birds; pleasant the Sun  
 When first on this delightful Land he spreads  
 His orient Beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flour,  
 Glistening with dew; fragrant the fertil earth  
 After soft showers; and sweet the coming on  
 Of grateful Evening milde, then silent Night  
 With this her solemn Bird and his fair Moon,  
 And these the Gemms of Heav'n, her starrie train:  
 But neither breath of Morn when she ascends  
 With charm of earliest Birds, nor rising Sun  
 On this delightful land, nor herb, fruit, floure,

Glisring with dew, nor fragrance after showers,  
 Nor grateful Evening mild, nor silent Night  
 With this her solemn Bird, nor walk by Moon,  
 Or glittering Starr-light without thee is sweet.

The rhetorical structure of the passage is based on a sequence of positive values followed by a sequence of negative statements on the same themes. The doubled inclusive poles are "with thee" - "without thee" and "sweet is" - "is sweet."<sup>26</sup>

### C) *The Case of Self-Closing Text-Construction*

A masterpiece of the form with an inherent and fully developed logical conclusion and a completely self-closing structure generated by the linguistic and the musical components is *Nem kell dér...* (1878) by János Arany:

Nem kell dér az őszi lombnak, Mégis egyre sárgul: Dér nekül is, fagy nekül is, Lesohajt az ágrul.	No frost bids the autumn foliage Ever to turn yellow, No frost, no freeze, yet it lingers Downward from the willow.
Nem kell bú az aggott főnek, Mégis egyre őszül: Bú nekül is, gond nekül is Nyugalomra készül.	No pain bids one's head at old age Ever to grow grayer, No pain, no care, yet it craves for Rest with every prayer.
Hátha dél-fagy, bú-gond érte, ősze is már késő: Hogy' pereljen sorsa ellen A szegény lomb és fő!...	But when frost-freeze, pain-care hit them And their autumn's too late, How'd the withered foliage and head Plead against their due fate?

One would hardly think that a triple logical manoeuvre is at work in the "dianoia" ("poetic thought" or unified ideatic-metaphoric structure) of the poem.

(A) The logical procedures inherent in the text:

(1) A summary of terms as in a calculation of propositional logic: i.e. stanza 3, with its summerizing merger of the central terms ("frost-freeze," "pain-care," "foliage and head") is a logical summary of the variables in the first two stanzas ("frost," "foliage," "freeze" in stanza 1, "pain," "head," "care" in stanza 2).

(2) A dual syllogism whose terms are, individually, the following propositions: (a) if there is no need for frost and freeze to turn the foliage yellow, how much more it is exposed to its doom when its autumn is "too late" (i.e. frost

and freeze are inevitable), (b) if there is no need for pain and care to turn one's head gray, how much more it is exposed to its doom when its autumn is "too late" (pain and care are inevitable).

(3) A unification in stanza 3 of the two (1, 2) processes (above) as equally representative metaphorical elements of two distinct series (each mirroring the other). The logic of distinct self-mirroring reflection appears in the parallel syllogistic formulae (2). Unification is carried out by the summerizing processes and formulae ("and"\* or " - ") of propositional logic (1).

(B) Genetically the textual linguistic coherence of the poem derives from two sources, which in the actual text coexist and extinguish one another. One is *Parallelism Based on Concurrent Linguistic and Musical Components*, the other *Parallelism Concurrent in Thematic Summary*.

(1) *Parallelism Based on Concurrent Linguistic and Musical Components*, the identical system of the "constants" of the poem includes not only single words and phrases but also the complete linguistic and musical structure. This complete parallelism whose components are separately exposed in stanzas 1-2 is inherently present also in stanza 3. If for stanza 3 the consequences of the thematic summary are suspended, the individual thematic structure, based on two different series of "variables" in stanzas 1-2, will extend, textually, to two parallel stanzas:

- (a) \* Hátha dér is, fagy is érte,  
       ősze is már késő:  
       Hogy' pereljen sorsa ellen  
       A szegény lomb!...
- (b) \* Hátha bú is, gond is érte,  
       ősze is már késő:  
       Hogy' pereljen sorsa ellen  
       A szegény fű!...
- (a) \* But when frost and freeze hit it  
       And its autumn's too late,  
       How'd the withered foliage  
       Plead against its due fate?
- (b) \* But when pain and care hit it  
       And its autumn's too late,  
       How'd the withered head  
       Plead against its due fate?

Obviously this alteration of the linguistic and musical characteristics of the poem, including its verbal phrasing and its rhythm and rhymes, changes the poem as a complete linguistic and musical structure.



(2) *Parallelism Concurrent in Thematic Summary*. The poem seems to present a special instance of thematic summary. Not only the main verbal protagonists (grammatical subjects) of the parallel text units (stanzas 1-2) are summarized ("foliage *and* head") but also the names of the physical or psychical factors which affect them (frost and freeze, or pain and care, respectively). The summary of the latter takes place in two (coincidental) steps: (1) the summary of the factors affecting the foliage (frost-freeze) and the head (pain-care) separately; (2) the sum total of the factors affecting both the foliage and the head ("frost-freeze," "pain-care").

The conclusion of the linguistic and musical processes of the poem (not to speak of the logical coherence of its "dianoia") *create a definite closure forbidding continuation*. The same processes *exclude an internal growth of the text*. No stanzas, lines or words can be inserted in the poem at any point without a detrimental effect to its perfect self-construction.

The forms described above are in a sense repeatable: they have a diagrammatic, schematic nature as mere patterns or formulas. Pál Gyulai seems to have consciously exploited them, or at least those easily adaptable to his poetic purpose. His poems based on parallel structure and thematic summary are masterly discoveries of the commonplace. These forms serve as patterns for ready-mades. In the latest period of his poetry when he became interested in them, Arany seems to have experimented with their polar extremities. He tested his capacities of verbal precision and economy in a strict though inventive construction of a complex abstract scheme and his suggestive power by *the creation of outstanding poetic dianoia* within the boundaries thus defined. I do not intend to discuss the "mood," "atmosphere" or "profundity of thought" in *Nem kell dér...* Nor will I examine how the word "plead" is brought in at the right moment to reverberate a recurring phrase, "Plead my cause..." in *Psalms* (35:1, 119:154).

Arany's experimentation with marginal cases instead of the commonplace potentials of formulaic composition is illustrated by *Csalfa sugár* (Deceptive Sunshine, 1880), a song-like poem brooding playfully over a premature romance of his small grand-daughter:

Kis bokor, ne hajts még,  
Tél ez, nem tavasz;  
Kis lány, ne sóhajts még;  
Nem tudod, mi az.

Small bush, don't bloom yet,  
It's winter, not spring;  
Small lass, don't sigh yet;  
Of that you know nothing.

Bokor új hajtását  
Letarolja fagy;  
Lány kora nyillasát  
Bú követi, nagy.

Frost will blast the small bush,  
Its fresh bud, new leaf;  
Lassies' early flowering  
Ends in lasting grief.

Szánnám a bokorkát  
 Lomb- s virágtalan:  
 S a lányt, a botorkát,  
 Hogy már oda van!

I'd pity the small bush,  
 So leafless, so bare;  
 And the lass, though foolish,  
 Left soon to despair.

The self-closing algorithm is clear. Two parallel processes (the fate of the bush in stanza 1 and that of the girl in stanza 2) integrate in stanza 3 so that the separate parallel descriptions (in lines 1-2, of the bush; in lines 3A, of the girl) continue and instead of a summerising fusion of the two terms, bush *and* girl, two rhyming words of *nearly identical* vowel and consonant structure ("bokorkát"- "botorkát"; in the translation "small bush"- "foolish") guarantee *metaphorical identity* for the bush and the girl.<sup>27</sup>

\*

#### Self- Closing Conclusions

Symmetry, however partial, seems to be inevitable in figurai poetry. Most figurai poems are linked by their figurative element to a symmetrical arrangement. This arrangement belongs to (is coadjacent with, or reflects) a dimension different from that of the primary structure of the text. (The terms "primary" and "secondary" are interchangeable due to a relativism inevitable in the interpretation of dimensional differences.) The figurai arrangement, however well it is integrated in the structure of a text, has its own specific figural-textual arrangement, which makes it discernible (viz. visually) and functions as its code or part of its code. The coincidence of two or more codes of communication appears as an anomaly in systems based on the hierarchy of primary and secondary codes (or dimensions of communication). For this reason de Saussure's linguistic system attributed an anomalous nature to the anagram as a marginal case due to a coincidence of two different text-structuring media, the verbal or phonic and the written or graphic symbolism.

The additional dimension opened by the visually self-supporting spatial scheme of a text raises "topological" problems. The transition from one dimension to another is permanent. This is why difficulties arise in the *trans-scrip Hon* of a figurai text to non-figurai linear sequence. Linear transcription changes the "structure" and "meaning" of the figurai poem. (Quotation marks are inevitable, as in the present context neither term is qualified to unequivocal application.) Istán Kilián comments his linear transcription of a

"Harmonika-Gedicht" (Accordion Poem) by Lukas Moesch, by mentioning that more initial, central or final letters occur in the linear transcription than in the accordion shaped original. "Man sieht also, dass aus den Buchstaben des Akrostichons bzw. Mesostichons der Name IOANNES so zusammengestellt werden kann, dass das I and das S zweimal, das A dreimal und das N viermal in den Zeilenanfängen vorkommen. Im Mesostichon ergibt sich die Reihe der Buchstaben anders, doch ist der Name IOANNES auch so herauslesbar. Das Telestichon hingegen verschwindet in dieser Auflösung vollkommen."<sup>28</sup> In the two dimensional arrangement two lines start with the same letter "I" and three lines with a single "A." This is inimitable in "one dimensional" linearity.

As a rule, it is impossible to render an accurate linear arrangement of certain figurai poems (e.g. rose-form poems) according to the author's assumed intention as the figure is incapable to define the order of lines. The difficulty is enhanced by the fact that in figurai poems textual coherence is often substituted by, or totally dependent on, figurai cohesion.<sup>29</sup>

*"Topological" Consequences of "Spatial" Arrangement on Any Textual Level*

The concept of the coincidence of diverse dimensionalities is extensible to any spatial form that arises from and regulates the poetical arrangement of textual sequence. As we have seen, there are poems like *Kortársam R. A. halálán* from whose textual arrangement a central structural conceit emerges and proves to be the governing idea of the poem as a whole and as a unity of definite segments. The structure of the text does not support the assumption of a self-closing algorithm. Nor does it support the assumption of any coherent linear segmentation either. As I explained earlier, complete poems are latently present in stanzas 1 and 5, or 1-5, or 1, 3-5, or 1, 4-5, or 1-3, 6-7.

This help us to see some of the structural principles of self-construction and self-closure. Though the central conceit of the poem is about sequential order (of deaths, of graves etc., etc.) no such order is preserved, by and large, in the linear structure of the poem. It is informed by its central structural conceit in the same figurative way as in a figurai poem a rose-form or a wheel-form informs its textual segments about their place in the figure without defining their sequential order in linear transcription.

This means that such a central figurative principle (the form of the graphic figure in one case and the central conceit in the other) governs a non-sequential sequence of scolon-type units, or it maintains a coherent arrangement in a graphic (or in the other case, in a metaphorical) medium by a manoeuvre of de-arrangement in the medium of linear textual sequence.

That the arrangement of the form determined by the rules of the *sesdna* is spatial (or the spatial reference of its structural laws), needs, I think, no proof. But it is worthy of attention that one customarily regards this form as a special kind of stanza sequence. Thus it is relegated to the order of stanzas, or an ensemble of stanzas, defined by a stanzaic rhyme scheme as if it were of minor importance. Nevertheless its governing scheme is a pattern of *words* (the last words of the individual lines) and not of rhymes. The same is true of the *sonetti a corona*: the structuring principle of this garland of sonnets is not a rhyme pattern (as of the individual sonnets) but a pattern of the repetitive order of *lines*.<sup>30</sup> In both cases *the pattern of self-closure is based on meaningful linguistic units*. Palindromes and similar symmetrically self-closing linguistic devices are dependent on their ordering of meaningful sequences. On the other hand, certain polar types of figurai poetry, e.g. cabalistic cubes, are disabled to maintain a self-closing textual pattern because their spatial figure or anagrammatic scheme, however perfect as a figure with its figurai self-enclosure, has no outlet to the meaningful structure of the text as a whole. Thus the geometrical-topological problem of the transcription of a spatially performed figurai poem into linear arrangement turns out to be a problem of the "inner form" (whatever that is). The two dimensions in play preserve their complementary character and functioning but complementation is reduced to *external form*, to decorative illustration and a kind of textual composition, which, though with a meaning of its own, is independent from the textual consequences of the form.

In this regard the forms described above as Parallelism Based on Concurrent Linguistic and Musical Components and Parallelism Concurrent in Thematic Summary excell with their capacity to generate (or maintain or develop) a formative spatial principle on their given levels or planes of linguistic and linguistically musical composition. The procedure is comparable to the construction of arches in the Roman or Gothic tradition: shape and dynamics conform in perfect balance. A self-closing poem such as *Nem kell dér...* or *Csalfa sugár* holds high its own burden with its dual concurrent sequence of verse as a pair of arches closed by a "keystone."

These are but metaphors. The actual process is, by and large, what I tried to explain when I discussed *Nem kell dér...*, especially under (B).

In terms of textuality the process is practically the same as what is at work in Symphonia, an overtly figurai kind of poetry. In line (a) certain elements ("constants") are identical with elements in a similar sequential position in line (b); the identical elements, i.e. those common to lines (a) and (b) can be written in a separate line (ab):

Quae	P	propter	pec	per	(line a)
	ira Dei	atris		cata emit	(line ab)
M	fr	acies	pia	red <sup>31</sup>	(line b)

This procedure does not involve self-closure (N. B. Its structural elements - "P," "atris," "pec" etc. - are not meaningful units of the language) but it illustrates, once again, how topological space functions in textual operations.

Structural descriptions of poetical texts are obliged to rely on topological reference even when the texts have nothing in common with figurai effects, parallel structures or concurrent self-closing stratagems. Dealing with Goethe's *Wanderers Nachtlied* János Hankiss attributed the enhancement of the sense of closure to a lack of congruence between the two basic systems structuring poetic texts, (1) the intellectual or grammatical and (2) the metrical and musical structures. (His terms suggest the same dichotomy as the terminology of János S. Petőfi.) János Hankiss discovered a slip between the grammatical and the linear segmentation of the poem, i.e. a source of tension due to something inexpressible on either plane but whose presence is suggestible by their confrontation *via* an irrational, extra-dimensional topological space to which the closure is an overture. "Les frontières trop rigides des articulations *a - d* sont en partie affaibles et comme dissoutes par la musique des vers dont les lignes de partage *A - E* ne coïncident pas toujours avec celles de l'analyse intellectuelle. Ce manque de congruence entre les deux systèmes (structure intellectuelle ou grammaticale - structure métrique et musicale) (...) ajoute à notre jouissance un élément de plus, pareil au contrepoint et à la fugue."<sup>32</sup> The indices *a - d* and *A - E* refer to a graph showing that while in lines 1-2 the grammatical interval coincides with the pause suggested by the rhyme pattern ("...Ruh' "), in line 5 it overruns the Halt! signalled by the rhyme word ("du").

\*

When Barbara Herrnstein Smith wrote her book she could be convinced that "the development in modern poetry" was characterised by a tendency "of deliberate anti-structure and anti-closure."<sup>33</sup> Since then we have witnessed a renaissance of figurai poetry and the cult of the permanent effectuation of self-reflexive *n + 1* dimensions of communication.<sup>34</sup> A scheme for endless self-closure.

## Notes

1. Barbara Herrnstein Smith, *Poetic Closure. A Study of How Poems End*. The University of Chicago Press. Chicago-London, 1968.
2. Cf. Pál, S. Varga, *A gondviselésihittől a vitalizmusig* (From the Belief in Providence to Vitalism). Csokonai Kiadó, Debrecen 1994. See esp. p. 123, and G. Béla Németh and László Szörényi as quoted in Note nr. 255.
3. Barbara Herrnslein Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
4. *Op. cit.*, p. 50.
5. Thomas A. Sebeok, "Decoding a Text: Levels and Aspects in a Cheremis Sonnet." In Thomas A. Sebeok (ed.), *Style in Language*. The M.I.T. Press, Cambridge, Mass. (1960) 1968, p. 234.
6. *Op. cit.*, p. 233.
7. *Op. cit.*, pp. 234-235.
8. There is a humorous child-rhyme version of the song in Cheremis folkpoetry which works as a riddle. Family relations are enumerated as in the "Cheremis sonnet" ("My father is sky's cuckoo" etc., etc.) but with no reference to the departure of the speaker, apparently a little girl. To the question in line 7, "But what am I after all?", the jocose reply is (line 8), "A tiny grain of millet, that I am after all."
9. Cf. Barbara Herrnstein Smith on paratactic structure, *op. cit.*, pp. 98-109.
10. Cf. *The New York Times*, AprU 30, 1991. Cf. Eugene Eoyang: Primal Nights and Verbal Daze: Puns Paranomasia, and the People's Daily. *Tamkang Review*, Summer 1992 (vol. XXII.) Nos 14, pp. 253-362.
11. Cf. Barbara Herrnslein Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-150.
12. Cf. "Ifs, Ands, Buts for the Reader of Donne" by Josephine Miles in *Just So Much Honour: Essays Commemorating the Four-Hundredth Anniversary of the Birth of John Donne* ed. by Peter Amadeus Fiore. The Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park and London 1972, pp. 273-291.
13. On numerical composition see "The Hidden Sense" by Maren-Sofie R<sup>^</sup>stvig in Maren-Sofie R<sup>^</sup>stvig, Arvid L<sup>^</sup>sner, et al., *The Hidden Sense and Other Essays*. Universitetsforlaget, Oslo, Humanities Press, New York 1963, pp. 1-112.
14. Cf. Mihály Hoppal, "Az »első« mese. Az ismétlés szerkezete a folklórban" (The »first« tale. The Structure of Repetition in the Folklore.) In Iván Horváth and András Veres (eds), *Ismétlődés a művészetben* (Repetition in Art). Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest 1980, pp. 244-266.
15. "Az első magyar sestina? Weöres Sándor: A szegény kis üdülőgondnok panasza." (The First Hungarian Sestina? The Laments of the Poor Little Rest-house Warden by Sándor Weöres). In Szigeti Csaba, *A himfarkas bőre. A radikális archaizmus a mai magyar költészetben*. (The Skin of the He-Wolf. Radical Archaism in Contemporary Hungarian Poetry.) Jelenkor Kiadó, Pécs 1993, pp. 141-163.
16. "...a költemény jelentése nem tárható fel a szerveződés természetének feltárása nélkül" (The meaning of the poem cannot be disclosed without disclosing the nature of its organization). *Op. cit.*, pp. 142-143.
17. "Látható, hogy a szerkezetépítés alapfelletelei miként szabják meg a vers terjedelmét sorszámmi pontossággal. Az önkényesen felvett szabályok a továbbiakban algebraikusan előírják a terjedelmet, ellentétben például a szonettel, ahol a kötött terjedelem kulturálisan, tradicionálisan rögzült." (It is visible how the basic conditions of structure determine the length of the poem to Üie exact number of lines. The arbitrarily chosen rules prescribe size

- further** on in an algebraic way, in contrast e.g. with the sonnet where the length was fixed by culture and tradition.) *Op. cit.*, pp. 133-134.
18. Petőfi, János S., *Towards a Semiotic Theory of the Human Communication (Text Linguistics – Semiotic Theory)*. Gold Press, Szeged 1991, p. 92.
  19. *Op. cit.*, p. 102.
  20. Reaching "saturation" by repetition. *Æ* Barbara Herrnstein Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
  21. Atilla Nyilas, undergraduate at the University of Miskolc, called my attention to this unique performance.
  22. Barbara Herrnstein Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 123.
  23. *Ibid.*
  24. *Op. cit.*, p. 124.
  25. János Hankiss, *Irodalomszemlélet. Tanulmányok az irodalmi alkotásról*. (An Approach to Literature. Studies on the Literary Work.) A Kir. Magyar Egyetemi Nyomda Könyvesboltja, Bp. 1941, p. 117.
  26. This also illustrates how a closure is constructed in "Milton's blank verse »paragraphs«" as described by Barbara Herrnstein Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-84.
  27. Cf. Szili, József: Arany-féle ördöglakatok. *Új írás* 1991, No. 3, pp. 89-101, No. 4, pp. 76-85.
  28. István Kilián, "Figurengedichte im Spätbarock." In B. Köpeczi, A. Tarnai (ed.), *Laurus Austriaco-Hungarica: Literarische Gattungen und Politik in der zweiten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts*. Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest - Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Wien 1988, p. 146.
  29. Based on a verbal comment by Professor Kilián.
  30. Cf. John Lotz, *The Structure of the Sonetti a Corona of Attila József*. Almqvist, Wiksell, Stockholm, 1965. (Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis. Studia Hungarica Stockholmiensia 1.)
  31. István Kilián, *op. cit.*, p. 123.
  32. Jean Hankiss, *La littérature et la vie. Problématique de la création littéraire*. Sao Paulo 1951, p. 147.
  33. Barbara Herrnstein Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 147.
  34. And also earlier, János S. Petőfi subjected *Canto Beduino* (1932), an eight line poem in symmetrical form by Giuseppe Ungaretti, to thorough textual analysis [*op. cit.*, pp. 125-143]. Dorottya Németh, a student of the Janus Pannonius University at Pécs, called my attention to the presence of self-closing parallelism in the poetry of Sandro Penna (1906-1977). In Hungary Sándor Weöres was an influential representative of this mode since the 1940s. His eight line song *Túl, túl, messze túl...* (Far, Far, Very Far away..., 1940) is a precedent to the technique of *a kés* by Katalin Ladik.





# PARADOXES OF AND ABOUT NICOLAE IORGA: ON THE HISTORY OF RUMANIANS IN TRANSYLVANIA AND HUNGARY<sup>1</sup>

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Rumanian thinkers are fond of paradoxes, all kinds of paradoxes. The word literally means contrary (*para*) opinion (*doxa*), or a view in opposition to expectations. Classic paradoxes are seemingly improbable and self-contradictory, but they are actually well-founded statements. According to Hungarian and Rumanian dictionaries paradoxes can be witty or even ingenious. According to the English, French and German ones a paradox can also be absurd and even inaccurate. In the words of Ferenc Pápai Páriz's Latin-Hungarian dictionary a paradox is an "unusual statement contrary to common sense [*közönséges értelem ellen való ritka mondás*]." This elasticity makes the paradox advantageous and sometimes disadvantageous, or even dangerous to use. Consequently depending on its use, a paradox can be either positive or negative. We can employ them in equivocal situations, when we are also full of ambiguities and react with either heated words or cynicism. The case of Nicolae Iorga is a classic and tragic example of the various uses and meanings of paradox.

Iorga was an epoch making figure. One of his disciples once observed that when turning to the past he was a historian but when turning to the future a prophet.<sup>2</sup> In short he was an educator of his nation. The number of his publications testifies to the extraordinary dimensions of his activities. From 1890 to 1934 he published 1,003 books and booklets, 12,755 studies, 4,963 reviews, and 13,682 articles on political problems. He desired to propagate an idea of national consciousness that transcended political and ideological trends and postulated an organic and integrated nation based primarily on villages and peasants. At certain moments he could actually feel that his views were shared by the entire nation. The recurring doubt that underlay his quest for truth remains one of the most interesting and valuable aspects of his thought. His huge lifework is so complex that one can hardly speak of it without misleading oversimplification. Those who write about him, invariably become entangled in Iorga's complexities.

In 1916 Iorga passionately advocated the mystique of war. Directed by the need to affirm organic development, he treated the nation as a permanent

category and virtually elevated it to heights that transcended historical development. Yet, at the same time he was fully aware of the historical relativity of nationalism. Iorga played an active part in the disintegration of the Habsburg monarchy. Later he ruefully recalled the "utility" that previous generations had derived from the former peaceful coexistence of many nationalities. A situation that after the First World War had been reshaped into an "instrument" for hatred.<sup>3</sup> Iorga could talk of his opponents, even well-respected writers, in unmentionable terms and in the next moment warn about Balkan manners. As a youth he had been a leading apostle of political anti-Semitism, but in his later years few could rival his ability to paint touching pictures of the Rumanian scholars of Jewish origin. He opposed closing the Magyar university at Kolozsvár [Cluj] and argued, "We did not obtain Transylvania in order to close the universities others have founded but to establish our own."<sup>4</sup> The Magyar minority cannot forget that during his ministry a number of anti-Magyar measures were passed. Yet he must also be remembered for his magnanimous gesture of returning to some Magyar schools the right to issue valid diplomas. His cult of ethnicity and ideas of the "organic" nation advanced the expansion of an autarkic nationalism in economic life. At the same time Iorga also urged international economic integration. He never stopped defending the values of European humanism, and yet the followers of nationalist orthodox mysticism consider Iorga an intellectual forerunner. Virgil Nemoianu remarked in "A Prodigious Rumanian, Nicolae Iorga" that during the age of fascism, "his disseminations began to grow into a horrible crop."<sup>5</sup> Consequently in 1937 when Iorga protested to King Charles against the growing influence of the Iron Guard in Parliament, the ruler could not resist the opportunity to observe, "They are your sons." Iorga sarcastically shot back, "[They are] bastards ... the only ones that morals would allow."<sup>6</sup> Thus, the Iron Guardist henchmen, who murdered Iorga on November 27, 1940, were probably not only exacting political vengeance, but in their own simple way they were also gaining revenge for his caustic remarks. One of Iorga's aphorisms is appropriate for his killers: "A madman killed the eagle in order to fly with its wings."<sup>7</sup>

To a certain degree not only Iorga's life but also his lifework fell victim to his own pithy sayings. His opponents, Magyars and Rumanians alike, often quoted him making statements such as, "What can I do with the truth when my country is in question?" or "Why should I bother about the truth when my people are at issue?"<sup>8</sup> But his critics ignored Iorga's *ars poetica*. "I wish that I had more poetic talent to lead me nearer to the truth."<sup>9</sup> By poetic talent he meant creativity, and so it is highly significant which part of his huge *oeuvre* is quoted.

Called by Iorga's Rumanian biographer "a national epic,"<sup>10</sup> *The History of Rumanians in Transylvania and Hungary*, which appeared first in two volumes

in 1915 and was recently republished, is interesting to us for several reasons. First, Iorga may have been in earnest when he said in the preface that he would like to have the book published in Hungarian as well.

Our opponents should see for once in their own language what we think of ourselves in the context of our relationship with them, and what we believe on the basis of unshakable evidence. Then they will be able to verify our views; and when the centuries-old fatal process, which is our relationship, comes to an end, they will understand why we desired and did certain things, which were prescribed as sacred duty by our entire past and the deepest needs of our inner life. (p. 13)

This work provides a taste of Iorga's methods and his technique of forming historical opinions. It also poses questions about his reception. Here we will most especially be concerned with Iorga's evaluation of major developments in the history of Transylvania, which in the previously cited article, Ion Negoitescu rephrased as, "Transylvania ought never divide Rumanians and Magyars, but unite them."

As his preface makes clear, Iorga wrote the work in a desire to urge Rumania's entry into World War I. He wished to justify national unity and desired to highlight the links between the Rumanians living on both sides of the Carpathians. The protagonist is the people, the ethnic Rumanians, the nation, which is a living organism comparable to other nations. Some kind of "nervous energy" moves a people, and the more a people clings to its rights, the stronger it is, "for a mighty fortress is our right." (p. 20) The wishes and abilities of a people are reflected primarily by the activities of its outstanding figures. Consequently Iorga could condense the events of centuries into a few sentences. At the same time he could dazzlingly parade before us hundreds of historical figures, masterfully characterize the changing historical circumstances, and enthrallingly portray the different ways of life. As one of the greatest publishers of Rumanian historical sources, he strengthened his explanations with hundreds of citations. (At most he knew only rudimentary Hungarian and understood Hungarian history primarily in terms of analogies. But he was partly familiar with the basic published sources and did some research in Budapest.)

Today his ideology is anachronistic. But through his method of describing various modes of life and connecting individual events to long-term historical developments, Iorga produced books that sold well in Europe. Some are often still enjoyable. In his trilogy delineating France's historical identity Fernand Braudel stressed the value of Iorga's 1918 work, *A History of the French People*,<sup>11</sup> while Perry Anderson esteemed Iorga for his pioneering work in depicting the conquest of Eastern Europe by nomadic peoples.<sup>12</sup> It would

neither praise nor diminish the Rumanian historian to emphasize how much he owed to his beloved Professor Karl Lamprecht, for it is Iorga's own contributions that truly matter. If Braudel could value his skill as a writer and Anderson his keen insights, why should the modern Hungarian reader, despite Iorga's intention to discredit Hungarian history, not find ways to appreciate him as well.

*The History of the Rumanians in Transylvania and Hungary* was not a facile polemic or propaganda, but the first major effort by a Rumanian from the eastern side of the Carpathians to thoroughly immerse himself the realities of Rumanians in Transylvania and Hungary. This "national epic" can also be read as a confession in which the elements of objective historical reality and its subjective literary counterpart are sometimes merged through the process of their vivification; and throughout the work we can sense the tension of intense preparation for an imminent turn in history. "This book is merely blood and tears. We have paid at least a thousand years for it. Let at least our offspring awaken to better days!" (p. 13) Nevertheless we can say that his realism as a historian triumphed. When evoking the past, Iorga was able to overcome in his own peculiarly contradictory manner this ideology of "blood and tears." On the one hand he declared the Rumanians to be a "passive race" (p. 20), and on the other he attempted to demonstrate their active presence in the region. By emphasizing two important factors in Iorga's book, we will try to illustrate his approach to a common Rumanian-Hungarian past. This choice of factors is not arbitrary, for they are the two central ideas of his work. First, he concentrated on the relationship of Rumanians to Magyars. Second, Iorga stressed the unity of the Rumanian people and the interplay between the lives and efforts of the Rumanians living in various regions.

His intellectual starting point was the concept of Daco-Rumanian continuity. Alexandru Philippide, a professor of linguistics at the University of Iași, who during the 1920s in a monumental two volume study carefully reviewed all of the previous theories, determined that the Rumanians had occupied their present territory by the twelfth century. Calling them confused, he bitterly and aggressively criticized Iorga's views on the subject.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless we can say, without undo prejudice, that Iorga's theory is still so attractive, the facts pale beside it. Naturally Iorga claimed that the Roman settlements were built gradually and continuously on Thracian foundations in Dacia. The conquest of Emperor Trajan brought a long and peaceful period of development, and the evacuation of the province meant only the withdrawal of the Roman troops and administration. The urban Roman settlements gradually became rural; and while living their own independent lives in the river valleys, the eastern Latin people almost imperceptibly turned into the Rumanians. The Latin

and Byzantine elements combined to create the originality of Rumanian civilization. Iorga does not depict this evolution in any detail and instead lavishes much attention and color on the inner dynamism of social organization. The local court is the basis of self-government, and the judge, or *kenéz*, is the local leader. Consequently without betraying his nation's cause, Iorga could largely "sacrifice" the writings of Anonymus and argue that the Hungarian chronicler had projected the situation existing around 1200 into the past. According to Iorga, the writings attributed to Anonymus were a later compilation, "in which the contemporary geographic elements are combined with the rationalistic interpretation of the legends of the Hungarian conquest." (p. 32) Iorga's main point was that "the conquerors" found a Slavic-Rumanian or Rumanian indigenous population. The final conclusion is above all crucial: the Saxon settlers borrowed from the native Rumanians the institution of the court, or *szék*, and even many elements of the Rumanians' nomadic and agricultural way of life. "So the 'guests' of the king were in another sense our 'guests', only we asked for less and gave more." (p. 49) This same notion of indigenous Rumanian local society organized around the *szék* was also the basis for Iorga's theory of the Szeklers' Rumanian origins. He did not, however, consider this an unshakable fact and occasionally emphasized that it remained a subject for scholarly debate.<sup>14</sup>

A major question for the reader is how the medieval Rumanian freedom became "bondage and humiliation" (p. 169) by the dawn of the modern age. In order to illustrate the condition of this lower social stratum, Iorga cited the mid-sixteenth-century humanist Ferenc Forgách.

...since the two Wallachian countries are near, there are so many Rumanians in Transylvania that they occupy nearly two thirds of the territory. But they are so wild and degenerate that neither example nor law can civilize them.

To sum up, the Rumanians live in huts, spend the summer in the woods and groves, do not work, steal from others, and since millet does not demand as much work as wheat or grapes, they live on millet, (p. 127) Iorga's use of this quotation from Forgách allows us more thoroughly to examine his handling of the sources. Even if they appeared unfavorable to his main argument, he did not abridge them. Nor did he challenge them under the guise of source criticism. Each time he was satisfied with a few short evaluative remarks. In this case he merely observed that Forgách had spoken of the Rumanians "with hatred" and fitted the quoted opinion into his own pattern of thought. He combined a sure hand and an excessive fantasy in his writings on history but never falsified the sources themselves.

In the light of his considerable knowledge, which he was constantly increasing and rearranging, he reformulated a number of questions. Approaching them from constantly changing angles, Iorga seldom left questions open without noting what additional proofs would be necessary in order to verify his statements. This must have followed from his role as an educator for his nation, and from his manner of adjusting his writings to his historical mission, or to the demands of his audience and the needs of the public. Sometimes his chain of thought led to unexpected conclusions. The book under consideration also shows exactly how Iorga's greatness lay in his ability under the pressure of momentary needs to present as scholarly facts the ideas percolating in the national consciousness.

We will be better able to understand Iorga's method when we realize that trying to find a reason for the degradation of the Rumanian race would be in vain. In the recent past aggressive martyrologists of the Rumanians have identified the anti-orthodox policies of Louis the Great as the cause of the Rumanian decline. Iorga on the other hand called attention to precisely the cooperation between the king and the Rumanian leadership.

The foundation of Moldavia was a result of Rumanian expansion. It did not happen contrary to the king's wishes, but was supported by him as congruent to his general military goals, (p. 69)

Through his actions against the Tatars, Louis the Great played a crucial role in the founding of the Moldavia. He was presented by Iorga as pursuing an imperialist policy contrary to the interests of the Hungarian people.

Based on our perception of Hungary's policies today, we can say that these are not appropriate to the strengths and abilities of the people who support them. These efforts derive from the traditions of Louis the Great and not from those of the Árpáds or János Hunyadi, (p. 61)

Louis the Great imported feudal ideals into Hungary, while the rule of the Árpád House had been characterized by "an autocracy blended with German concepts" (p. 58) and by "an inability to develop the ancient Hungarian constitution." (p. 63)

Iorga's polemical intentions can most easily be seen from his overemphasis on the apostolic character of Hungary's kingdom. By granting him the crown, the pope bestowed on the king of Hungary a mission, namely spreading the Catholic faith. Having failed in this, Hungary proved incapable of fulfilling her mission in history. St. Stephen's toleration - Iorga questioned the authenticity

of the "Admonitions" [Intelmei] because he thought them unlikely to have been written during the king's lifetime - he diagnosed as a sign of weakness, just as the active eastern policy of Louis the Great he explained as imported aggressiveness. But given the inability of Hungary and its kings to fulfill their duty, how can we explain why so many among the leading strata of the Rumanians found assimilation into the Hungarian Catholic nobility so attractive? How did the social integration that strengthened the inner coherence of the Hungarian kingdom come about? Iorga's failure to deal with these problems is all the more interesting because in the age of national and bourgeois transformation they have become some of the most exciting questions. During this period the issues of assimilation, identity and loyalty came front and center in the Danubian-Carpathian region. What was the experience of the Rumanian elites who changed their religion and legal allegiances, abandoned an unofficial nobility, and rose into the ranks of an official one? How did they preserve their relations with their original local communities? Under what influence did they take such pains to guarantee so extensively the religious freedom of their underlings? Could it be that for a time we can only speak of political and not ethnic assimilation? What was the essence of ethnicity at that time? Could we be witnesses to dual loyalties? Iorga solved the complex questions by overemphasizing ethnicity, but without investigating the content of ethnic identity in the medieval historical circumstances. Instead, he understood ethnicity as a value connected to the "*Volksgeist*" which could only be grasped in its full meaning by those who were already initiates. Thus,

The significance of János Hunyadi for world history derives from the representative features of the Rumanian element in Hungary, as well as from his incessant influence on the Rumanian element in Wallachia and Moldavia and the unquestionable enforcement of his will. (p. 80)

And in truth, Transylvania could certainly not be defended, "if the ruler of the Danubian principalities was not a friend." In which case Hunyadi mercilessly retaliated against all unfriendly actions. Iorga's characterization of Hunyadi as "the uncrowned king of his homeland" was right on the mark. At the same time and in contrast to János Hunyadi's epoch-making significance for world history, Iorga evaluated Hunyadi's role as Hungary's governor and his part in Hungarian domestic politics as quasi-local, (p. 80)

Iorga assigned only the role of a scapegoat to the crowned King Matthias Hunyadi. How was Iorga able to do this? We have arrived at one of the critical points in his approach. It would appear that precisely in his evaluation of the Hunyadis Iorga must have recognized that other points of view were also

possible. But Iorga considered the opinions that differed from his in 1915 as "superficial." (p. 17) He stressed that he had long abandoned such ideas. Through his nationalist perspectives he could apprehend the deep essence of historical events. Consequently he no longer had any intention of remaining simply an external observer and describing "merely the main and most important factors in our national life." (p. 18) The external approach is

a method that does not allow us to address decisive factors of national or world history. One merely examines appearances, which can be described at length. János Hunyadi can be introduced and his career described without the author ever asking himself if Hunyadi in the majority of his actions represented Rumanian ideas, Rumanian interests, or the national goals of this people. And since King Matthias was Rumanian through his father, who felt himself Rumanian and spent much time abroad but with Rumanian virtues, we can also depict the life of Matthias. But this king in reality felt himself the son of a Hungarian mother and the leader of that people, which adopted him. Matthias became a good typical Hungarian king, whose benevolence also extended to the Rumanians because he was an exemplar of righteousness, (p. 17)

From the perspective of the nationalist approach that uncovers the essence of things, however

it was the policy of Matthias that prevented the Rumanians from developing during the period. Just as his character differed completely from that of his father, so did his policies. The old voivode János was a true Rumanian in his modest and strong character. We do not have a single authentic portrait of him. He had no coins minted. Nor did he invite literati to praise him to the heavens. He was indifferent to what people said about him. He did not maintain a court in order to provide a comfortable refuge for ambitious Italian parasites with literary and artistic ambitions. His son on the other hand loved such superficial displays of himself as the reliefs depicting him with the imperial crown, the frescos of Filippino Lippi, the panegyrics of Ranzanus that would preserve his fame for the future, the ceremonial appearances, and the hullabaloo over the achievements of his reign, which were sometimes the work of others but invariably claimed to be his alone. Consumed by envy and anxious never to have to share glory and fame, King Matthias was ready to abandon his undertakings, rather than let others participate in his glory; and he was willing to allow a plan to collapse, rather than provide money and assistance to his ally. Matthias took completely after his Magyar mother Erzsébet Szilágyi.

His political orientation was toward the West. There people recorded his acts, while in the barbarian East they were forgotten. His ambition was directed to where the scribes worked, where the chronicles were stylized, where the poets sang, where the painters painted, and where the sculptors worked. He died in Vienna after conquering the Austrian provinces and partly satisfying an imperial need,\* which paralleled that of his distinguished predecessor Sigismund I. Fighting the Turks he consigned to those whom he considered his vassals. Men such as Tepeş and Ştefan cel Mare were left either



with no support at all, or barely enough help to insure that Matthias could undeservedly skim the cream from their military successes.

Transylvania lost its Rumanian character, which in some regions had still been quite conspicuous around 1450. Matthias recruited great men from the distinguished noble families. Although they stood close to him, they were not satisfied with him. One of the leading Germanic magnates, Sigismund, the Count of St. György and Bazin and Voivode of Transylvania, helped to lead an uprising against Matthias in 1467. The three privileged Transylvanian "nations," the Magyar, the Saxon and the Székely, united in defending by force of arms their privileges against the monarch. Although the uprising was suppressed, Transylvania returned to the domination of primarily the Saxons and the Hungarian nobility and until the death of Matthias was governed as a nearly autonomous region. He might have been benevolently righteous, as the Rumanian people often remarked, but his justice was inspired by the Bible and the example of St. Stephen and was not directed at the Rumanians as Rumanians but as subjugated poor, who deserved the mercy of their lord. (p. 88-89)

Of course Rumanian history did not end with Matthias, and Iorga could masterfully spin the yarn. "It is not possible that such a people could be denied the manifestation of their ethnic character." (p. 93) This axiom was also rooted in his organic and nationalist approach, and his transition from one epoch to another was brilliant. "What the Rumanians slowly lost as soldiers, they gradually recovered as priests, monks and men of letters." (p. 93) For during the age of the Reformation it became apparent what orthodoxy meant, and how much orthodoxy secured a certain degree of cultural unity and conscious cohesion for the Rumanians living in different lands. Iorga emphasized that the various needs for self-expression all found a home in ecclesiastical life. The Rumanian Orthodox Church was

like a lonely oak with the forest felled around it. The tree could appropriate all the nourishment that would have been available to the other plants. Thus, its branches are unusually strong and vigorous, and in normal circumstances we could not see their like on even the most beautiful tree. (p. 22)

For Iorga the shadow of this radiant tree was particularly important in the hostile political atmosphere of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Transylvania.

Although until then in Transylvania and in the *Partium* the Rumanians suffered greatly - they being the defeated, the schismatics and the serfs - and although the crown itself sometimes treated them unfairly, under the pressure of its own political interest the crown defended them against the nobility and the Saxons, (p. 99)

In the independent Transylvanian principality, however, only the privileged nations dominated, and the voivode ruler served as their creature and instrument. As we shall see, Iorga was much too skillful as a historian to depict the developments only in such simplistic terms. He painted a rich cavalcade of events in which the dramatic struggles and the interaction of the political developments in the Danubian principalities unfold before us. If his work had been published in Hungarian, the Magyar public would have become much more aware of the relations between the Rumanians living on both sides of the Carpathians.

The rulers of the Danubian principalities played the decisive part in the creation of a Rumanian cultural, or religious and emotional, unity. Their feudal estates in Transylvania allowed them to support the Rumanian Orthodox Church in the region. Their physical presence in Transylvania and their involvement in the political events of Hungary after the Battle of Mohács proved to be even more important.

The fact that Rumanians living in Transylvania could see Moldavian and Wallachian standards fluttering in the wind and could witness voivodes of Rumanian blood such as Alexandru and Pătrașcu place a queen on the throne and thereby determine who should rule in Transylvania was obviously bound to bring about a great psychological change for the Rumanian population. Can anyone imagine the poor toilers of the soil, who know nothing, raising their heads when an army, of which they know nothing, passed by and hearing that the voivode has come on behalf of the Emperor of Constantinople [Trigrad] to restore order in Transylvania! This must have been one of the most momentous effects that came from us to influence the people of Transylvania." (p. 120)

Iorga primarily explained the lack of any policy on the part of any of these voivodes to acquire the throne of Transylvania by the geopolitical considerations that gave rise to a tacit understanding.

Thus, based on the same instinct that had always united them in common effort, the Rumanians in Moldavia and Wallachia, their respective rulers, and the Rumanian nobility in Transylvania brought to life a unity in political action. They all wanted Szapolyai.

And now the question arises: was he not the Magyar, the feudal, the enemy of the Saxons, the representative of that repression against which the Rumanians groused and rose in defiance at every opportunity in order to smash it?

Our answer is no. King János, instead, represented official Transylvania and the effort to maintain Transylvania's independence in the face of absorption into political entities based on other traditions, (p. 105-107)

Since János Szapolyai did not persecute the peasants and the nobles did not rally around him, "he could not provoke the expected spirit of rejection by the

Rumanians and the poor nobles," (p. 136) that he would have, if he had been the mere conglomeration of those negative characteristics.

The true hero of the turbulent transitions of the sixteenth century for Iorga was Petru Rareș, the son of Țtefan cel Mare. Petru was the same Moldavian voivode of whom R. W. Seton-Watson - who genuinely searched for what was valuable in Rumanian history - remarked, at least in part as a rebuff to Iorga,

Much may be pardoned to the desperate straits in which Peter found himself, wedged in between at least four overbearing and unscrupulous foes: but it cannot be denied that the kaleidoscopic character of his perfidy is almost unique even in the annals of the sixteenth century. It is impossible to admit that he was in any way fitted for the rôle which a modern Roumanian historian has treated as feasible - namely that of rallying the Roumanian masses under the Habsburg banner and playing them off against the Hungarian nobility, which was using the dire anarchy of the times to strengthen its feudal power. The most that can be said for him is that he genuinely aimed at Moldavian independence, as achieved by his father in happier days, and also, if it might be, an extension of his power to the two neighbouring Principalities. Of patriotism, as distinct from personal ambition and greed, there is but little trace in his story.<sup>15</sup>

In truth, Iorga also observed that Petru Rareș took revenge. We could say that he extracted satisfaction for a former slight by Pál Tomori, who as commander of Fogaras had favored the Saxons over the Rumanians. But was he unaware of the drawbacks of the Moldavian voivode's policy? In 1905 he had characterized Rares, as "a zealous and ambitious" ruler.

Peter only differed from his father in that his desire for conquest exceeded all other motivations. When he saw only poorly defended borders, or when either side in a civil war asked for his assistance, he quickly took to the field with his able Moldavian forces. On the other hand he was in no way the equal of his father as a field commander. In reality he was a tireless intriguer and eventually became entangled in his own craftily woven net. When he died, his country - largely due to his own fault - found its borders reduced, surrounded by a chain of Turkish fortifications, and the authority of the voivode of Moldavia, as that of Wallachia, at a low point.<sup>16</sup>

By 1915 Iorga's need to serve Rumanian unity had pushed all other considerations into the background. The "avenger," who was "strong, brave and cunning," (p. 103) had become more significant even than Michael the Brave. Iorga declared that under more favorable circumstances Rares, could have achieved much more, because, "Michael's deeds were personal and accidental." (p. 110) Even the editor of Iorga's rereleased work found the verdict on Michael the Brave "too severe" and noted that it contradicted what Iorga had said of Michael in the same book. (p. 118) Iorga's favorable

evaluation of Petru Rares, and desparagment of Michael the Brave appears all the more strange because he had examined in rich detail Transylvania's role in the history of East-Central and Southeastern Europe at the end of the sixteenth century.

Although even today many Rumanian historians will disagree with him, Iorga stressed the significance of Transylvania in the recovery of Hungary. Nevertheless Iorga could not avoid quickly adding that Transylvania had only become a part of Hungary around the middle of the thirteenth century and had its own unique mission, (p. 138) We soon discover from Iorga's narrative that Transylvania's role lay much less in resistance to the Turks and much more in solidarity with the Danubian principalities. And the Fifteen Years' War provides ample opportunity to expand on this hidden essence. Iorga brings to life the turmoil and tensions of the rapidly changing events by employing an undulating rhythm of long and short sentences, by binding together factual information with analysis, and by discarding chronological narration. The initiative lay with Zsigmond Báthory, who in his quest for glory and fame wished to "mobilize our nobility against the Turks" and simultaneously to subordinate it under his own authority. But then "the political errors of the Báthorys and the emperor's policy toward Transylvania allowed Michael the Brave to cross the mountains as 'the fates' had decreed." (p. 138) During the war against the Turks Zsigmond Báthory abdicated in favor of Endre Báthory, who represented the pro-Turkish faction in Transylvania. Thus, the isolated Michael the Brave, who was a true Crusader and desired above all the liberation of the Christians in the Balkans (p. 142), had no choice but to occupy Transylvania by force. It made little difference whether he wanted to continue the war against the Turks, or simply to survive the disastrous developments.

Transylvania accepted Michael the Brave. No one needs to hide this fact. It accepted him because of the emperor in whose name he spoke and whom he represented, but most of all because he was what he was." (p. 142)

In the eyes of the Rumanians of Transylvania he became a *crai*, *SL* king, a successor to the kings of old. He was also supported by the Székely, whose survival was threatened, and above all by the Catholic nobility. Iorga demonstrated that while Michael the Brave desired to expand his own power, he did not ignore Transylvania's historical inheritance. Michael emphasized to the emperor that he had reunited Transylvania, which had been detached a quarter century earlier, with the lands of St. Stephen. At the same time he promised to the estates that he would respect their constitution, and to some degree he

did. On the other hand the inner logic of his military rule demanded that he strive to place his own men into positions of power.

What did he do for the Rumanians? The question is important for its historiographical dimensions as well. In the 1850s when Nicolae Bălcescu spoke of this leader, who had pointed the way to national unity, he remarked bitterly that Michael the Brave had no desire to improve the lot of the Transylvanian Rumanians, and in Wallachia the condition of the peasants worsened under his rule. This approach is ahistorical enough to be ignored by Iorga, but nevertheless it is rational enough to elicit some form of response. In keeping with his basic concepts, Iorga emphasized everything that Michael the Brave did for the orthodox church, most especially the establishment of the Rumanian Orthodox Church's institutional unity. But his fantasy truly started to take flight when Iorga described how Michael the Brave's men began to seize Transylvanian revenues.

Undoubtedly this was the beginning of the Rumanianization of an alienated Transylvania and an acknowledgement of Transylvania's Rumanian essence in all matters relating to the population, government and administration. If fate had shown its favor, all that we could see manifesting itself in the first steps of the new regime would have enjoyed a great future, (p. 146)

Invoking fate was typical of Iorga's method for solving problems. In this way he was able to suggest the historical character of Michael the Brave's reign. Nevertheless today, after the debates of the Rumanian historians of the 1930s and as result of the work of László Makkai and Gheorghe I. Brătianu, we can say that Iorga avoided the essence of the question when he ignored the role of Transylvania in the efforts to create an estates constitution in Wallachia.<sup>17</sup> Instead he concentrated on issues of power politics and ecclesiastical life. At the same time he masterfully seized on the geopolitical aspects of the relations between the rulers of Transylvania and the Danubian principalities. Michael the Brave's inheritance, he writes, was a sense of "tradition, temptation and responsibility for Transylvania." (p. 158) The word "temptation" should be examined more closely, especially because the editor of the new edition found it necessary to observe that Iorga really meant "attempt." Nevertheless, the word "ispită" primarily means "temptation" in this context and elsewhere. (For example, "ispită" is the expression used for "temptation" in the Lord's Prayer.) As David Prodan has noted in his *Supplex Libellus Valachorum*, this "temptation" in the existing political vacuum to unite the three territories was entertained by Zsigmond Báthory's other successors and the Moldavian prince Vasile Lupu as well.<sup>18</sup> Today, in retrospect, it appears that the basis of future progress in this relationship was the tradition of a social integration

that underlay the struggles for power. In this tradition the Transylvanian estates' constitution served as a model for strengthening constitutional efforts on the other side of the Carpathians; and Transylvania and Wallachia repeatedly allied with each other with this unspoken goal Transylvania played the same role in Wallachia's life and development as Poland in Moldavia's. Through this constant interaction the cultural morphology of the Carpathian and Danubian regions gradually evolved. The often repeated concept of a "common fate" now acquires content for the historical observer.

The reciprocal influences can best be discovered in the processes of the cultural sphere. The great revolution of the day was the Reformation and the Catholic response, or Counter Reformation. What was Iorga's attitude toward these developments? Essentially he evaluated the Reformation in Transylvania from the perspective of power politics and Rumanian national interest. If we consider that many have only observed the Transylvanian Reformation as a religious mission, we can note that Iorga's perspectives inclined him toward realism. Iorga was able to bring to light the political elements that lay in the background. At the same time his Rumanian nationalist perspectives led him to overemphasize the political dimensions. Since "at this time religion and national identity melted into one," (p. 167) he argued that the Reformation can be understood as "anti-nationalist," an effort directed against orthodoxy and Rumanian popular religion "to strip away the Rumanian national character." Iorga explained,

We are talking about a deliberate persecution of the nation, an effort to smash the moral basis of a people. All are dependent on the institutions that form the foundation of the nation, and the soul of a people stands in the way of an oppressive power. This soul must be killed. It must be decisively destroyed, (p. 171)

The triumph of Iorga's historical realism can again be recognized when we observe how he described the creative effects of the Reformation on Rumanian culture.

The Calvinist propaganda proved to be very useful. The nobles and boyars of Fogaras, and perhaps Máramaros as well, joined the new movement at the very beginning. But they forced the new regulations on the poor peasants, the very group from which they desired to distinguish themselves. Those who desired to convert the Rumanian villagers to Rumanian Calvinism believed that the nobles, who adhered to the Magyar Reformed church, would remain a part of the community and through the Hungarian ceremonies and sermons would Magyarize the Rumanian peasants. But this did not happen. The ancient vernacular was victorious everywhere, (p. 197)

Iorga's emphasis on politics also saved him from cheap martyrology. The Rumanian orthodox prelates often found themselves at odds with the rulers of Transylvania. In these conflicts a religious element was always present, but by noting how the Rumanian prelates allied themselves with the enemies of the prince, Iorga confidently also uncovered the crucial political motivations. When the ruler of Transylvania wanted to attack the voivode of Wallachia, he came down even stronger on the orthodox. Thus, the cruel vilification of Sava Brancovici during the 1680s was "a political and not a religious tragedy." (p. 190) Iorga was convinced that the fate of the Rumanian orthodox church in Transylvania was determined by developments in the relationship between Transylvania and Wallachia. The outstanding cultural achievements of the Rumanians in Transylvania at the middle of the seventeenth century were the products of an age when the good relations of Transylvania and Wallachia ensured a peaceful atmosphere and the fruitful effects of the Reformation could prevail.

Having produced no proof for the efforts at Magyarization, Iorga later conveniently forgot that he had ever even mentioned them. In 1938 he wrote,

I have been asked why I accuse sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Hungarians of using Calvinism to denationalize the Rumanians in Transylvania. I have never said such a thing. What I actually said was that we profited from the Calvinist propaganda. Neither nation persecuted the other. At the same time we cannot say that the Hungarians desired to civilize us. There was neither persecution nor civilizing. The historical process was something quite different.<sup>19</sup>

This process had still not been explained in a satisfactory fashion by the historical literature, but the publication of the basic sources was underway.<sup>20</sup>

Iorga masterfully introduced a significant aspect of the Reformation, one that played an important role in the onset of a new era, namely, how Calvinist propaganda by the late seventeenth century had prepared the soil for the Counter Reformation. In light of this fact we can better understand the union of the orthodox Rumanians in Transylvania and Hungary with the Roman Catholic church. Aside from the preponderance of power wielded by Vienna, the secret of this union's success lay in the absorption of the Uniate clergy into the Catholic church and in the Uniate clergy's acquisition of the privileges enjoyed by its Catholic counterparts. At the same time the Uniate clergy did not have to disturb popular religion or its practices. The Reformed religion, Iorga observed, spoke primarily to educated men; but it left their hearts cold. In contrast,

our people loved the ritual, indeed the magic of the Slavic words that they could not understand. In these expressions they discerned a secret force, and they loved the 'superstitions' that the system of the superintendents angrily persecuted, (p. 224)

Iorga found the union of the churches fruitful, but he spoke of it in terms that no Greek orthodox could ever have uttered. He described the union as "an artificial creation" (p. 226), which arose from the ambitions of some individuals and was based on hidden selfish and personal interests. Orthodoxy stood closer to his heart, but Iorga did not try to diminish the far-reaching consequences of the Uni ate church's establishment. For this union made possible the political struggle of the Transylvanian Rumanians for their national and estates' rights; and after many important undertakings it also opened the way for the cultural growth, which proved to be so decisive in the fields of linguistics and history in the second half of the eighteenth century. As for the historians, Iorga tried to render their merits relative by arguing that without the Moldavian historians, there would have been no Transylvanian historiography, (p. 263) This is undoubtedly true. Nevertheless he failed to add that without the collaboration with the Hungarian historians of the age, their efforts would have stagnated at a much lower level. In his own dramatic fashion and through the rhetorical flourishes that were so pleasing to him, Iorga was able to vividly describe the struggle of Bishop Inochentie Micu-Klein against the Transylvanian estates during the 1730s and 1740s. At first the bishop enjoyed the lukewarm backing of the Viennese court, but later Vienna turned against him and forced Micu-Klein into Roman exile. When the Rumanian bishop realized that the Viennese authorities wanted to subject him to a hearing, he refused. "As soon as he realized that his nation's cause was lost, that no one in this world could help him, that his person alone was in question, he felt himself stronger than anyone else." (p. 272) Later research has shown that the exiled church leader could confidently quote from the *Tripartitum*, the very influential sixteenth-century compilation of Hungary's feudal laws.<sup>21</sup>

We do not wish here to emphasize the paradox of this situation: namely that a bishop fighting for Rumanian national rights and whose demands had been declared illegal could cite "Hungarian law" and draw strength from it. This element certainly fit well into Iorga's concept of Hungary. He was too great a scholar to label Hungary a historical anachronism. Iorga honored everything that had a long history. He respected organic historical development and disdained all that he considered inorganic and improvised, such as the importation of foreign ideologies. Thus, Iorga found the French Enlightenment and its followers to be literally repulsive. Therefore, somewhat in rebuke of his contemporaries, in the second volume of his work Iorga made the following observation on the Hungarian "milieu."



All those lords who think that it is enough to make some priest a bishop, so that they can then together influence the history of the Rumanians living in Hungary, know nothing. It is enough to attend ten lectures on Hungarian public law; and since all educated people have studied this law, they decide all matters as the people of the eighteenth century. That is an ancient country, they do not judge matters there as we do here, where we determine things based on contemporary life, the abstract theories of French philosophy, or from Roman law. (p. 322)

The significance of the Rumanian Uniate church lay precisely in the fact that after the Rumanians signed a treaty with the leaders of the empire, they obtained privileges. "Thus we became a nation recognized by the realm" (p. 226), in other words the Rumanians could be integrated.

Thus Iorga considered the integration of nations into a community as positive. Yet, when he selected the Horea uprising as a milestone, Iorga emphasized disintegration. This was also appropriate to his political goals and beliefs. In Iorga's analysis of events the conflict between politics and learning appears repeatedly.

For Iorga the Horea uprising meant the liberation of popular energies. "We were a passive race," he wrote, "until the Horea uprising, which was the first one with national characteristics. All of the others had only social ones." (p. 20) But with this argument Iorga was not content merely to justify the long-term significance of the uprising, he also applied historical analogies.

The story of the Rumanians in Transylvania from 1784 to our own day is composed of modern and contemporary historical chapters, indeed more of the latter than the former. If contemporary French history starts in 1789, and if Lamprecht believes that the first part of the German nation's life begins with the age of Goethe and Schiller, I do not understand why for me, for our entire nation - not just the principalities - the contemporary age would not start with the period from 1784 to 1790. (p. 15)

The politician applauded national unity and searched in the unfolding of events for the epoch-making turning point, while the scholarly historian thought in terms of long range developments; and the scholarly historian also evaluated differently the co-mingling of the national and social characteristics. He saw the beginning of the new era in the need for radical transformation. For the boyars in the principalities

became convinced during the 1770s and 1780s that the old forms must be abandoned and new ones found. Without these we cannot live. They only vaguely adumbrated these new forms, which would have to be made more concrete in the future. Nevertheless we can clearly state that our contemporary history begins here during the second half of the eighteenth century, (p. 16)

The intellectuals, who were viewed by public opinion in the principalities during the 1830s and 1840s as having founded the modern concept of nationality, now stepped on the stage. The current that began between 1774 and 1784 "culminates in our own day." (p. 17) The main tendency was the gradual conjunction and binding together of the national and the social aspirations through the process of great historical events. But in 1784 this did not yet happen. Iorga himself explained this best, even when he stated the opposite.

But at that time, around 1780, it would have been natural if these youths, the new 'philosophes,' had stood at the lead of the movement to liberate the Rumanian people, a process that in both social and national respects Horea's peasants had to begin anew. In the West it happened thus, and the philosophes led the revolution. They developed an ideology, which was appropriated by the socially dissatisfied elements, and thus established a connection between the leading intellectuals and the least of the *sansculotte*, who spiked his bayonet with a piece of bread and set out for the frontier, or who cheered as a bloodthirsty slut with fiery eyes when the guillotine fell. It should have been this way in Transylvania all the way from the orthodox doctor Molnár, or the united Clain, or Şincai and Maior down to the last peasant. The peasant, who with flames of hope in his heart, set the palaces of injustice on fire in order to burn the documents with their magical connections to his bondage. But it did not happen this way. (p. 310)

Referring to the fact that Şincai died at Szinnye, where he worked as a private tutor on the estate of the Wass family, while Clain and Maior died in Buda, where they had been able to publish their works, Iorga continued,

The literate men had to die abroad in their workrooms or deaneries. The peasants after setting fires, hilling, smashing and killing had no idea what else to do. So they waited for others to beat and kill them.

We must search for this lack of contact in the isolation of the intellectual elite, which unfortunately was characteristic of the Transylvanian cultural movement. Far from the free Rumanians here, far from their own enserfed peasants, the intellectuals, paying dearly for their sinful upbringing, lived and died. Not even in their learned writings did they attempt in any understandable terms to draw near to the simple and good souls of the people, (p. 310)

Iorga attributed the great gulf that separated the intellectuals from the common people to the extraordinarily high level of schooling the Enlightenment had made possible in Transylvania. The same development that had given birth to the epoch-making works in philology and history had also separated the educated elite from the unlearned and impoverished masses. Perhaps sensing that his verdict had been too harsh, Iorga immediately corrected himself.

The strength of a people lies solely in their national relationship, which is so strong, that no one knows how it was formed; and no one knows how to tear apart the bonds of language and blood, which unite a whole community as one. (p. 310)

Despite his tough condemnation of the eighteenth-century intellectuals Iorga used the very same axiom on national identity to exonerate the identical men of letters in the next volume. The instinct for national unity, the impulse to belong to a community, was elevated to a plane where it penetrated everything. There it also appeared useful for the condemnation of those who did not behave appropriately. At the same time these deviant intellectuals were still considered by Iorga to be the instruments for the conveyance of an ideology necessary for popular and national unity. After describing the social condition of the various groups, Iorga still emphasized the aboriginal unity of the Rumanians in Transylvania. "It could not be said of the Rumanian people living in Transylvania that around 1780 they were separated into clearly distinct social classes." He attempted to stress this fact by pointing to his own times.

Since the members of the elite are constantly recruited from the ranks of the peasants, such clearly distinct classes seem in a sense to be missing even today. Our contemporary social classes appear to be entirely new; and these social classes lack the firm foundations their counterparts have elsewhere: distinct boundaries and clear-cut legal status. And still today the social class that in an absolute sense excessively dominates the situation there [in Transylvania] through its size and values, even if it lacks a constant presence in political life, is entirely peasant. Naturally this was even more true in 1780. (p. 319)

By emphasizing or de-emphasizing the relevant motifs and employing the bold juxtaposition of images, Iorga's various passages established or dissolved the desirable popular and national harmony. The vivid life nestled in the sources emerged from the eloquence of his depictions. Based on his work on the sources in the Hungarian National Archives, Iorga admitted that he did not want to disclose every fact concerning eighteenth-century Transylvanian life because,

some of them are indecent. Life in those days was so harsh that it lacked not only religious belief but also the signs of human decency. Thus not everything can be published, and some sources can only be used cautiously. The bitter struggle between the orthodox and Uniate clergy is revealed by the documents. They stole churches from each other, and then, considering the newly captured buildings impure, they consecrated them anew. The relations of the pastors and the people were not particularly decent and reveal little obedience in spiritual matters. This or that priest, or his wife, were regularly

accused of frolicking with the local garrison. Lacking theological training, neither the orthodox nor the Uniate clergy understood clearly the differences separating them. (p. 323)

Iorga's words expose a bitter honesty, but the author seemed incapable of overcoming his prejudices in favor of the orthodox. His heart moved him toward orthodoxy and against the "wealthy milieu" of Balázsfalva. Even if, as he himself admitted, the learned culture of Rumanians in Transylvania owed its existence to "the Rome on the banks of the Küküllő River," Iorga still stressed the superiority of the orthodox clergy.

Our orthodox clergy has a great advantage. It has developed and lived among the common people. This clergy is interested in everything that concerns the laity. Due to their large families, they are much more suitable to their mission than the Catholic priesthood, (p. 324)

The people for Iorga constituted an idea and an ideal. But even as a concept he did not idealize the people in their physical manifestation. Without regard to the "meaning" that he as a representative of the ideals of his community ascribed to them, Iorga described the developments and events in their historical context. The animation and fusion of objective and subjective reality is nicely illustrated by Iorga's depiction and analysis of the Horea uprising. Iorga's methodology for bringing the past to life helps to explain how the character of the Horea movement was explained very differently during his concrete delineation of events from the way it was presented in the introduction, where Iorga was concerned with the goal and meaning of his work as a whole.

For example, after discussing several times in the introduction why the Horea uprising meant the beginning of a new era, and what the fusion of the national and social characteristics indicated, Iorga observed,

In the process of researching the circumstances of the 1784 rebellion many have made the mistake of overly simplifying the history of events ... and seeing in this phenomenon a social rebellion characterized by class consciousness and some type of national awareness arising from the social sensibilities, (p. 330)

In contrast Iorga took as his starting point the mechanisms of Transylvanian life embedded in the structures of the Habsburg Empire, as well as from the external determinants and internal logic of the actions of individuals, social strata and groups. After describing the mode of simplification, he turned to the complexity of the questions.

Naturally it is easy to present things in a simplistic fashion, but the causes of historical events are usually far more complicated and the developments far more chaotic and vague than anyone would believe. There was some kind of social and national movement, but not only that.

Another fault in the evaluation of the Horea uprising has been committed in connection with the characteristic political orientation of the Rumanians living beyond the mountains, an orientation that is also symptomatic of political thought today. The Rumanians beyond the mountains have always been loyal to the emperor, or more intimately 'the dear emperor.'

In light of this undivided adoration for and confidence in the emperor, who was somehow a continuation of the ancient Roman emperors, the Caesars of legend, the fascinating and tragic history of Horea and his fellow rebels is the following:

Once upon a time there was a good emperor and some evil Magyars. And this good emperor - just as all the emperors who have lived and will live - this emperor was prepared to grant to the Rumanians the greatest political concessions. Alas, the Magyars were wicked. One might ask if the good emperor was created for the bad Magyars, or vice versa. I think it is a little bit of both. What would the bad Magyars do without a good emperor? There would be a revolution. What would the good emperor do if there were no wicked Magyars. Would there be national justice? And since there is no revolution and no national justice, we have to conclude that the bad Magyars were just as much created for the good emperor as the good emperor was for the bad Magyars, (p. 330)

In this way Iorga seized the opportunity to ridicule the thought of his contemporary Rumanians in Transylvania and discredit their desire to create Rumanian national unity or autonomy within the context of the Austrian Empire. He used concepts unknown in eighteenth-century Rumanian popular thought, but the road he designated for scholarly investigation is historiographically significant. Of course contemporaries during the eighteenth century spoke of the people's loyalty to the good emperor, of the belief that the emperor would be good to his people, reduce their obligations to the landlords, and free them from serfdom. Unfortunately the lords stopped him. Rising above superficial appearances, Iorga was able to show the intricacies of the historical multi-polar system; and while taking into consideration the political factors that limited action, he competently described the field of operations. But as we have already noted, he also wove his political considerations into the fabric of the events. Therefore he did not dwell on the myth of the good emperor, which was essentially a problem of legitimacy. If he had, then Iorga would have been obliged to consider in greater detail the possibilities for legitimacy open to the Rumanians in Transylvania and the justification for their pro-imperial loyalty. A discussion Iorga did not consider advisable at that time. (Even in the present work he noted that it was not appropriate to confuse the role of the journalist, who arouses the passions, with that of the politician,

who rules over them. (p. 506) In the course of his analysis, however, he explained unambiguously and unemotionally the significance of the legitimate character of the various efforts. This approach meshed well with his political goals, and allowed Iorga to question the right of the Habsburg Empire to exist. He determined from the events of history that the empire lacked sufficient reason for its existence but at the same time warned against underestimating the enemy.

There are those who believe that Vienna is not very smart today, or was not smart in the past. Vienna was always very smart. It has always had enough intelligence to govern the less intelligent peoples, or those who would not use their intelligence. Vienna is very smart! (p. 331)

Thus, having testified on behalf of Vienna's cleverness, Iorga picked up steam in stridently attacking the legend that the emperor was the rightful judge of nations, or particularly well-meaning toward the poor. We should hardly be surprised that Iorga concentrated this assault on the period Joseph IPs rule. The Danubian monarchy could not be compared to the French. The latter was legitimated by French culture and created a framework that could later be adopted by the French people. In contrast the Danubian monarchy followed a policy of eastern expansion toward, and eventually over, the Danubian principalities. If Iorga had considered the eastern expansion of the Habsburg monarchy at the end of the seventeenth century, would he have been able to question the benefits of expelling the Turks from Hungary? Was Transylvania and the situation of the Transylvanian Rumanians not improved by the long period of peace and the reform policies of Enlightened Absolutism? In contrast the Danubian principalities under the phanariot system and the constant Russo-Turkish wars lived in a very different Balkan atmosphere. Iorga carefully avoided making a more thorough comparison. (The alternative that Transylvania might have chosen between the two empires was not considered realistic. It was but an after-thought, a warning to take realities into account.) Iorga set out from the internal workings of the Habsburg Empire and moved toward his preconceived conclusions.

The Danubian monarchy is a dynastic stale. The method of governance is 'Austrian' and so is the mode of existence. The Austrian system essentially attempts to derive the maximum benefit from the least effort. If possible, it will utilize others for its advantage. This is the pattern of Austrian politics, (p. 335)

In this case Iorga virtually idealized the Hungarian nobility, the opponent of the Austrian state, because

even though the Magyars were a minority, they were nobles conscious of exercising their power for centuries. Would the Saxon trader, the poor Székely frontier guard, or the Rumanian bishop have the courage to assert himself as an equal and in opposition to the Hungarian nobles at the diet? No. Here lies the significance of ancestry. Each man with a tradition knows that he will be followed by others. Here lies the significance of that heritage bestowed by a nation or class on its heirs. An individual is determined by his past and the opportunities the future offers, (p. 335)

The purpose of the Rumanians in the Habsburg realm was to keep these Magyars in check. Austria was a community based not on common sentiments but on common interests. The imperial elite, for understandable reasons, did not like the Magyars, at least in part because "it was not possible to draw a frontier between the Magyars in Hungary and Transylvania." (p. 335) The Rumanians on the other hand, "are the most numerous, the most oppressed, and the most uneducated. With great probability any sort of future could be denied to them." (p. 336) Most especially the Rumanians could be deprived of any destiny pointing toward a national future and threatening to the empire as a whole. As a result the Rumanians could be useful against the Magyars. Starting out with Horea, Iorga quickly reached his own times when he noted,

others had the power to rise against the Magyars. They did and defeated them! What could the emperor have done then? Unless forced to do so, he would never have stepped in to defeat with his own hands the foreign and domestic enemy. Even then things did not always go well for him. This policy is being repeated today, and it will be the same in the future - if we see another Joseph II, who clobbers the Magyars with a Wlach hammer, (p. 336)

In the end Iorga was called to deny any loyalty toward the monarchy, and he evaluated Austrian policy with the following words,

We have clearly profited by it. But now we have other tasks, and it would be a misreading of history, if anyone desired us to show everyone our appreciation. Now we ourselves must act and for ourselves alone, (p. 337)

The significance of the Horea uprising was not diminished because the movement arose as a consequence of the effort to reorganize and expand the Habsburg Empire. "Joseph II was the cause," (p. 338) but not because he gave an audience to Horea. His entire policy and regime of harsh exploitation coupled with the promise of a way out of the difficulties proved to be

instrumental for the rebellion. Iorga did not turn 1784 into a general peasant uprising. "We are not dealing with a general Rumanian movement." (p. 345) As he repeatedly stressed,

the movement did not originate with the entire Rumanian population of Transylvania. It did not start with those who were the most exploited and impoverished but arose precisely among those who enjoyed a level of economic autonomy and could entertain political ambitions ... (p. 344)

Because, Iorga noted, one can do what one wants with the unfortunate but not with the embittered. As a result the uprising began on the crown lands in the Carpathian Mountains. "It arose within the privileged flock of the emperor." (p. 339) The network of military outposts scattered throughout Transylvania provided the opportunity to try to change fate. The Rumanians from the hinterlands were animated by the idea that if they volunteered for military service, they would be freed, because the emperor wished it so. Despite the unique situation, the developments in Transylvania fit into the general pattern of peasant movements.

A constantly oppressed lower class, which does not for a moment believe that without some command from above it can alleviate the cause of its sufferings, cannot be moved to action unless it receives a command, issued by one ruling group against another, directing it to rise. (p. 345)

Horea received no such command, but he appealed to the directive of the emperor, and that was enough. The spread of the rebellion was then made possible by the organization of the government in Transylvania. The military and civil authorities lived separately, and their interests often crisscrossed and contradicted each other.

Being cognizant of the general tendencies of peasant uprisings, again saved Iorga from overemphasizing the manifestations of anti-Hungarian and anti-noble attitudes among the rebels.

Much more than their bourgeois counterparts, peasant movements are ambiguous. They arise from books and are transmitted to the village folk through various intermediaries. Thus, in terms of ideology these movements are very chaotic and contain much more shouting than words. Since we can usually only distinguish in this shouting the sounds of suffering and hopelessness, and only with a very fine ear can we obtain any sense of concepts, plans or goals, we usually read into these movements only our own ideologies or the ideas that move us. (p. 343)



Iorga did not try to analyze this peasant mentality. (Over a half century later David Prodan did; and he described the events painstakingly, virtually from minute to minute. His method of trying to make the sources speak can perhaps best be summed up in his dedication to László Makkai, where he observed that his two volume study was "a history that spoke for itself.")

In explaining the specific events of 1784, Iorga did not attempt to deduce general historical lessons or laws. Instead of metahistorical analysis Iorga turned his attention ever more to determining the practical political lessons to be learned from the events and to offering political advice for his own contemporaries. When he ended his discussion of the Horea uprising and observed, "... how sad that in this world no one pays attention to the truth until it screams, and no one does justice until the truth strikes back ...," (p. 348) Iorga was signaling that he was about to change his analytical approach. The strident historian struggling for the national cause was gradually giving way to the embattled politician. This new tone increases the value of Iorga's work as a window for understanding the thought of his own age and does not detract from the value of his observations. Our reading of Iorga is further enhanced because, while the nationalistic communists only wished to homogenize this period of Rumanian history, Iorga drew attention to the complexity and variety of the events and developments. We no longer find any trace of the fraudulent devotion and nationalistic artifice through which he analyzed the significance of the Hunyadi. Beginning with the end of the eighteenth century he assessed matters as a practical politician. His central value was an instinctual forging together of service to the people, the practical work of building a nation, and political expediency. In the name of this nationalist purpose he condemned not only those Rumanian aspirations that aimed at some degree of dual loyalties, such as those toward both the fatherland and the nation, but also all those who differed from his program and, even more important, diverged from the public posture that he considered desirable. In truth, no one lived up to his expectations, save perhaps the Magyars. Nevertheless, "the antagonism between all Magyars and all Rumanians is inextinguishable for all times," (p. 427) and, "it is their misfortune that they can only serve their national interests by breaking the law." (p. 525) On the other hand the Magyars served up all kinds of examples for Iorga. Naturally he emphasized Petőfi's and Kossuth's Slovak ancestry, only to depict in the most vivid colors the so-called *furor hungaricus*.

Except perhaps for a few songs of Andrei Mureganu reflecting national energies, the Transylvanian Rumanians unfortunately did not have any literature comparable to that of Vörösmarty and Petőffy [sic]. From this Romantic literature, old and new, which was

characterized by passionate imagination, spur to action, rash boldness, as well as patriotism and nationalism, the movement of 1848 sprang to life for the Magyars. Those who sacrificed their lives in the cause of Hungary's independence grew up with these ideals and were educated by this poetry. Their effort to organize a state was also logical to a certain extent. The classical school, which was not so classical, and the Romantic school, but most especially the political school contributed to the formation of the Magyar national public spirit and instigated the whole society. The well-worn pages of the conventional historical essays cannot account for the vehement enthusiasm engulfing the Magyars in 1848 and 1849. Nor can they inform us why even in defeat - while some victories are sterile - the Magyar movement bore fruit. The decisive result for a movement is not to be confused with its accomplishments at any particular stage but resides in the moral capital with which it infuses the life of a nation and its significant actions. This moral capital is not lost but represents perpetual wealth. Just read the novels of Jókai. He wrote them after 1848, yet they still convincingly capture the spirit of those days. (p. 480)

Apparently the honest wonder led Iorga to forget what he had earlier written.

To our own day the Magyar has remained feudal and cannot escape from the attendant mentality. Some have remained serfs, while others landlords with whips in their hands, (p. 334)

As long as he saw the passion in Magyar nationalism as a model, Iorga rejected the Magyar forms of political behavior. True, he never examined these forms in any particularly nuanced way. As for the Rumanian politicians in Transylvania during his own day, such as Iuliu Maniu among others, Iorga condemned them for assuming something of the gentry's political world, despite "their all out struggle against it." (p. 512) Here we can already note one of the tensions between the Rumanians in Transylvania and the politicians of the Trans-Carpathian oligarchy. We know that Maniu's "fundamentally democratic attitude," as Vlad Georgescu - who saw things from a Trans-Carpathian perspective<sup>22</sup> - has noted, did not sit well with the elite in the Danubian principalities. Yet Iorga's integrative nationalism also could not overcome the conflicts of the days to come. But at that time Iorga could not have known what the future would bring. For the time being he saw the main task as educating the nation.

We conclude our work convinced that we are still at the beginning of our pedagogical task to develop the national strengths of the Rumanian people. In the absence of unexpected and providential changes we can expect nothing good and certain that would make possible the rapid promotion of normal national development, except after our pedagogical labors have born fruit, (p. 513)

We could hardly propose to determine precisely how much Iorga's study did for the education of his nation. His audience - the two volumes were based on his university lectures - certainly lapped up his words. In his autobiography Iorga noted that the queen once came to his lectures, but we cannot know more because the incident was deleted from the 1976 edition,<sup>23</sup> and the earlier edition has been unavailable to us. Nor do the ritual formalities of the postscript allow us learn anything more about the popular and professional reception of the two volumes.

Much of Iorga's *oeuvre* still remains undiscovered. Consequently we cannot know why he chose the paradox as one of his main modes of expression. The rich treasury of the paradox, however, has provoked a variety of ways for interpreting Iorga's lifework. Some have attacked him with uncontrolled passion, while others have eulogized him, but many have turned away from him in silence. During the post-World War I crisis of identity neither those searching for transcendence nor the rationalists seeking objectivity could find in Iorga's *oeuvre* the keystone. Mircea Eliade in 1927 began a series of articles entitled "Reading Iorga" and suggested that an institute be established for the study of Iorga's writings. Then slowly it began to dawn on Eliade that the master's genius was disorganized. He started to note that Iorga no longer kept abreast of the latest historical research and that his knowledge of philosophy was superficial. When all this was taken as criticism, Eliade abandoned the study.<sup>24</sup> At about the same time Eugen Lovinescu also suddenly discovered that "Iorga's impressionism is in reality an impatient fanaticism."<sup>25</sup> During the second half of the 1930s a new and strident generation of historians entered the stage. One of its leaders, Constantin C. Giurescu, put together a list of Iorga's factual errors and interpretive excesses. The collection would fill several small monographs.

For reasons of nationalism the Magyar historians could not ignore Iorga. The young Gyula Miskolczy first published a brief critical review of Iorga's synthesis on Hungarian history and concluded that the Rumanian had allowed his political theories to overwhelm his insights and research.<sup>26</sup> (Obviously the leading historians at that time shuttled such potentially sensitive tasks off to their junior colleagues.) Nor did Lajos Tamás and Iorga open a fruitful dialogue on the pages of a French language Budapest periodical with their exchange of articles on the unity of the Rumanian people and culture.<sup>27</sup> The debate eventually became rude, and Iorga wrote to the editor that an effort to disturb the peace between the two nations lay behind the dispute over continuity.<sup>28</sup> Later in 1936 Sándor Domanovszky replied to one of Iorga's accusations against him by publishing a thick pamphlet-like work detailing Iorga's errors on Hungarian history and the Rumanian's

anti-Magyar utterances.<sup>29</sup> The debate then continued with strict avoidance of any mention of each other's merits. For example, Sándor Domanovszky borrowed from the Budapest University Library one of Iorga's most successful and irenic works<sup>30</sup> - a book detailing the common characteristics of Southeast Europe's development and modes of life, a book written precisely against the Balkan conflicts and in the interest of conciliation, and a book in which Iorga considerably toned down his passionate nationalism - but the Hungarian never once mentioned the work in his debate with Iorga. Instead, Domanovszky selected from the rich material provided by the French and German editions of *The History of the Rumanians in Transylvania and Hungary*. He needed the anti-Magyar nationalist Iorga.

The informative work by the Hungarian contemporaries of the Rumanian "New School" has been far more fruitful for evaluating Iorga. Along with their nationalist and professional perspectives they undoubtedly felt a sense of solidarity with their youthful Rumanian counterparts and endeavored to evaluate Iorga by taking into account both his strengths and weaknesses.<sup>31</sup> In two splendid works, one in French and one in Hungarian, László Gáldi was able to document a solidarity and respect by Hungarian historians that extended beyond professional debates. True, Gáldi's Hungarian article was more critical, while his discussion in French was more appreciative of Iorga's skills. Nevertheless Gáldi was moved to take up his pen by a genuine shock and led by honest anger. He began his article on Iorga with the following words:

When his murderers tossed his well-groomed, bearded, robust, and bullet-riddled body into the muddy roadside ditch, they surely never considered that they had dispatched not only one of the Iron Guard's most determined and uncompromising enemies but also simultaneously brought to an end a fading era in Rumanian history. Because today as we gaze upon his vanishing figure besmirched by a dishonorable death, we clearly feel that Iorga was more than merely a historian, poet, orator, writer or politician. Together with his virtues and vices, his abilities and shortcomings, Iorga embodied an entire era. He was the most conspicuous representative of an intellectual world that modern Rumanian political perspectives have virtually condemned to death.<sup>32</sup>

Gáldi, who naturally discussed the interplay of light and darkness in Iorga's *oeuvre* through his own refined literary sensibilities, closed his essay by noting, "surely there will be bullets for his murderers."<sup>33</sup> The critical voice of the Hungarian article is more restrained in the French essay. Nevertheless Gáldi mentioned Domanovszky's work as the first "scholarly criticism" of Iorga and emphasized that Iorga's "scholarly propaganda" had run its course and

exhausted its credibility even in the eyes of his own contemporaries. In the French *Gáldi* did not end by promising a bullet for Iorga's murders.

[Iorga] to the end lived in the comfort of an ideology that twenty-two years ago gave birth to Greater Rumania. Since this edifice was built on sand and surrounded by enemies, a part of it has collapsed, and the ruins have buried his robust bearded figure, which we can say served as the symbol for an entire age.<sup>34</sup>

The deeply humane message of this essay was understood and appreciated in Rumania. One of Iorga's students Gheorghe I. Brătianu, who belonged to the "New School" but remained loyal to his master, and who was himself beaten to death while imprisoned in 1950, wrote,

I have been blessed to see the day when I could read an article appreciating his work and honoring his memory in the periodical of our enemies (*Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie*, January 1941), at a time when not a single Rumanian publication would have dared to mention his memory.<sup>35</sup>

Brătianu mentioned *Gáldi's* article specifically because he concentrated on the Iorga who had struggled for nationalist ideals, but he also emphasized that the day had not yet arrived when a more thorough evaluation of Iorga would be possible. Then "we will see what he meant for the dynamic life of our nation."<sup>36</sup> It is hardly an accident that even in our own day we have no monograph worthy of Iorga's lifework.

Between 1941 and 1947 a number of excellent essays recalled the writer, the medievalist, the moralist, the Byzantinist, and above all the martyr. Then came the period of deliberate silence. During the 1960s we witnessed the joy of his rediscovery. The more comprehensive scholarly evaluation has become dependent on the publication of the massive source materials.<sup>37</sup> At the same time we are now better able to evaluate his place in early twentieth-century Rumanian historiography,<sup>38</sup> and several elements of his *oeuvre* have been compared, as the products of a victorious nationalism, to the methods of other outstanding East European historians.<sup>39</sup> In order to see better how the writing of history became politics,<sup>40</sup> we think that the comparative method has the best prospects for future research on Iorga. We, Hungarians and Rumanians alike, hope that the time when we felt compelled to slander each other's past is over. We also hope that in our investigations Iorga will no longer be a caricature of, or a prophet for, anti-Magyar feelings, but an important personage of the period, which has aptly been called 'modern Europe's Thirty Years' War,' and that through his lifework all of us can better understand the

relationship of politics and scholarship.<sup>41</sup> Thus, the new edition of *The History of the Rumanians in Transylvania and Hungary* will be most profitable.

### Notes

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# LUKÁCS, DECADENCE AND MODERNITY

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In a late interview, Lukács recorded the last of many words on the course of his life's work. From that perspective, his earliest reviews and articles, dating from 1902 and 1903, are dismissed as the "impressionistic" false start to a body of work in quest of its own critical premises.<sup>1</sup> This first Lukács was a drama critic who retired from journalism at the age of eighteen. The elder Lukács describes how, after sustained theoretical study, during which he published nothing for some three years, his initial impressionism was replaced by "an approach based on German philosophy with a tendency towards aesthetics".<sup>2</sup> Theory was, in turn, supplemented by practical (behind the scenes) experience of the theatre, for between its creation in 1904 and its demise in 1908, Lukács was a leading member of the *Thalia Társaság* [Thalia Society], Hungary's first independent theatre company. Both interests converge in his first book-length text, *The Evolution of Modern Drama* - published in 1911, but initially drafted between 1906 and 1907 - which declares itself a "theoretical response" to "the most tangibly practical, dramaturgical and theatrical questions".<sup>3</sup>

*Modern Drama* asks: "is there such a thing as modern drama, and if so, what is its style?" (MD, 17). Style is the principal category at issue in Lukács' study: the stylistic heterogeneity of modern drama suggests that no one style is adequate to drama's representation of modernity. By that token, however, Lukács' quest for a style of criticism, which is not merely a symptom of its own inquiry, does not cease with the "tendency" informing *Modern Drama*. It follows that his early criticism may be regarded as symbiotic with, rather than fully succeeded by, the drama book. Both seek to make prescriptive the central descriptive category of dramatic style, and both are confounded by the inability of an approach governed by this category among others to legislate for its object. Yet "impressionism", with its appeal to a singular aesthetic sensibility, accounts for neither endeavour; on the contrary, Lukács consistently seeks to ground his judgements in a formal quality (style) whose transformations within the modern period are referred to the tribunal of the history

which produced them. The present inquiry will describe the history of Lukács' critical project in the years which precede the composition of *Modern Drama*. My purpose extends beyond the recovery to the reevaluation of a body of work largely unfamiliar to an English-language readership, arguing that the uncertainties attending Lukács' early work must continue to generate and frustrate any criticism conducted in the name of style.<sup>4</sup> My analysis will assess the conflicted modernity of that inquiry by turning it upon its own, avowedly pre-critical, foundations.

Lukács' reviews of 1902-1903 combine cultural and dramatic criticism in equal measure. His writing addresses a Hungarian context whose condition he describes in the last chapter of *Modern Drama*: "In the international history of modern drama, Hungarian drama can only be discussed as a case apart" (MD, 581). The major reasons for Hungary's isolation from the mainstream of European drama are "sociological" in nature, for Lukács' account of post-Enlightenment European drama is constructed on the thesis that "modern drama is bourgeois drama" (MD, 64), engaging at its heart the conflict of individual and collective interest within bourgeois society. In Lukács' estimation, however, neither the Hungarian revolution of 1848, nor subsequent political events, had succeeded in creating "a world-view corresponding to eighteenth and nineteenth century bourgeois ideology" (MD, 583).

The cultural politics of Lukács' reviews are informed by the fact that a large Hungarian bourgeoisie emerged only after the *Ausgleich* [Compromise] with Austria of 1867. The founding of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy in that year led to rapid expansion within a country still dismantling the feudal structures formally abolished in 1848; at the nexus of investment, Budapest was Europe's fastest growing city between the Compromise and the Great War. In the same period, however, political power remained to a significant degree with the landed aristocracy, while many of Hungary's half-million lesser nobility, impoverished by peasant emancipation, joined the swelling state bureaucracy. As Jörg Hoensch has noted, it was this group, collectively known as the *dzsenti* [gentry], which, in the absence of "a broad, economically independent and self-confident middle class, [...] formed the nucleus of an emergent urban bourgeoisie comprising assimilated groups and Magyar social climbers of petty-bourgeois or peasant origin."<sup>5</sup>

"Gentrification" was the social ambition of many new arrivals to the Hungarian middle class, among them those Jewish businessmen - some, such as Lukács' father, later ennobled - who were influential in the country's financial oligarchy. Identification with a romantic version of the national past (enshrined in the Hungarian millennial celebrations of 1896) partly compensated for, and offered security against, the absence of class interest or power; the

gentry became the self-appointed preservers of that past.<sup>6</sup> Politics were organised around national and constitutional, rather than class issues; and when a new party of class did emerge - in 1890, with the Hungarian Social Democratic Party - it was to represent proletarian rather than bourgeois interests. In Lukács' retrospect, historical conditions thus conspired against the rise of a self-confident "bourgeois ideology" in Hungary. Instead, swayed by feudalism, "one section of the Hungarian intellectual world [...] fell short of this world-view", while the other, "supported by socialist beliefs", went beyond it (MD, 583).

The theatre presented in turn of the century Budapest was, in Lukács' terms, almost entirely at the service of a bourgeois audience without a bourgeois ideology. John Gassner has described the outcome as a triumph of dramatic confection over conflict: "Entertainment, spiced with urban sophistication, became the criterion for modernity in the Hungarian theatre."<sup>7</sup> Although Budapest's first commercial theatre, the *Vígyszínház* [Gaiety] opened as late as 1896, its success was rapidly copied by a number of other theatres offering the same surrogate sophistication. In his response to such drama, Lukács engages as a matter of course with the pretensions of its public: "They rave about classical purity, and flock to French farces; this is the nature of our [Hungarian] audiences. In theory, classical and moral drama. In practice, the Gaiety, because one has to amuse oneself now and again."<sup>8</sup>

Lukács' criticism extends beyond the event to the institution of theatre, and proceeds to target a circle of self-interest between the critical and theatrical establishment. Thus his account of József Prém's *Léha világ* [Giddy World] announces: "The play is prize-winner, need I say more? [...] The author's mistake is great: he believed the play was good. The Academy's is greater: it said so in writing. But the National Theatre made the greatest, and wholly unforgivable mistake: it staged the play" (IM, 76).<sup>9</sup> The refusal to identify with these institutions lends to Lukács' reviews an air of willed embattlement. This is a journalism which contracts out of the very public sphere - that of an emergent, leisured middle class - within which it is inscribed. It amuses not by prolonging the theatrical *divertissement*, but at the expense of the drama reviewed. Lukács' "esteemed reader" is instructed by an ironic assault of paradox upon prejudice, whereby dramatic failures are regularly praised for their exception to the theatrical rule. This reader is part of a general class of readers implied in Lukács' denunciation of the entire "giddy, frivolous" Budapest public as one which (in a paraphrase of *Dorian Gray*) visits galleries "in order to regard itself rather than to look at the pictures" (IM, 16).<sup>10</sup>

The style of these articles is as unstable as their stance, by turns inside and outside the culture which they address. Lukács' jauntily aggressive manner is

more self-fashioning than self-assured, its precocity of judgement entertaining an unelaborated and not altogether consistent poetics of the drama. In this respect Lukács is far removed from the feuilletonist who features in his late self-portrait. This figure was typically one for whom, as Carl Schorske has observed: "To render a state of feeling became the mode of formulating a judgement." Here, the shape-shifting world of modernity is arrested by a gaze principally focused upon its own receptivity: "objective analysis of the world" is transformed into "the subjective cultivation of personal feelings".<sup>11</sup> Attention to one's impressions operates both as a barrier against the world and as a basis for its possible critique. By contrast, Lukács' early reviews are stylistically and critically distressed; what passes in them for impressionism is rather the self-dramatising testimony of a subject ill at ease in its address to the present. Instead of simply reflecting upon the theatrical event, these reviews rehearse their own form of critical theatre in which judgement of the drama plays to reflection on the very criteria of judgement.

Lukács' first words in print announce the principal of these criteria: "Turgenev at the National Theatre. Praise be to God, a modern play at last!" (IM, 11).<sup>12</sup> The reader, he anticipates, may well think otherwise, protesting a diet of "Dumas, Sardou, Capus and more". But such a response is, according to Lukács, mistaken in one important respect: "the new is by no means modern". The last term is inimical to novelty, and it is in the name of modernity that he prefers Turgenev to the more technically proficient authors of *the pièce bien faite* and their Hungarian imitators: "What do we demand of modern drama? Two things chiefly: ideas and characters." Lukács' demand is strongest when mobilised as critique, in which respect he approaches Shaw's lampooning of "Sardoodledom". The well-made play has, he laments, sacrificed character to a plot enacted by "puppets reciting graceful iambs or cracking bad jokes". In Turgenev, however, rather than seizing the opportunity for their own greater glory, the actors "behave and speak as if the audience does not exist" (IM, 12).

Implicit in these remarks is a normative poetics which can be aligned with that mode of dramatic "realism" established on the late nineteenth century stage by André Antoine's *Théâtre Libre* (founded 1887) and Otto Brahm's *Freie Bühne* (1889). The call for depth - and truth - of characterisation is but one aspect of the call for a faithful representation of modern life answered by both directors in their championing of, among others, Ibsen and Hauptmann. Moreover, the separation of stage and auditorium, which Lukács admires in the production of Turgenev, had been raised by Antoine to a major element of realist dramaturgy in his doctrine of the "fourth wall" through which the spectator observes the world of the bourgeois chamber play. Under this

regime, the cast turns its back on the audience in an illusionistic negation of the illusion which it is perpetrating: what is presented is life itself.<sup>13</sup>

A similar spirit of disabusement informs Lukács' concluding statement to this, his first review: "Alas, I shall never make a good 'critic' " (IM, 14). Irony at the expense of his reader is only one function of Lukács' self-deprecation. At the root of the Hungarian term which, he apostrophises [*ítész*], is the act of "judgement" in its juridical, philosophical and eschatological senses. If judgement is wanting in this particular critic, it is at a conceptual rather than perceptual (aesthetic) level: he is unable to adumbrate what he means by a drama of "ideas". Of course, in one aspect his is merely a plea for the *idea* of modern drama, for a drama which answers to its age; but in another, it points to the uncertain constitution of Lukács' sense of the modern. He confesses that he cannot locate any single "idea" in Turgenev's *The Parasite*, the reason being that: "Modern literature prefers ideas which are unexpressed in words" (IM, 13).<sup>14</sup> The dramatic work is not predicated by its idea, but pursues it; it shimmers through the action and is admired for just this quality of "obscurity" and, above all, "infinity". Idea is dissolved into the all-pervasive atmosphere of the play.

Lukács imagines himself before a group of "aesthetes" [*esztétikus urak*] who demand to be shown that idea. His critical theatricality signals a possible disjunction between this concern and his demand for the authentic portrayal of character: the latter should be tangible, the former intangible. Indeed, it may be possible to extrapolate from the review a critical confusion of two quite contrary dramatic or artistic modes, in which a latent tendency towards realism merges with a desire for the aestheticisation of the life - or the "idea" of that life - represented on stage. Whatever the tensions palpable in this and other early reviews, Lukács claims that his own twin demands of modern drama are effectively convergent. If the play has an idea, it concerns the representative nature of its protagonist, the "parasite" Kuzovkin; Lukács proposes that this figure "is not just one man among many, [...] but that Kuzovkins exist everywhere". This idea of typicality - if we may so name it - is of a different order to the "infinity" elsewhere inferred, and makes more particular the imperative to put (real) people on stage: "whether good, evil, weak, strong, wise or foolish, let them *be people*" (IM, 11). Again, however, the reader is required to tease out a reluctant conceptuality in Lukács' text, and here we may suspect an evasion of the judgement to which his own critical idea must answer.

Lukács' review dramatises its own ambivalence towards a drama whose liminal "modernity" bears upon its formal imperfection - ascribed to its status as an "early" work. To take this analysis further, the typical status claimed for

the play suggests that, in Lukács' own earliest work, artistic modernity is a category which is best understood as (a condition of) coming into being, rather than as a quality which submits to codification once and for all. Yet such an understanding is, in Lukács' case, at best an unhappy and at worst an unacknowledged one, for he continually appeals to the modern as the criterion by which to evaluate a cultural present empty of the value (prospectively) embodied in that same modernity. Perhaps the most positive element of this judgement lies rather in its appeal to a correlative understanding of *history* as the locus of any and every present, including those past and yet to pass. At this point, the idea of the potentially representative nature of the artwork achieves new resonance, for it proposes that, in one aspect, art can mediate a critical understanding of history: Kuzovkin is a creature typical of his age.

Many of these first reviews are animated by protest against historical misrepresentation. This is itself typified by the "new romantic" mode of drama favoured by Hungarian audiences, in which "tirade upon tirade" replaces "characterisation and any feeling for history" (IM, 72).<sup>15</sup> One play resembles another in formulaic plot (patriotic struggle plus love interest) and stilted diction: "Only the laughs are different; in other respects, the periods are interchangeable," This deformation of the national past into a single, ever-recurring storyline - the phantasy projection of a gentrified present - is, complains Lukács, compounded by the most casual attention to fact on the part of most critics. He cites, as one example, a Hungarian version of Rostand's *Les romanesques*, whose title - mistranslated as *The Romantics* - led to the play being reviewed as an exercise in romantic self-mockery.<sup>16</sup> And in the same article, he attacks critical approval for Prém's *Léha világ* as complicit with the play's regard for itself as a modern piece of work: "Modernity [*modernités*] seemingly calls for modern dress, just as romanticism calls for romantic dress; or perhaps a play is modern when the husband is unfaithful and the chambermaid is kissed?" (IM, 76).

This critique of a theatre that shirks engagement with the real world is enlarged in Lukács' account of *Aföld* [The Soil] by Jenő Kemechey and Dezső Malonyay, a play which presents the condition of modern Hungarian society as a three-way struggle between "the peasantry, the nobility, and the Jews" (IM, 20).<sup>17</sup> Lukács admires the formal intention behind the work, which is to dramatise this struggle through a single "symbolic action" wherein each character and group assumes a representative role. Thus he identifies the conflict presented between smallholders and the large estates as of greatest significance for what it shows of "the perpetual struggle between individualist and centralising movements today." But the play fails because, according to Lukács, each author has a finger in the scale, notably in their implausible

portrayal of the play's Jewish characters. While the play may be correct in its conclusion that "only the gentry have any claim to the soil" - Lukács remains fastidiously neutral in this matter - "one should not have to distort the action in order to prove one's point" (IM, 23). Such manipulation is, however, inevitable in authors who "wished to write a modern play using the techniques of Dumas", or - which comes to the same thing - who wished to "resolve a sociological question by deductive means". By slavishly following the model of the well-made play, Hungarian dramatists merely pander to those "fickle historians who blithely assert one thing today and the opposite tomorrow".

The imperative is rather "to write a drama which is at once particular and general" (IM, 22). Lukács insists both that drama must proceed inductively from the former to the latter, and that the particular event which precipitates the action must itself be of representative status. This question of representation is, he states, "the most important [...] to confront the whole of modern dramaturgy". His own proposals in this respect echo early experiments in "laboratory" drama (Lukács elsewhere uses the phrase of Björnson's work), where, having established a situation, "one permits forms to develop of themselves, and waits until a solution emerges of itself." Such thinking also implicates conceptions of dramatic necessity, and thus also of tragic pattern, an issue tangentially present in the discussion of Maeterlinck's *Monna Vanna*, which follows that of *The Soil*. Here Lukács admires the "strange and disquieting phenomenon" of a modern art which, in its author's words, takes upon itself "the representation of the unknown" (IM, 26). This is at once a drama of metaphysical generality (the unknown is "death") and of historical particularity, however factitious that may be. In a later review of the same piece, Lukács argues with the assumptions behind Hungarian discussion of the play's "renaissance" characters. The play may be set in the past, but its view of the world is, he observes, that of the present. The problem lies with an audience and establishment who think in "theatrical" terms alone, and who thus, by implication, treat history as a form of costume drama in which differences of then and now may be explained (away) as a matter of mere surface appearance (IM, 56).<sup>18</sup> The result is that all sense of "period" is made relative to a present oblivious to its own relativity.

It is in the context of this emergent historical critique that Lukács introduces the term most central to his analysis: style. The dissociation of theatre and drama will be overcome in the epoch of what he names "great style" [*nagy stílus*], and the history of modern drama is perceived as a protracted struggle for or against this "classical" paradigm (IM, 35).<sup>19</sup> Lukács maintains that the art of the nineteenth century was largely hostile to style, grounding his generalisation in a quotation from Fontane: "What does great style mean? It

means ignoring everything that truly interests people."<sup>20</sup> Nonetheless, the endeavour to create or recreate this style is everywhere evident "from D'Annunzio to the Budapest Museum of Applied Arts", which celebrated example of Hungarian *art nouveau* architecture was opened as part of the millennial celebrations in 1896. In the drama, Lukács anticipates an "age of style" in which "characters neither declaim in social dramas nor [...] speak Shakespeare as if they were quoting grain prices on the stock exchange" (IM, 32).<sup>21</sup> Such judgements are reinforced by mapping the history of ideas onto the stylistic development of modern drama: "The old battle between idealists and naturalists is over. But the naturalist movement had scarcely triumphed before it had to take up arms against new opponents. The study of nature, requiring immersion in the natural world with the aim of discovering a great 'Truth', necessarily led to the revelation of some such truth [...] in every image, phenomenon and situation - and thus to the emergence of symbolism" (IM, 17).<sup>22</sup>

Throughout his reviews, and with increasing frequency, Lukács proves the advocate of a symbolist theatre which aspires to certain universals in its representation of the world. He observes with approval that symbolism embodies "a return to the renaissance and the classical tendency". This is not the "sham classicism of the academy", but that of those "many-sided" artists of the renaissance who, in deriving beauty from nature, "paid homage to more than one muse" - artists who sought an ideal unity of the arts. He names as the foremost representatives of this mode Wilde, Maeterlinck and Hauptmann (the only dramatist whom he claims to have survived the naturalist movement). Wilde is lauded as "the most gifted writer of the younger generation", and *Salome* offered as a rare example of the maxim that "great" drama inheres in "historical" as opposed to "social" subject-matter (IM, 62).<sup>23</sup> The aim of Wilde's play is that of "the greatest artists since Wagner: the total work of art" (IM, 41).<sup>24</sup> Not only has he "moulded one of the greatest events in world history into one act", but the play is all-embracing in its portrayal of "a despoiled Roman Empire, a literal-minded Jewry, a refined, decadent and wicked ruling family, nascent Christianity — in short, a whole epoch". Similar praise is extended to *Lady Windermere's Fan*, an "harmonious unity of French, German and English spirit" which takes as its point of departure the Nietzschean project of a "transvaluation of all values" [*Umwertung aller Werte*] (IM, 61).<sup>25</sup> Thus Lukács identifies the critical power of such drama with its artifice; its very distance from life confers upon Wilde's art an "objective" and corrective function in relation to the world of "everyday morality".

This model of a synthetic drama which insists upon its own exemplary relationship to life is nowhere more evident than in Lukács' discussion of



Hauptmann: the former naturalist now meets with Maeterlinck at "the gates of classicism" (IM, 38).<sup>26</sup> Hauptmann's *Florian Geyer* joins *Monna Vanna* and *Salome* in opposing an authentically historical art to what might be termed the "historicist" drama dominant in Hungary. These works enable us to discover "in the individuals and tendencies specific to and characteristic of the period in which they are set, a quality which is common to us all and which engages our interest" (IM, 81).<sup>27</sup> Each play "could, *mutatis mutandis*, be set in the present day, because each will remain true in essence, because the ideas which live in each [...] will always live, so long as there are people to live them". Yet if Hauptmann's career typifies a general movement from naturalism to symbolism, then his work is implicated, in particularly acute fashion, in the question of the present direction of modern drama: "Where is this road leading to?" In Lukács' view, the "classical" is not as yet a fully substantiated category in Hauptmann's work; his work asks questions of the world, but it cannot - because it lacks a "world-view" [*világ?tézet*] - answer them (IM, 41).<sup>28</sup>

In "The New Hauptmann", the last of his early reviews, Lukács states that the "true", and new, Hauptmann is most evident in those plays which must be judged dramatic failures: *Michael Kramer*, *Der rote Hahn*, and the fairy-tale play *Der arme Heinrich*. Whereas the young Hauptmann portrayed a series of situations rendered dramatic by "chance" alone, it is the task of the mature writer to create a drama of "process" [*fejlődés*] oriented by necessity. To this end, Hauptmann must abandon representation of the "individual case" for that of the "type"; by this means alone will he answer the questions asked of the arbitrariness of his naturalist dramas (IM, 85).<sup>29</sup> Hauptmann thus strives for "symbolic characterisation in a language no longer tied to the particularity of milieu"; yet his later plays, however epoch-making in their dramaturgy, "make no impression on modern audiences" (IM, 88). Having mastered stage technique, he turns his back on it. From a determinist presentation of milieu and a "Darwinist" world-view, Hauptmann has progressed to an apparent "void" governed by the two great powers in which he now places faith: "love and death" (IM, 89). In his handling of social and political questions, fatalism has succeeded determinism. Whereas formerly he sought to "shake an already decayed society" by laying bare its foundations, his present attitude can be summarised as: "whatever must happen, let it happen". This Hauptmann does not preach, but consoles in a spirit of *tout comprendre, tout pardonner*. The world is surveyed at a distance, and "without bitterness", from the same point of view attributed to one of the characters in *Der rote Hahn*: "it is interesting to watch, but who would want to take part? There's no need for revolution: the oppressed are no better than their oppressors" (IM, 87).<sup>30</sup> Lukács affirms the abandoning of a world-view prejudicial to the generic disinterestedness of

drama, but implicitly questions the ideological sufficiency of the perspective that replaces it. Like Hauptmann, he asks but cannot answer the question of drama's future path.

At this critical impasse Lukács' reviews and articles cease, only to resume in 1906 with the publication of "Thoughts on Henrik Ibsen".<sup>31</sup> The latter essay restates many previously established concerns, but resituates them within the question of (and quest for) a form of tragedy appropriate to the age. This new orientation, born of the study of "theory and history" to which Lukács had devoted the interim years, enables a clearer sense of the unresolved poetics of his first reviews by raising their founding questions to a higher power. Resolution of the criteria of judgement does not follow; rather, the essay allows us to locate an already conceived ambivalence towards modernity within the very terms of modernity's conception.

"Thoughts on Henrik Ibsen" offers two accounts of the dramatist - as late romantic and tragic poet - whose relationship it leaves in some doubt: such is the measure of Lukács' uncertain assessment of Ibsen's modernity. The first Ibsen belongs to "the great chorus of *poètes maudits*", among whom are ranked Baudelaire, Flaubert and Schopenhauer (IM, 90). These are figures "in eternal conflict with their age and with themselves", and Ibsen's work is typical in its expression of "pure bitterness" towards a society in which "rationalism reigned supreme". While this "dissonance" is seen as a reaction to the "unsuccessful revolutions of 1830 and 1848", its true source is held to lie "in the disposition of the romantic soul" (IM, 92), for romanticism was, principally, "a revolution of the emotions" against "all forms of rationalist restriction", a project which could not be completed because its pursuit of the "infinite" represented a "flight" from the real (IM, 93). Hence, what began as a revolutionary impulse ended not only by seeking a "prop in religion", but even by "propping up reaction". Moreover, among those who enter the scene late, romantic illusion is inherited as disillusion. The result is "romanticism *à rebours*", disappointed with the world and resigned to disappointment (IM, 95). Aspiration to "naive synthesis" is replaced by "radical, all-embracing doubt", and just as "piety becomes atheism", so people turn to worship at the altar of "*l'art pour l'art*". Art is not only divided from life, but is raised up over and against it; the living moment is either ignored or "stylised" by the late romantic artist.

Ibsen's place in this narrative is, with that assigned to Flaubert, a double-edged one. Circumstances of place and time meant that, for both, the passage to a "literature representative of the modern age" was an experience of "bitter disappointment". The "realism" of both writers "proceeds from irony", and is

directed, in a typically romantic gesture, "*Contre les philistins*". Both seek to portray the petty bourgeois "so truly, so typically, that no one dare say: that is not me" (IM, 96). But at the same time, this irony is directed against their own (formerly held) highest ideals; even in his late plays, where Ibsen entertains the romantically "fantastic", all is invested with a mode of "nihilistic irony" (IM, 98). And because disillusion informs Ibsen's entire aesthetic, Lukács insists on dissociating him from those "social-critical writers" among whom he is habitually classed.

Disapprobation then cedes, in the second part of Lukács' essay, to an account of Ibsen the tragedian. In this capacity, while the principle of necessity distinguishes his work from that of the romantics, he is nonetheless said to "complete a process of development" which, it may be inferred, is as much literary-historical as personal. The "exclusive form of the analytic drama" paradoxically achieves that representational inclusiveness which the romantic fragment, despite (or by virtue of) its openness to infinity, forever excluded. Implicit in Lukács' evaluation is a recasting of the "classical" goal of modern drama. For that imperative is now understood as a "striving for tragedy" in which the dramatist lays bare "the causes of conflict" in those "few truly great questions to which there is no answer". In the collision of the individual with some "unknown power", there is "always a certain mystical element at the essence of tragedy" (IM, 100).

At this point, the exposition curves back towards Lukács' earlier account of romanticism, save that his formerly critical inflection gives way to tones of recommendation. Thus tragedy is celebrated in its opposition to the "rationalist" tendency of "social drama". Because it supposes that, "through institutional change and enlightenment [*felvilágosítás*], certain conflicts can be avoided", rationalism is, in the final analysis, "anti-tragic". (The tragic ending of an Enlightenment drama such as Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* is "forced" upon the play by a mechanism of intrigue.) Tragedy is, by the same token, inherently anti-rationalist; its sources are posited in an inscrutable and unchanging "human nature" [*ember természeté*]. This is the basis of Ibsen's drama from *Rosmersholm* onwards; he works with types who are "born for a tragic fate" and who live their "true life" in the *amorfad* of the moment of destiny (IM, 102).

The highest statement of those beliefs lies, for Lukács, in the artist dramas of Ibsen's last years, where a fundamental antagonism between "art and life" is played out through the fundamentally different psychical dispositions of "man and woman" (IM, 103). We find ourselves once more within a major topos of late romanticism: "The artist must stand apart from life if he wishes to represent it; woman is, for him, only line and form; feeling only word and

rhythm. There is necessity in this, for otherwise he could not create" (IM, 104). The lives of both man and woman are sacrificed to the "work" of the former. The tragedy of the artist is primary; the ruin of the woman is consequent upon an "inner struggle" already endured by the artist in the name of creation (*When We Dead Awaken*). He must die to life in order to shape it; art is a "great martyrdom" (IM, 105).

The dialectic which presents Ibsen as, in effect, a composite late romantic tragedian, appears to offer the second term as an antidote to the first. But the immanent mode of Lukács' analysis suspends judgement on precisely this point. His essay describes, but does not in any diagnostic sense acknowledge, a process whereby Ibsen's tragedies consummate and legitimate romantic "disillusion" - a term of critique in the first part of his discussion - within a metaphysic which lays claim to the status of the real. Lukács' unmasking of the ideological condition of disillusion all but succumbs, in the second part of his discussion, to its romantic imago as a condition without illusion. In these last terms it is tragedy that does the unmasking, stripping us of the illusion that life is, at base, anything other than that. It does so, moreover, by taking as given (and to that extent as its subject), the alienation of life and art which Lukács has already identified as symptomatic of romantic "resignation".

It may be said, therefore, that Ibsen's tragedies transcend resignation only by resigning themselves to that condition. His later work, at least in Lukács' version, does not jettison the romantic legacy, but takes it to an extreme, which is not even a necessary precondition of its abandonment. The crisis to which Ibsen presents a seeming "solution" lies rather within Lukács' own critical schema. Schematically, if not historically, Lukács' Ibsen responds to his Hauptmann: whereas the drama of the latter lacks completeness because its questions cannot be answered, that of the former finds completion in the very unanswerability of the questions which, as it were, ask his work into existence. The path of modern drama, so open to question in the work of Hauptmann, apparently discovers its end in that of Ibsen. Yet the historical resolution decreed by this conclusion stands in uneasy relation to Lukács' earlier critique of dramatic historicism, and is possibly subject to the very complaint that it avowedly remedies. Ibsen's tragedies indeed offer a critical response to modernity's weak conception of its own present, but they point the way beyond that present only by representing a symptom of its historical crisis (the division between life and art) as the principle of universal crisis. Insofar as this "beyond" secedes from history, Ibsen's drama only appears and actually fails to reply to the question of historical prospect previously asked in respect of Hauptmann.

It follows that we may infer an historical uncertainty in Lukács' construction of both dramatists as modern. Modernity is a conception at odds with

itself, not only because it names, at one and the same time, the end and the beginning of an epoch, but because, as a term of critique, it endorses art as the "better made" of its age in a manner that reproduces the same late romantic configuration identified with that age in its decline. What is named as modern art is then projected as the image of historical modernity as it ought to be; art is not only elevated in judgement over life, but in that judgement their present dissociation is absorbed within a form of critical subjunctive, which announces the "ought" in what is. Far from resolving, by its categorical cast, a critical ambivalence towards modernity as it is and ought to be, the announcement that tragedy is the very style of modern drama only serves to inscribe a crisis in judgement within the categories of judgement.

The same crisis structures the emergent poetics of Lukács' first reviews in the real or potential incompatibility of some of the judgements offered there. Ambivalence even has a biographical locus in Lukács' recollection that he was introduced to modern European literature by Max Nordau's *Degeneration*: "I read the book and came to understand what real decadence meant in the work of Ibsen, Tolstoy, Baudelaire, Swinburne and others."<sup>32</sup> Discovery of their writing led him, by the age of fifteen, to "what was for the time an extremely avant garde Western position" - a position hostile to the local values of Hungarian literature. In consequence, he began to write plays "in the manner of Hauptmann and Ibsen", an activity that both furthered his interest in criticism and was terminated in Platonic fashion by that interest when, at the age of eighteen, he burned his manuscripts.<sup>33</sup> Critically, Lukács' retrospect encourages us to redeem the typical from the idiosyncratic: in this case, the convergence of "decadent" and "avant garde" occurs as an expression of opposition to prevalent cultural and political reaction. Given this contest of modernity, Lukács sides with an art which refuses the (exchange) values of a culture in thrall to commerce. In its quality of negation, however, decadent art is susceptible to Nordau's charge of a "degeneracy" which would locate it - the mere illusion of an alternative - within the domain against which it reacts. Nordau's analysis proceeds from an account of the "Symptoms" of degeneration to a "Diagnosis" of their pathology (*Degeneration* chapters two and three). His literally symptomatic reading of the "mystical" character of contemporary art and literature anticipates Lukács' rather wishful discussion of Turgenev, but with a very different inflection. Thus, from the "shadowy thinking of the mystic" emerges a "washed-out style of expression" whose "shapeless representations" take the form of a language "the cloudy, chaotic sense of which is intelligible only to himself".<sup>34</sup> Where Lukács praises such qualities in Turgenev (to whose *Nest of Gentlefolk* Nordau refers), he does so

as a form of refusal of philistinism. But this negative advocacy sits uneasily with a simultaneous call for "realism" of representation on stage. The hesitation between - or conflation of - these distinct dramatic modes is itself symptomatic of the ambivalent politics of Lukács' reviews, which display, by turns, a version of Ibsenite aristocratic disdain and a keen sense of intervention in the cultural sphere.

Lukács was not unaware of the problematic status of the modern. In "Berlin in July", his second published article, he defends the "secessionist" exhibition in that city against the accusation that "art is degenerating" [*hanyatlik*] (IM, 16). But he does so in precisely the terms which Nord identifies with that condition. The gallery is proclaimed a "temple to art" for the few who appreciate "quality", and the art is admired for a "philosophical refinement" quite different in outlook to the painterly fare which "surveys the world from coffeehouse windows". Munch is given special mention, although Lukács is obliged to confess that he does not understand much of his work. This is, however, "the case with a number of symbolist artists", who ask to be understood "not with the mind, but with the emotions"; where we do not follow, concludes Lukács, "the fault lies in us" (IM, 18). It is here that he declares symbolism the herald of a classical "renaissance" in the arts; whether indeterminate or overdetermined, what matters is the endeavour of the "symbol" to signify.

Paradigmatic in this respect is the all-signifying ambition of the Wagnerian *Gesamtkunstwerk*, and in Lukács' enthusiasm for that model of artistic totality we can place his criticism within one of the most celebrated conjunctures of the decadent and the modern, Nietzsche's *The Case of Wagner* (1888). Where Lukács perceives (or indeed performs) the contradictory relation of these terms, Nietzsche insists on their paradoxical interdependence, acknowledging the decadence necessary to his own critique of decadence: "I am, no less than Wagner, a child of this time; that is, a decadent: but I comprehended this, I resisted it."<sup>35</sup> He resisted philosophically, through a dialectic which understands decadence as mystifying by mistaking the causes and effects of cultural decline. In the domain of art, whose function is to organise experience in an aesthetically meaningful way, decadence represents disaffection with life (*ressentiment*) as the effect rather than the cause of the alienation of art and life. But just as decadence offers its own diagnosis of sickness, to which it declares itself the only possible cure, so Nietzsche claims that the philosopher needs Wagner even as he rejects him: "Through Wagner modernity speaks most intimately, concealing neither its good nor its evil [...]. Wagner sums up modernity. There is no way out, one must first become a Wagnerian."<sup>36</sup> If his modernity is, nonetheless, a false dawn, that is in part because he "was unable

to create from a totality", but could offer instead only a "patchwork" of motifs whose unity is, in a surrogate sense, purely stylistic.<sup>37</sup> Wagner is said to have "invented a style for himself charged with 'infinite meaning' [...] - Music as 'idea' ". The "totality" of the work of art is an idea alone; Wagnerian opera is decreed the ignominious "heir of Hegel" in "its playing hide-and-seek behind a hundred symbols, its polychromy of the ideal".<sup>38</sup> Nietzsche perceives that style assumes an artlessly conceptual role, which in turn needs to be conceptualised. Style is, in this account, a means of "inducing intimations" of a significance, which does not inhere in the work itself: "To speak in the language of the master: infinity, but without melody."<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, one can conceive of decadence in the arts as itself a style. Not only is it "the sign of every *literary decadence*" that "the whole is no longer a whole", but this must be seen "as the simile of every style of *decadence*: every time, the anarchy of atoms, disaggregation of the will".<sup>40</sup> That being the case, decadence is, in more ways than one, the style of modernity: different evaluations are implied in the differently dialectical function attributed to each term. Decadence represents itself as the stylistic overcoming of one modernity for another; Nietzsche represents it as modernity's stylistic double. Where Lukács hails a news classicism, Nietzsche identifies "romanticism through and through". Implicated in this stylistic characterisation of modernity is its historiography, for the critical tensions evident in Lukács' reviews may be considered an index of, in Nietzsche's sense, their proper "untimeliness". Yet this necessary quality of critique - which in Nietzsche' *Untimely Meditations* inaugurates an account of the romantic pre-history of modernity - is given a more acute inflection when, from a Hungarian context, Lukács announces as progressively of moment the same Germany which Nietzsche has lamented "the most retarded civilized nation in Europe".<sup>41</sup>

These tensions likewise inform Lukács' response to historicism in the arts. His vision of "great style" as the model of cultural and historical authenticity is particularly open to question where specific works are recommended. Wagner's operas offer only one such instance; the single Hungarian example unequivocally associated with this stylistic renaissance - Budapest's Museum of Applied Art - is, in its millennial aggrandisement of the present, analogous to the forms of historical misrepresentation denounced by Lukács in the drama. The museum, instantly dubbed "the palace of the gipsy king", employs a language of folkloristic motifs in notably grandiloquent fashion; it dresses the present in an image of the past designed to affirm the continuity of one thousand years of the Hungarian nation. By means of such historical pastiche, the millenium is legitimised as both a second founding of the nation and a peculiarly "timeless" moment wherein history describes a mythical circle.<sup>42</sup>

The literally crowning moment of 1896 - the presentation of Franz Joseph's regalia to the Hungarian parliament - reminds us that artistic mediation of this imperial(ist) mythopoeia can be located within the wider context of Habsburg decline. János Nyíri has observed that, within the Dual Monarchy, the rise of national self-confidence in Hungary was accompanied, in liberal Austria, by a loss of confidence in "the rational structure of history".<sup>43</sup>

Within this cultural convergence, Lukács' reviews can finally be related to a critical discourse of "style" which crystallises around the specifically Viennese idea and institution of *Secession*. Elements of his polemic are, in the first instance, anticipated by Hermann Bahr, the leading ideologue of the movement, whose *Studien zur Kritik der Moderne* (1891) perceived the "sickness of our century" as a double malaise: "Life has become transformed, down to its very depths, and is transformed anew from day to day, restless and unstable. But the spirit remains old and rigid - motionless, immobile - and now it is suffering, lonely, deserted by life."<sup>44</sup> As an artistic formation, the Secession was founded in 1897 in reaction to an Academy whose stylistic model was a history painting equally "deserted by life". This academicism exemplified what Hermann Broch has called "the non-style of the nineteenth century", a style tending "toward bourgeois restriction and bourgeois pomp".<sup>45</sup> Both Bahr and, in retrospect, Broch characterise this style by its eclectic facade of "false Baroque, false Renaissance, false Gothic", at once retouching and refusing the transformations of modernity.

Bahr's criticism of Vienna's *Ringstraße*, the principal monument to Habsburg historicism and hubris, conceives of turn of the century Vienna as the site of a contest for the modern. Against the "frenzied" and "profligate modernity" of the Ring, a "colossal quarry of motifs" plundered from history, he opposes the "up to date [*neueste*] modernity" of the "young architects of the Secession".<sup>40</sup> The project of the latter is an architecture which will express rather than conceal its function: "Earlier, people used to require that a building should 'look like something'; we demand that it should 'be something'."<sup>47</sup> This projected reintegration of the aesthetic and the social aspires to a vision of culture as, normatively, a unity of style and function. Here we find the same imperative reproduced in Lukács' demand that drama must represent modernity as it really is, yet in a style remote from the purely contingent details of everyday life: this newly modern aesthetic strips modernity of its experiential contingency in order to reveal the pattern behind its shape-shifting and day-to-day aspect. As with Lukács' agenda for symbolist drama, modern art is held to preserve a critical distance from modern life in order to show what modernity might be - a double moment captured in Bahr's observation that: "The modern exists in our desire alone, and yet is everywhere around and



outside us. [...] We need only take within that which lies without and we shall both cease to be strangers."<sup>48</sup> Through this fantastic ingestion of the "modernism", ascribed by Bahr to the "aesthetic revolution" which overturns naturalism, modern art *becomes* (the simulacrum of) modernity: "The nature of the artist [is] no longer to be the mere instrument of reality, in the service of its perfect likeness; on the contrary, reality once more [becomes] the stuff of the artist, in order that its nature might be proclaimed in clear and powerful symbols."<sup>49</sup>

Lukács' secessionist affinities make it plain that even the most powerfully normative aspects of his poetics are inflected by the crisis of modernity against which they are directed. Foremost among these is the incipient Hegehanism of his demand for "typicality". Although mobilised against dramatic historicism, both this term and the implicated category of "totality" lend themselves as much to the symbolic confection of modernity as to its critique. In sum, this first phase of Lukács' criticism is structured by an "ambivalence" towards modernity inherent within its conception and experience as an epoch of envisaged order and actual chaos. Modernity is an era of disfunctional reason whose social and cultural forms cannot be sustained; modern existence, as Zygmunt Bauman has remarked, "forces its culture into opposition to itself, thereby engendering a "form of life [...] of continuous restlessness" evacuated of any present (fulfilled) sense of the present."<sup>50</sup> Those cultural forms which, in reaction, pursue or propose an ethical and aesthetic totality resistant to rationality may thus be understood to be driven by the dynamic which they oppose. The "symbolic" mode of the latter forms is complementary - and in no way alternative - to the "allegorical" mode of an anxious rationalism which, in Hermann Broch's analysis, "leers backwards in order to uncover in some former earthly reality the rules it needs for an evaluation of the present".<sup>51</sup> Symbolism does not inaugurate a new epoch; it takes us beyond historicism only by taking us beyond history. Allegory, on the other hand, evacuates the present in its resort to the "abstract particularity" which Lukács, in "The Ideology of Modernism", would come to lament as the general fate of modern literature and art. Yet, with his earliest work in mind, we may well hesitate before the late critique that: "Modern allegory, and modernist ideology, [...] destroy the *typical*".<sup>52</sup> Here, it seems, the categorical judgement to which Lukács' first criticism aspired is achieved at the primary cost of an ambivalence refused.

## Notes

1. Georg Lukács, *Record of a Life*, trans. R. Livingstone, ed. I. Eörsi (London: Verso, 1983), 32. The interviews in *Record of a Life* were conducted between March and May 1971, the month of Lukács' death.
2. *Ibid.*, 33.
3. György Lukács, *A modern dráma fejlődésének története*, 2 vols (Budapest: Franklin-Társulat, 1911), I, iv. This work has been republished in one volume, ed. Ferenc Kőszeg (Budapest: Magvető, 1978). Further page references are to the latter edition, and are incorporated within the text.
4. Anglophone discussion of Lukács' early drama criticism is available only within the conspectus of intellectual biography. See Lee Congdon, *The Young Lukács* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1983), ch. 1; and Arpad Kadarkay, *Georg Lukács: Life, Thought, and Politics* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), ch. 2.
5. Jörg K. Hoensch, *A History of Modern Hungary, 1867-1986*, trans. Kim Traynor (London and New York: Longman, 1988), 37.
6. John Lukács, *Budapest 1900: An Historical Portrait of a City and its Culture* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1989), ch. 3 *passim*.
7. John Gassner, *Masters of the Drama*, 3rd edn (New York: Dover, 1954), 1178.
8. György Lukács, *ifjúkori művek* (1902-1918) [Early Works], ed. Árpád Tímár (Budapest: Magvető, 1978), 69. Lukács' article first appeared in *Magyar Szalon* [Hungarian Salon], March 1903. Further references to *Ifjúkori művek* are incorporated within the text, and are annotated only where a new or different work is cited.
9. *Magyar Szalon* (April 1903), 749-51.
10. Lukács, "Berlin júliusban" ["Berlin in July"], *Magyarság* [The Hungarian], 18 July 1902, 1-2.
11. Carl E. Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1980), 9.
12. Lukács, "A kegyelemkenyér" ["Alms Bread"], *Magyarság*, 20 February 1902, 1-2.
13. J. L. Styan, *Realism and Naturalism (Modern Drama in Theory and Practice*, vol. 1) (C.U.P., 1981), ch. 5 *passim*.
14. For further details of Turgenev's play (1849), see the author's entry in the *McGraw-Hill Encyclopaedia of World Drama*, vol. 4 (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974).
15. *Magyar Szalon*, April 1903.
16. *Magyar Szalon* (May 1903), 847-48.
17. *Magyar Szalon* (January 1903), 401-11.
18. *Magyar Szalon* (February 1903), 497-502.
19. *Magyar Szalon*, January 1903.
20. Quoted in German. Lukács cites the same lines, spoken by Ebba Rosenberg in Fontane's *Unwiederbringlich*, in *Deutsche Realisten des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: Aufbau, 1952), 282, where he attributes this point of view to Fontane's own "realism".
21. *Magyar Szalon* (December 1902), 309-15.
22. Lukács, "Berlin júliusban".
23. *Magyar Szalon*, March 1903.
24. *Magyar Szalon*, January 1903.
25. *Magyar Szalon*, [Ma.cñ](#) 1903. Lukács quotes Nietzsche's phrase in German.
26. *Magyar Szalon*, January 1903.
27. *Magyar Szalon* (July 1903), 1073-77.

28. *Magyar Szalon*, January 1903.
29. Lukács, "Az új Hauptmann" ["The New Hauptmann"], *Jövendő [Prospect]*, 23 August 1903, 29-32.
30. Lukács suggests that these lines are spoken by the Jewish Dr. Boxer; but although the sentiment may be Boxer's, the words are not to be found in *Der rote Hahn*.
31. Lukács, "Gondolatok Ibsen Henrikről", *Huszádik Század [Twentieth Century]* 7, 8 (August 1906), 127-37.
32. Lukács, *Record of a Life*, 30.
33. *Ibid.*, 31.
34. Max Nordau, *Degeneration* trans. from the 2nd edn (London: Heinemann, 1913 [1893]), 57-58.
35. Friedrich Nietzsche, "*The Birth of Tragedy*" and "*The Case of Wagner*", trans. and ed. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1967), 155.
36. *Ibid.*, 156.
37. *Ibid.*, 177.
38. *Ibid.*, 178.
39. *Ibid.*, 167.
40. *Ibid.*, 177.
41. *Ibid.*, 181.
42. Vera Varga, "Some Reflections on the Decorative Arts of Hungarian Art Nouveau", in *Lélek és forma: Magyar művészet, 1896-1914 [Soul and Form: Hungarian Art, 1896-1914]* (Budapest: Hungarian National Gallery, 1986), p. 59.
43. J. C. Nyíri, "From Eötvös to Musil: Philosophy and its Negation in Austria and Hungary", in *Austrian Philosophy: Studies and Texts*, ed. J. C. Nyíri (Munich: Philosophia, 1981), 21.
44. Hermann Bahr, "Die Moderne", cited in Peter Vergo, *Art in Vienna, 1898-1918: Klimt, Kokoschka, Schiele and their Contemporaries* (London: Phaidon, 1976), 12.
45. Hermann Broch, *Hugo von Hofmannsthal and his Time: The European Imagination, 1860-1920*, trans. and ed. Michael P. Steinberg (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 35 and 33.
46. Bahr, "Die Ringstraße", in *Die Wiener Moderne: Literatur, Kunst und Musik zwischen 1890 und 1910*, ed. G. Wunberg and Johannes J. Braakenburg (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1981), 108-109.
47. Bahr, *Secession* (1900), cited in Vergo, 90.
48. Bahr, "Die Moderne", in *Die Wiener Moderne*, 189-90.
49. Bahr, "Die Überwindung des Naturalismus", *ibid.*, 200.
50. Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence* (Cambridge: Polity, 1991), 10.
51. Broch, *Hugo von Hofmannsthal*, 34.
52. Georg Lukács, *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism*, trans. John and Necke Mander (London: Merlin, 1963), 43.



# **JE GENAUER MAN HINSIEHT, DESTO MEHR SIEHT MAN. DIE ANWENDUNG DER CHAOSTHEORIE AUF DAS LITERARISCHE SCHAFFEN VON GÁBOR NÉMETH**

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Eine veränderte Weltsicht bringt sowohl in die Kunst selbst als auch in ihre Bewertung neue Aspekte ein. Unsere Vorstellungswelt ist seit der Verbreitung der Schriftlichkeit einerseits von einem Ordnungs- und Hierarchiedenken beherrscht, das zur Fixierung von Merkmalen neigt, um die Dinge faßbarer und transparent zu machen, andererseits bewirkte der Historizismus und die Linearität der westlichen Kulturen laut Flusser die Entfremdung des Menschen vom Konkreten. Die Welt setzt sich eben auf Grund der Linearität aus Sachlagen, die Ursache und Folge haben zusammen, wobei ein direktes, Erleben nicht mehr möglich ist.

Die Störung dieser menschlich herbeigeführten Ordnung zeigt erst die Komplexität der Systeme und Zusammenhänge, die die Welt darstellen. Das Chaos, das zur Entstehung von Strukturen dynamischer Systeme notwendig ist, wird im Umkippen der Ordnung sichtbar. So wurde Chaos zu einem Schlüsselbegriff der Postmoderne, denn das durch die Chaosforschung begründete Weltbild kann der Komplexität der Welt offensichtlich besser gerecht werden. Mit Hilfe des Computers wurde eine neue Sprache, eine Bildsprache entwickelt, die zur Beschreibung der Natur mit ihrer sinnlichen Vielfalt und Unregelmäßigkeiten geeigneter scheint als die auf euklidischer Erklärung basierenden, logisch definierten Elemente der Natur - Kreise und Dreiecke -, aber sie nicht erklärt.

Das Selbstverständnis der Postmoderne schafft einen Freiraum, um diesen immer wieder auftretenden Störungen und den damit einhergehenden gesellschaftlichen Veränderungen mit ihrem Wertewandel gerecht zu werden, indem es grundsätzlichen Pluralismus von Sprachen, Modellen und Verfahrensweisen zuläßt und anwendet. Die Postmoderne, eine negative Definition eines noch nicht klar bestimmbareren Bewußtseins eines Paradigmenwechsels, negiert nicht die Vergangenheit, sondern präsentiert sie in einem anderen Zusammenhang, in einer neuen Art. Dabei stellt „Post-“ ein Zeichen der Distanz zu den Merkmalen der jeweiligen „Vorgänger“ dar, die erneut behandelt, neu bearbeitet werden. Deshalb sprechen einige Forscher der postmodernen Kunst die

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Fähigkeit zu genuinen Formschöpfungen ab und definieren das Epigonale als ihren Wesenszug. (Kilb)

Zwar ist das Posztmagyar nicht die ungarische Form der Postmoderne, doch um die traditionellen Sichtweisen und Erwartungshaltungen zu revidieren, war für die Rezeption der neuesten ungarischen Literatur und Kritik eine Diskussion dieses Themengebietes bereichernd und entscheidend. Denn die Werke der jungen Schriftsteller/innen/generation lösten eine Irritation im Zuge der Rezeption aus, die teilweise zur Ablehnung führte. Die Literaturkritiker/innen konnten dergestalt auch eine neue Form des Diskurses und der Auseinandersetzung mit Literatur und Kunst finden.

Das literarische Schaffen von Gábor Németh umfaßt bis jetzt drei Buchveröffentlichungen (*Angyal és bábu*, *A Semmi Könyvéből*, *eleven hal*), eine Menge Kurzprosatexte in den verschiedenen Literaturzeitschriften und Anthologien sowie das Drama *Leer*. Die Texte halten auf Grund ihrer offenen, dynamischen Struktur einer traditionellen Behandlung nicht stand, oder besser gesagt, führt diese nicht weit, meist zur Frustration, da sich in ihnen nicht der viel diskutierte Wert der Literatur augenscheinlich zeigt.

Die neue Literatur im allgemeinen und teilweise die Ungarns scheint sich nicht durch passiven Genuß auszuzeichnen. Mit dem Computer und den interaktiven Medien ist nicht nur eine neue Beschreibung von Dingen und Objekten möglich, auch die Wahrnehmung hat sich verändert, die Linearität scheint durchbrochen. Die Autor/inn/en beziehungsweise Kunstschaffenden bieten mehr und mehr komplex strukturierte Werke an, die ein freies Spiel der Kombinationen erlauben. So erfuhr schon in der Romantik das Fragment eine Aufwertung (Nachdem lange Zeit die Unversehrtheit des Kunstwerkes und seine Vollendung als Bedingung für das Schöne galt.), um die schöpferische Phantasie und Freiheit besser ausleben zu lassen.

Die Texte Gábor Némeths kennzeichnet eine Fragmentarität. Jeder Text verweist mit den aufgearbeiteten Motiven, Themen und Protagonist/inn/en auf andere Texte. Doch auch innerhalb der einzelnen Werke zeigt sich eine fragmentarische Schreibweise, die die Begrenztheit der Darstellung gegenüber der Unendlichkeit der Welten und Sichtweisen erahnen läßt. Da die Motive die einzelnen Texte quasi miteinander verknoten, entsteht der Eindruck, daß sie Teil eines umfassenden Ganzen sind: als ob Gábor Németh eine große Geschichte, bestehend aus kleinen Mosaikteilchen schreiben wollte - die Geschichte vom Leben oder besser gesagt vom Tod.

Dieses strukturelle Konzept des Textaufbaues bewirkt eine relativ große Offenheit. In seinem Buch *A Semmi Könyvéből* zum Beispiel bestehen die einzelnen Absätze selbständig, da sie unabhängig voneinander je einen kurzen Ausschnitt von Begebenheiten, Träumen, Philosophien, Bildbeschreibungen

und ähnlichem geben. Im Verlauf der Zusammenstellung zu einem Buch synthetisieren die Absätze mit ihrer photographischen Schärfe - infolge der präzisen, oft bis ins kleinste Detail gehenden Beschreibung - (fast) komplexe Welten oder beinahe ganzheitliche „Mikrowelten“, die von de/r/m Leser/in nach eigenem Belieben zu einem größeren Bild, beziehungsweise stets neuen Welten komponiert werden. Das Fragment evoziert die Teilnahme am literarischen Prozeß und löst so die schöpferische Mitarbeit der Leser/innen aus. Gleichzeitig suggeriert es die formale Entgrenzung des Textes, in der Unendlichkeit seiner Offenheit bietet es eine gewisse Gesamtheit und Komplexität, oder besser gesagt, universelle Pluralität (Baudrillard). Die am besten mit dem „Wander“-Zitat

Mindent látok, és mindent megengedek (von László Garaczi zu Gábor Németh zu László Garaczi)

(Ich sehe alles und lasse alles zu.)

illustriert werden kann.

Das Fragmentarische erweist sich derart als gutes Vehikel zur Projektion und Abbildung einer Gesamtheit in sehr beengtem Rahmen und vermittelt ein Gefühl der Überschaubarkeit. Die Verwendung von Textver satzstücken und Fragmentarisierung des Textes zerstört aber die Texteinheit. Der Schreibakt kann derart auch als Gewaltakt gesehen werden, der selbst die Gewalt innerhalb der Texte entstehen läßt. Die Aggressivität tritt meist unerwartet im Textverlauf auf. Sie stellt einen Lebens- beziehungsweise Todesmotor dar, in der sich d/i/e/r Protagonist/in selbst zu finden sucht. Das Böse gilt hier als mögliche Erfahrung des Ästhetischen in einem eigenen Wahrnehmungsraum. (Rahden) Die Suche und Möglichkeit der Bewahrung der Selbstidentität in einem Dasein ohne Zentrum eröffnet sich im Gefühl der Fremdheit und Versäumnis. Der Widerspruch zwischen unbestimmbarer Unendlichkeit und der konkreten Individualität wird in der Angst, nicht Selbst zu sein, offensichtlich.

In demselben Sinn [Anm.: im Sinne fraktaler Objekte] können wir heute von einem „fraktalen Subjekt“ sprechen, das in eine Vielzahl von winzigen gleichartigen Egos zerfällt, [...] Wie das fraktale Objekt bis ins kleinste seinen elementaren Teilchen entspricht, trachtet auch das fraktale Subjekt danach, sich selber in seinen Bruchstücken anzugleichen. Diesseits jeder Repräsentation fällt es zurück bis zum winzigen molekularen Bruchteil seiner selbst. Ein eigentümlicher Narziß: er sehnt sich nicht mehr nach seinem vollkommenen Idealbild, sondern nach der Formel seiner endlosen genetischen Reproduktion. (Baudrillard S. 113)

In unserer Gesellschaft herrscht in einem gewissen Sinne eine Uniformität. Innerhalb einer Realität, besser gesagt Typs, gibt es nicht wirkliche Unterschiede,

lediglich ein vorgefertigtes Repertoire an Existenzmöglichkeiten - wobei auch Außenseitersein zur Rolle wird - bietet die Möglichkeit der Wahl, bei der die Vielfalt der Welt sich als Fiktion herausstellt. (Schütz) So kann auch die mangelnde Fremdheit des Anderen zu einer Identitätskrise führen, denn Eigenes wäre ohne Fremdes unreal.

Distanz, Ich-Bildung, Reflexion und Individualisierung hängen mit der Schrift und Schriftlichkeit zusammen. Das Buch wurde durch die Logik der Sprache zum Ort der Wahrnehmung von Kultur und Sinn. In der Postmoderne könnte es zur Befreiung des zentrierten Subjekts mit gleichzeitigem Identitätsverlust und der Begrenztheit der Welt kommen, da die elektronischen Medien keine Koppelung an den Körper und Geschichte haben. (Pott)

Das abstrakte, formale Denken des mathematischen Bewußtseins stellt den „soliden Kern“ der Identität in Frage und sieht den Menschen eher in ein kollektives psychisches Feld getaucht, die Gesellschaft nicht als miteinander in Beziehung stehende Menschen zeigt, sondern als Feld von intersubjektiven Beziehungen eines sich ent- und neu verknüpfenden, wogenden Netzes. (Flusser) Die Subjektivität sowie die Gesellschaft, selbst ein komplexes System, können auf Grund von Zufällen und Rückkoppelungsprozessen mit anderen Systemen unvorhersagbare Folgen haben. Die Subjektivität, ein System unter Milliarden von anderen, ist deshalb nicht mehr der letzte Bezugspunkt der Gesellschaft. (Wehowsky)

Die Identitätslosigkeit der Protagonist/inn/en verstärkt Németh Gábor durch die Fragmentarisierung der Texte ebenso wie durch die melancholische Atmosphäre der Texte und die ständig wechselnde Person und Zahl des Prädikates. Die Gestaltung der Geschichten und Protagonist/inn/en weist vor allem in den ersten beiden Büchern in Richtung Desubjektivierung. Die in der 1. Person Plural vorgetragenen Ansichten über die Welt sowie die Sätze mit einem Prädikat im Infinitiv lassen die Person des Schriftstellers in den Hintergrund treten. Der Infinitiv als Nullpunkt der Verbform, weil ohne Zahl, Zeit und Modalität, verstärkt den Eindruck der Anonymität, da der meist als Anweisung, Befehl oder Empfehlung gebrauchte Infinitiv nicht an einer Person festgemacht werden kann.

Die Grenzen der Einzelperson erweitert Gábor Németh in die Allgemeinheit, aber gleichzeitig zeigt er isoliert Einzelschicksale, die allgemeine Gesellschaft spaltet sich auf, wobei die Ichidentität stets in Frage gestellt wird. Denn das sich selbst reflektierende Bewußtsein ist sich des Identitätsbruches bewußt und verliert sich selbst so zwischen Ahnung und Erinnerung.

Außerdem nimmt sich Gábor Németh als Schriftsteller so weit zurück, daß teilweise das Buch des Buches *A Semmi Könyvéböl* die Rolle des Schriftstellers



übernimmt. (Als ob sich das Buch in gewisser Weise selbst schreiben würde.) Der Schriftsteller überläßt sein Wissen dem Buch, so daß dieses zum objektiveren, sachlicheren Vermittler seines Wissens wird.

A könyv tud egy ikerpárról [...] (*A Semmi Könyvéből* S. 57)  
(Das Buch weiß von einem Zwillingspaar)

Gleichzeitig werden aber Leser/in und Autor zum Objekt des Buches, es kommt zur Wechselwirkung, in der das Buch eine aktive Rolle einnimmt. Leser/in und Autor nehmen dermaßen den Platz des Subjektes ein, so ist das Subjekt nicht im Werk, sondern außerhalb zu finden. Der Autor regt die Mitarbeit de/r/s Leser/s/in an, indem er sie/ihn in die Situationen hinein-zuziehen versucht, was durch die autothematischen Elemente verstärkt wird.

Folglich scheint die Fragmentisierung nicht nur das strukturelle Konzept von Gábor Németh zu bestimmen, denn mit Hilfe dieser textuellen Verfahrensweise hinterfragt er auch die Wirklichkeit. (Lautréamont beispielsweise sah in der Schönheit der Welt vom Menschen erschaffene, kombinierte Realitätsfragmente, die in der Wirklichkeit nicht vorkommen.) Er zerstört die Grenze zwischen Wirklichkeit und beschriebenen Bildern. Die aufgezeigte Komplexität und Ganzheit der Textteile ist zwar der Weltwirklichkeit ähnlich, trotzdem verweist sie auf die Grenzen der Wahrnehmung, auf die Grenze zwischen Virtualität des Textes und des Lebens. Dies zeigt er im Text *Hungária extra dry* an Hand eines auf eine Hauswand aufgemalten Freskos. Literarisch umgesetzt verschwimmen hier die Grenzen zwischen Bild und Text Wirklichkeit, der Protagonist erkennt die Scheinhaftigkeit, die ihn trotzdem gefangen nimmt.

Ahogy belép a házba, megérti, hogy az egész csak kulissza, belül nincsenek emeletek. Körben a hatalmas falfelületen egyetlen freskó: mindazt ábrázolja, amit egykor elrejtett: [...] *feleven hal* S. 8)

(Wie er das Haus betritt, versteht er, daß das alles nur Kulisse ist, innen gibt es keine Stockwerke. Ringsum auf der riesigen Wandoberfläche ein einziges Fresko: es stellt all das dar, was es einst verbarg [...])

Daneben setzt er oft die Form des Tagebuches ein, die die Fragmentierung wegen der subjektiv-fragmentarischen Schreibweise selbst in sich birgt. Der integrale Ganzheitscharakter der Fragmente (als intuitive Vermittlung) verhilft zu einer präreflexiven Bewußtseinsstruktur. Beim Tagebuchschreiben ordnen sich Gedanken, Gefühle und Ereignisse durch das schriftliche Festhalten, andererseits kann es zugleich das Gefühl des Verlustes der kontinuierlichen Lebensgeschichte in der Fragmentierung der Sprache wiedergeben und durch

die Selektion des Wahrgenommenen erhöhen. Im Text *Katharmoi* - ein Tagebuchausschnitt - des Buches *Angyal és bábu* treibt er die Unterbrechung und Zerteilung des Erlebten so weit voran, daß er zwischen die unzusammenhängenden Gedanken und Reflexionen des Tagebuches unregelmäßig zerstückelte Teile einer Geschichte schiebt. Der Fluß des Lebens, den das Tagebuch festhalten soll, wird von der zerstückelten Geschichte wiedergegeben.

Die fragmentarische Schreibweise und die Leerstellen tragen auch zu einer Verzögerung bei der Rezeption bei. Man könnte sogar den Rezeptionsvorgang als Fragmentierung sehen, wenn man davon ausgeht, daß das Werk nie ganz und vollständig sich dem/r Rezipient/e/i/n eröffnet. Die Bedeutungssphäre eines Werkes, ein Zwischenzustand, den Almási Mintha(Als ob)-Ort nennt, bildet sich zwischen Werk und Rezipient/e/i/n aus. Details, Kapitel oder Ausschnitte, Perspektiven und Bilder werden zu Ausgangspunkten und Impulsgebern der Rezeption. Erst im nachhinein erschließt sich die Bedeutung des Werkes durch die Zusammensetzung der Fragmente, weshalb Iser darunter eine zeitliche Kategorie versteht. Doch verweist Almási auf die gegenständliche Grundlage dieses Zwischenzustandes als Anhaltspunkt, von dem aus sich d/i/e/r Rezipient/in immer aufs neue definieren kann und dies deshalb auch eine räumliche Kategorie darstellt. (Almási S. 44-45)

Der Makrokosmos wird im Mikrokosmos leichter erkannt, so können mit der fragmentarischen Schreibweise adäquat komplexe Zusammenhänge aufgezeigt werden.

Vergleichbar mit den selbstähnlichen Fraktalen wirken die einzelnen Elemente der Prosa von Gábor Németh. Gemäß der Chaostheorie gelten die Fraktale als grundlegendes Muster der Natur, da sie sämtliche Informationen, die das Objekt bezeichnen, in sich tragen, das heißt, daß im kleinsten Teil einer nach den Regeln des Chaos organisierten Form die gesamte Struktur erscheint. Nach dem Prinzip der Selbstähnlichkeit wiederholt sich das Große im Kleinen und umgekehrt.

Das Buch *A Semmi Könyvből* zeigt viele verschiedene Handlungsstränge, die aber immer wiederkehren. Ähnliche Orte und ähnliche Protagonist/inn/en füllen einen beinahe zeitlosen Raum mit wenig Handlung aus, wobei aber die Ähnlichkeit der Ereignislosigkeit oder besser gesagt Banalität auffallend ist.

Die Gleichförmigkeit einschließlich kleiner Variationen erinnert an die Bilder von Caspar David Friedrich, dessen Bilder als Thema und Motive in den Texten von Gábor Németh zu finden sind. (Auch Bilder anderer Künstler, Bildmotive und Bildbeschreibungen tauchen in den Texten auf, die selbst aus sehr bildhaften, expressiven Segmenten aufgebaut sind.) In den Bildern von C. D. Friedrich lenken stets ostinate Landschaften und Motive den Blick de/r/s

Betrachter/in/s auf die Details. Dabei ist nicht immer klar zu beurteilen, ob es sich um eigene Repliken oder Fremdkopien handelt. Diese ständige Wiederkehr und in sich Abgeschlossenheit unterstreicht zusätzlich die melancholische Grundstimmung, die sowohl in den Bildern Friedrichs als auch in den Texten Gábor Némeths vorherrscht.

Neben der wiederholten Verwendung unveränderlicher Motive, Protagonist/inn/en, Handlungsorte und Atmosphären greift Gábor Németh einzelne Textpassagen und Themen in anderen Werken, an anderen Stellen wieder auf, die einem das Gefühl des Schon-Gelesenen geben. D/i/e/r Leser/in kann jedoch oft nicht entscheiden, ob es sich dabei um ein Selbstzitat, um eine fremde Quelle handelt, oder ob er von anderen zitiert wird. Er kennzeichnet zum Beispiel auch einige Absätze als Zitate, wobei sich eben herausstellt, daß dies doch nicht auf die Zitathaftigkeit des Absatzes hinweist.

(Und deswegen stellt sich die Frage, ob das in Anführungszeichen Gesetzte nicht manchmal auch Eigenes ist, ein fremdes Eigenes, ein nicht vollständig akzeptiertes Eigenes. Dieses Jenseits des Textes wird zu dessen Diesseits uminterpretiert.)

Die Textpassagen tauchen meist reduziert und sprachlich ausgefeilter in neuen Kontexten und Zusammenhängen auf, die die Wiederholung nicht sofort erkennen lassen. Diese Art des Selbstzitates, ein Anknüpfen an das Vorige erzeugt das Gefühl des unendlichen Sprechens, eine ineinanderfließende Struktur und bewirkt so eine Weiterentwicklung des Textganzen.

So findet der „munyampará“ - ein afrikanischer Reisebegleiter - aus dem Buch *Angyal és bábu* eine erneute Bearbeitung im *A Semmi Könyvből*. Das Motiv des Bildes *Zwei Männer in Betrachtung des Mondes* von Caspar David Friedrich erscheint in drei Variationen, wobei er es in *Angyal és bábu* nur erwähnt, quasi als Darlegung. In *A megnevezhetetlen* wird das Motiv zuerst in einer Geschichte verarbeitet, die dann verkürzt auf das Wesentlichste im *A Semmi Könyvből* wiederkehrt. Außerdem ist dieses Bezugnehmen Gábor Némeths auf die bildende Kunst auffallend und bietet de/r/m Leser/in dadurch eine mögliche Form der Annäherung an seine Texte.

Einige Abschnitte finden sich indes auch unverändert in neuen Kontexten wieder. So kommt im Drama *Leer*, das eben dieses Problem der Originalität und das Ghostwriter-Sein behandelt, der Anfang der Novelle „Ő meg mondatokkal fizet“ (mit derselben Thematik) vor. Es ist nicht nur ein zweifaches Übernehmen und Verwerten eines Textes, sondern ein vielfaches, auf Grund der vielmaligen Projektion. Im *Leer* erzählt der Protagonist diese Novelle, in der aber wiederum die Originalität und Vermarktung von Texten thematisiert wird, Neumann Leer, der Leute für Geschichten und Sätze bezahlt. Diese dreifache In-Frage-Stellung sprengt die Dimensionen der textuellen Ebene und erweitert sie ins Unendliche.

Das Problem der ständigen Wiederkehr betrifft den schöpferischen Akt, doch ebenso die Lebensform als Selbstverwirklichung. Der Widerspruch zwischen unbestimmbarer Unendlichkeit und der konkreten Individualität bestimmt das Bild über d/i/e/n Melancholiker/in, die sich auf Grund von Selbstreflexion des Identitätsbruches bewußt ist und sich doch zwischen Ahnung und Erinnerung verliert. Durch den Stillstand der erlebnisimmanenten Zeit und die determinierende Gewalt der Vergangenheit kommt es zu einer Existenz im Leeren. (Schmitt) Das Erinnern erscheint bei Gábor Németh deshalb nicht allein als subjektiver, persönlicher Vorgang, sondern dehnt sich auf das gesamte Leben als weltanschauliche und metaphysische Kategorie aus, indem es die Einstellung zum und die Bewältigung des Lebens bestimmt.

Pokoli óra, amelyben rájön, hogy minden valahavolt értelmekből való. (*Angyal és bábu* S. 19)

(Teuflische Stunde, in der Sie erkennen, daß alles aus einstigen Sinnen besteht.)

In der Malerei bewirken Vervielfältigung und die Regelmäßigkeit der Bilder, die mit kleineren Veränderungen einhergehen, das Gefühl einer Bewegung. Ähnlichkeit mit allmählichem Wechsel - Prinzip des Filmes - werden vom Auge de/r/s Betrachter/s/in als Ablauf einer Handlungsfolge wahrgenommen.

Die einzelnen Prosatexte, Bücher und Briefe von Gábor Németh könnten auch als eine offene, dynamische Geschichte gewertet werden (im Zuge der jeweiligen Rezeption). Durch diese Wiederholungen, Variationen und Verwendung von Fremdtexen, die hier eine dynamische, zirkulierende Bewegung zeigen, strukturiert er seine Texte und auch das Textganze. Das Textmaterial wird Neubearbeitungen unterzogen, wobei gleiche Ausgangsstoffe andere Formen und andere Ergebnisse ergeben.

Die gegenseitige Abhängigkeit von Vorgegebenem und Neuem beeinflusst und ändert ständig den Rezeptions- sowie den Gestaltungsprozeß. Jeder Text weist über sich hinaus und steht mit anderen Texten im Dialog, wobei es aber de/r/s textdechiffrierenden und -ergänzenden Leser/in/s, bedingt durch die Verzögerungen und Aufschübe der Präsenz, bedarf. Dermaßen gehen auch Lesen und Schreiben ineinander über. (Renner) Auf Grund der Demontage von Textstellen und mit einer neuen, ungewohnten Eingliederung in andere Zusammenhänge erzielt Gábor Németh diese unzähligen Möglichkeiten der Interpretation, Das Netzwerk von Geschichten erlaubt den verschiedenartigen, nebeneinander bestehenden Weltansichten und -anschauungen, zur Geltung zu kommen.

Auf den ersten Blick oder auch im Zuge gesonderter Lektüre kann der Eindruck entstehen, daß die einzelnen Geschehnisse und Geschichten nur in einem „zufälligen“ Verhältnis stehen und sich nicht beeinflussen. Bei genauerer

Betrachtung jedoch kommt das feine Netzwerk von Relationen und Abhängigkeiten mit gegenseitiger Beeinflussung der eigenen einzelnen Texte, der der anderen Bereiche der Literatur, der Texte anderer Autoren und auch nicht-literarischer Quellen zum Vorschein. Die Elemente, die Sätze und Wörter können als neue Impulsgeber die Geschichte in eine andere Richtung ablenken, was durch die Verwendung von fremden Texten noch verstärkt wird. Im Laufe der Zeit nimmt die Komplexität zu, da die einzelnen Texte in sich selbst und in der Wechselwirkung miteinander und auch mit nichtliterarischen Texten immer neue Möglichkeiten aufdecken und einbeziehen.

Ähnlich dem Prinzip der Chaostheorie sieht man immer mehr, je genauer man hinsieht, denn die Fraktale kehren bei sukzessiver Vergrößerung immer wieder, und je genauer man sich die Gebilde betrachtet, desto kompliziertere, vielfältigere Formen kommen zum Vorschein - die Kombination einfacher Grundelemente kann hochkomplexe und überraschende Erscheinungen hervorbringen. So verdichtet und multipliziert sich auch die Wirkung der Texte.

Gábor Németh irritiert den Rezeptionsvorgang vor allem mit der Technik der Reproduktion, das heißt, daß Ausschnitte in veränderter, gekürzter Form, mit einer anderen Rahmenhandlung vorkommen - ein Spiel mit dem Bekannten-Unbekannten. Er lenkt den Blick immer auf Anderes, Unvorhergesehenes, dabei können plötzlich Banalitäten und Details wichtig werden und eine verbindende Funktion - ähnlich eines Gelenkes - erhalten. Auch in de/r/m Leser/in verändern sich im Laufe der Rezeption die Bilder der möglichen Welten. Wobei sich die Ansicht mit veränderter Perspektive wandelt, die Darstellung erfolgt in einer „anderen Dimension“, die das Dargestellte sich selbst entfremdet und „verzerrt“ erscheinen läßt. (Arnheim)

Die Intensität des Augenblickes wird vor allem in den einzelnen Absätzen des Buches *A Semmi Könyvéből* spürbar. Es ist kaum möglich, die einzelnen Absätze nachzuerzählen, sich im Gesamten daran zu erinnern.

Fél tucatszor olvastam a rövid kis könyvet, nem mintha annyira tetszeti volna, de másnap reggelre már semmire nem emlékeztem belőle. (Hajdú S. 510)

(Ein halbes dutzend Mal las ich das kurze, kleine Buch, nicht das es mir derart gefallen hätte, aber bis anderntags am Morgen konnte ich mich an nichts mehr davon erinnern.)

Mostanában előfordul, hogy könyvlapokai álmodom, „egyszerre” olvasom az egészét, nem sorról-sorra, nagyon furcsa szövegmező, néha értelmessé, sőt, zseniálissá csomósodik, másutt csak betűhalmazok egymásutánja. Reggelre nem marad belőle semmi, *{eleven hal S. 48}*

(In letzter Zeit kommt es vor, daß ich Buchseiten träume, „auf einmal“ lese ich das Ganze, nicht Zeile um Zeile, ein sehr eigenartiges Textfeld, manchmal wird es verständlich, sogar genial, andernorts ist es lediglich ein Nacheinander von Buchslabenhäufen. Bis am Morgen bleibt nichts davon.)

Lyrischen Gedichten ähnlich bleibt bei einem Resümee der einzelnen Sequenzen ein Signifikat über (Tod und Leben, in lyrischen Gedichten laut Barthes: Tod und Liebe), ihre Identität verschwindet. (Barthes S. 134) Doch die Details der Beschreibungen ermöglichen einen Gesamteindruck, bei erneutem Lesen, aber auch neue, andere Eindrücke und Gefühle. Abhängig vom Zustand de/r/s Leser/s/in, ihrem/seinem Wissen über sich und die Welt unterliegt die Wichtigkeit einzelner Absätze und ihre Aussagekraft sowie der Eindruck, den sie im Verlauf der Rezeption hinterlassen, einem ständigen Wandel. Diese Bildhaftigkeit der einzelnen Absätze, eine Ansammlung von genau beschriebenen Objekten, bewirkt ihre Polysemie.

Nicht nur die expressiven Segmente, auch die Synthese von Bild und Text in schriftlicher Form und im letzten Band *eleven hal* dann praktisch verwirklicht, treibt die Geschichte - der Rezeption - voran. Das Bild, die magisch-mythische Betrachtungsweise, präsentiert im Gegensatz zum Text, die Welt in einer anderen Sicht, in der Zweidimensionalität. Die eindimensionale Schrift hinterfragt das zweidimensionale Bild und erlaubt eine kausale, historische Betrachtung der Welt mit linearem Fortschritt, in der gewonnene Ansichten für künftige Zeiten gespeichert werden können. (Flusser) Diese Dialektik im Text kann als Suche nach anderen Dimensionen gedeutet werden, doch durchbricht sie auch die gewohnte Linearität der Schrift.

Die Textzusammenstellung und Handlungsentwicklung (das heißt, der jeweiligen Lesart und Zusammenstellung) läßt sich kaum kausal erklären - wie chaotische Entwicklung und Situationen wegen der Verflechtung der Fraktale ebenso schwer kausal erklärt, beziehungsweise auch nicht vorhergesagt werden können. Ursache und Wirkung stehen in keiner erkennbaren Beziehung zueinander, sondern werden durch die Macht des Zufalles (die eine unbekannte Einflußgröße darstellt) oder Wahrscheinlichkeit der Alternative ersetzt.

Gábor Németh unterbricht den fortschreitenden Verlauf der Texte, indem er oft unvermittelt die belletristischen Passagen beendet, um mit einem theoretischen Einschub fortzufahren und danach erneut wieder, aber doch in einem anderen Stil, die Erzählhandlung aufzunehmen. Als weiteres Zeichen der Kritik am Logozentrismus (eine romantische Absage der Postmoderne) könnte die Verdichtung des Textes auf Konklusionen ohne Syllogismen und Vergleich gesehen werden. D/i/e/r Rezipient/in wird lediglich mit der Tatsache konfrontiert, die Urteilsfindung selbst bleibt im Dunkeln und läßt sich nicht rück ver folgen. (Burger)

Die offenbar zufälligen Zusammenhänge, dieses unauffindbare Konstruktionsprinzip (trotz verschiedener Ordnungsmethoden) kann bei de/r/m Rezipient/i/e/n zur Frustration und Hemmung der Konsistenzbildung führen und ist anscheinend im Nicht-Festlegen-Wollen und im Offensein für anderes begrün-

det. Der Zufall (nicht im Sinne von Schicksal und Passivität, sondern als Gegensatz zur logisch begründeten Realität) führt die Texte zusammen und bewirkt zum Teil dieses sensible Geflecht verschiedener Relationen, die sich gegenseitig beeinflussen.

Die Textelemente beginnen in de/r/m Rezipient/i/e/n ein Eigenleben, das weder einer Regel noch einer kausalen Erklärung standhalten könnte. Die Leser/innen/kompetenz sowie der Blickpunkt beeinflussen das sich in de/r/m Rezipient/i/e/n eröffnende Textganze immer aufs neue, wobei sich die Ansicht mit veränderter Perspektive wandelt.

Das Sehen als Thema erhält deshalb einen besonderen Stellenwert in den Texten und wird auch in der Funktion, die es bei der Ausbildung des Selbst einnimmt, also als Selbst- und Fremdkontrolle dargestellt. Das motivische Netz für das Blicken und Betrachten, das meist durch Apparaturen gefiltert und abgelenkt ist, nicht direkt erfolgt, wird durch das Motiv der Idioten ergänzt und verweist vehement auf die Legitimation verschiedener Betrachtungsweisen und -möglichkeiten.

A kerítés párkányán ülve újrarendezik a világot az idioták (*A Semmi Könyvéből* S. 16)  
(Auf dem Gesims des Zaunes sitzend, ordnen die Idioten die Welt neu.)

Kant nennt den Wahn eine Verrückung der Seele, wodurch alle Gegenstände aus einem ganz anderen Blickwinkel betrachtet, anders aussehen. Im Wahn erscheinen die Gegenstände anders, die Fragwürdigkeit der Übereinstimmung von Ich und Wirklichkeit wird dabei augenfällig. Durch zunehmende Einsicht wird die Nichtigkeit des Selbstseins derart offenbar, daß sie im Wollen zum Unmöglichen zum Wahn führt. (Teilenbach) So verliert der Angestellte der Staatlichen Verkehrsbetriebe im *A Semmi Könyvéből* (S. 67-68) - im landläufigen Sinn - den Verstand auf Grund der Lektüre eines Buches, das Zugang zu einer tieferen Einsicht gewährt.

Wenn sich die einzelnen Glieder einer Gestalt in einer ihrer wahrgenommenen Eigenschaften gleichen, erlaubt das „Prinzip der Ähnlichkeit“, daß die einzelnen Glieder auf einmal wahrgenommen werden können, daß sie gemeinsam quasi ein komplexes Bild präsentieren. So ist d/i/e/r Leser/in versucht, die aufgefundenen Ähnlichkeiten in einem Text, ja sogar seine unterschiedlichen Elementen - als eine Verkörperung der Gesetzmäßigkeit des Ganzen - auf Grund des menschlichen Reflexes der Vereinfachung, Ähnlichkeit zusprechend, zu einer homogenen Geschichte zusammenzustellen und dabei auch die entstandenen Leerstellen im Text auszufüllen. Der Augenblick des Erblickens, der Wahrnehmung ist von den Eindrücken und sinnlichen Erfahrungen der Vergangenheit geprägt, deshalb rufen wahrgenommene Aspekte und Motive Erinnerungen wach, die auf eine Ganzheit verweisen. Bilder werden einer

neuerlichen Wertung unterzogen, das Gesehene zum Hinweis auf anderes, auf das Schon und Noch der Wahrnehmung.

[...] vajon összeáll-e a világ valaha egyetlen értelmes mondattá, tán csak sejteni lehet, hogy nem egészen szervezetlen Özőne a jeleknek, esetleg az igazság még sötétebb, s még föltételezni sem szabad a kiismerhetetlen grammatika létezését, vagy akár egészen fekete, és már a „jel” szavát is csak az öncsalás száználmas bizonyítékaként tarthatjuk számon. (*Cher Poiette!* 1994. feb. 4.)

(ob sich die Welt je zu einem einzigen vernünftigen Satz zusammenfügt, vielleicht kann man nur vermeinen, daß es nicht die ganz unorganisierte Flut der Zeichen ist, möglicherweise ist die Wahrheit noch finsterer, und die Existenz der undurchschaubaren Grammatik darf nicht einmal angenommen werden, oder womöglich ist sie ganz schwarz, und allein schon das Wort „Zeichen” können wir nur als bedauerlichen Beweis des Selbstbetruges in Betracht ziehen.)

Für diese dynamische Struktur des Textes sind zum Teil Leerstellen verantwortlich, die laut Iser eine gewisse Offenheit markieren, indem d/i/e/r Rezipient/in sich das Nicht-Gesagte als Gemeintes vorstellt, bekommt auch das Gesagte, besser gesagt, das Niedergeschriebene eine andere, tiefere Bedeutung. Denn das Fehlen eines Zeichens kann selbst ein Zeichen sein.

Der wandernde Blickpunkt de/r/s Leser/s/in verliert auf Grund der Segmentierung des Erzählens noch mehr die Möglichkeit der Zentrierung und wechselt ständig. Die erwartete, traditionelle feste Erzählform wird mit einer von Leerstellen beherrschten, ersetzt und bietet so keinen Anhaltspunkt für die Bewertung. Diese Leerstellen, Scharnieren gleich, können den Text in verschiedene Richtungen weisen. In Interaktion mit de/r/m Rezipient/e/i/n, die/der die Freiräume zwischen einzelnen Wörtern, Sätzen und auch Sequenzen füllen und danach entleeren, um sie dann erneut, vielleicht anders füllen, oder aber sie auch bestehen lassen kann, führt der Text ein beinahe vom Autor abgekoppeltes Eigenleben.

Im Buch *A Semmi Könyvéből* sind jedoch Leerstellen nicht nur zwischen den einzelnen Segmenten zu finden, auch in der sorgfältig aufgebauten Mehrdeutigkeits-Konstruktion kommt es innerhalb der Absätze zu Verzögerungen, die gleichzeitig die Vorstellungsintensität de/r/s Leser/s/in steigern. Die aufschiebenden und dissimilierenden Effekte erzielt Gábor Németh mit der Erzähltechnik, die Verdichtung und Reduktion kennzeichnet. Zum Beispiel wird das Erkennen der Identität der Protagonist/inn/en durch das Weglassen des hinweisenden Pronomens und im Nicht-Benennen dessen, der handelt, verzögert.

A fiú átadja a kulcsokat és a csomagot. Cserébe gyűrött papírpénzt kap, és egy félbemaradt, simogatásnak induló mozdulatot. Aztán megfordul, hogy átvágjon a parkon. A fiú hosszan követi tekintetével a ballonkabátost. (*A Semmi Könyvéből* S. 8)



(Der Junge übergibt die Schlüssel und das Paket. Im Austausch erhält er zerknülltes Papiergeld und eine unvollendete, zum Streicheln bereite Bewegung. Dann dreht er sich um, um den Park zu durchqueren. Der Junge verfolgt lange mit seinem Blick den im Ballonmantel.)

Und eine frühere Version:

A fiú átadja a kulcsot és a csomagot. A férfi cserébe egy gyűrött papírpénzt ad, és egy félbemaradt, talán simogatásnak induló kézmodulatót. Aztán megfordul, hogy átvágjon a parkon. A fiú nem fut el, ahogy várnám, áll, tekintetével hosszan követi a férfit. (*A Semmi Könyvéből* 1990. S. 48<sup>^</sup>19)

(Der Junge übergibt den Schlüssel und das Paket. Der Mann gibt ihm dafür eine zerknüllte Banknote und eine unvollendete, vielleicht zum Streicheln bereite Handbewegung. Dann dreht er sich um, um den Park zu durchqueren. Der Junge läuft nicht davon, wie ich es erwarten würde, er steht da, verfolgt lange mit seinem Blick den Mann.)

Die logische Linearität der Sätze scheint offensichtlich durchbrochen zu sein, denn beim oberflächlichen Lesen ist es nicht gleich ersichtlich, welcher Protagonist den Park durchquert.

Die Unterbrechung der Linearität im zeitlichen Verlauf der Handlung verweist im Text auf das Problem der zeitlichen Dimension und Wirklichkeit. Gábor Németh stellt an Hand der vielen Umstände und Gegebenheiten, durch die Schichtung der Sequenzen aus verschiedenen Epochen, aus unterschiedlichen Milieus und Handlungsorten etc. nicht nur die Wirklichkeit in Frage, er dehnt die zeitliche Dimension aus, eröffnet einen anderen Raum. Weder eine zeitliche Abfolge noch eine Gleichzeitigkeit erscheinen in den einzelnen Büchern und Texten. Er konfrontiert die verschiedenen Ebenen der Textrealität miteinander, indem er einander widersprechende Sätze nebeneinander stellt und entgrenzt den fiktiven Raum mit Hilfe einer weiteren Fiktion aus einer anderen Dimension, meist ohne textuelle Kenntlichmachung, wobei d/i/e/r Leser/in erst später erfaßt oder meint zu erfassen, welche Ebene des Textes wo beginnt. Die Wirklichkeit ist nur Schein.

Auch die häufige Verwendung des Infinitives verweist auf eine Komplexität der Zeit. Denn der Infinitiv ist die am schwächsten determinierte Verbform und hinsichtlich der Tempus-Perspektive variabel.

Zudem wechselt er oft innerhalb eines Textes Modi, Zeit und Person. Mitunter tragen auch die Zitate als ein Zurückgreifen auf vergangene Quellen zur erweiterten Zeitdimension bei. Die zeitliche Zäsur zwischen Vergangenem und Gegenwärtigem schafft Raum für Zeitlosigkeit, wie im *Angyal és bábu* die Empedokles-Zitate.

In der Malerei setzte Duchamp durch Aufschübe und Zwischenräume auf die Ungeduld des Auges und bringt es so aus der Fassung, indem er die

Vereinheitlichung verzögert. Die beiden Hälften des *Großen Glases* (das Gábor Németh im Buch *A Semmi Könyvből* bearbeitet) spiegeln unterschiedliche Zeit- und Raumdimensionen wider. Die untere Hälfte bezeichnet die archaische Zeit, die obere Hälfte der Braut entzieht sich durch ihr inneres Lebenszentrum einer klar definierbaren Zeit-Gesetzlichkeit. Die Braut, die entkleidet wird - aber noch nicht ist - fällt einer Art Verzögerung zum Opfer, wobei in „Etant donnés...” der Akt bereits vollzogen ist. Außerdem wurde das *Große Glas* nach der Beschädigung von symmetrischen Sprüngen durchzogen, die seine Bedeutung ohne Zutun des Künstlers veränderten. So kommt dem Bruch an sich eine strukturelle und „bildende“ Funktion zu.

Genauso sieht Gábor Németh im Bruch eine textformende und dynamische Größe. Der Blick de/r/s Leser/s/in wird durch das Verharren bei der vorigen „Einstellung“ abgelenkt. Erst nach einiger Zeit zeigen die Absätze ihre Wirkung, mit einer gewissen Verzögerung modifiziert sich die Bedeutung, die Nach-Bilder der Absätze wirken weiter, sinken als Schwerpunkte der Betrachtung ins Bewußtsein de/r/s Rezipient/i/e/n.

Die Linearität bestimmt die menschlichen Denkweise und Lebensform, doch steht sie im Widerspruch zur Nichtlinearität der Natur. Laut Flusser stellt die Ausbreitung des mathematischen, binären Codes einen Angriff auf die traditionelle historische, lineare Sichtweise dar. Die Informationen werden in nulldimensionale Punktelemente des digitalen Codes zerlegt und so gespeichert. Im Gegensatz dazu ist die Schrift eindimensional. Die Punkte selbst sind lediglich Möglichkeiten der Konkretisation und Wiedergabe.

In den letzten Jahren wurde immer wieder der Versuch unternommen, die Linearität des Buches, die sich allein schon aus der Schrift und ihrem Nacheinander ergibt, mit verschiedenen Methoden zu durchbrechen. Nicht nur durch Brüche und Leerstellen im Text als Geste des Auf Schiebens, auch durch den Wechsel des Stils oder des Themas kommt es bei Gábor Németh zu einer Diskontinuität. Er erzielt mit den unterschiedlichsten textuellen Verfahren diese Unterbrechungen - schreibenderweise.

Prozesse, die gemäß nichtlinearen Gesetzen ablaufen, bergen ein unerschöpfliches Potential an Kreativität in sich. Das Geheimnis, das dem Chaos entspringt und das Chaos erzeugt, liegt in dem Moment des Nicht-Beschreibbaren und Erklärbaren.

Irodalmárnak lenni - annyit tesz, mint *domesztifikálni* a tébolyt. (*Angyal és bábu* S. 54)

(Schriftsteller zu sein - ist soviel, wie die Unordnung zu domestizieren.)

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## HUNGARIAN STUDIES AT INDIANA UNIVERSITY

For the time being a full-fledged Hungarian program, i.e., Hungarian language teaching complemented by appropriate area courses is offered by two universities in the United States: Rutgers University in New Jersey and Indiana University at Bloomington.

The origin of the Hungarian Studies Program at Indiana University goes back to the time of World War II. Before the war Hungarian language, history, culture or civilization were never taught in post-secondary educational institutions in this country. Soon after the war started the administration in Washington realized that the country lacked experts in foreign areas and languages. This problem was recognized by U.S. Army Chief of Staff George C. Marshall, who in 1942 created an Army Specialised Training Program. On different university campuses this program provided intensive training in dozens of languages. Indiana University was selected as a center for teaching several Eurasian languages including Russian, Turkish, Finnish and Hungarian. A young Hungarian linguist Thomas A. Sebeok was hired to be in charge of the Hungarian and Finnish groups. Eventually he was made responsible for the entire operation.

Teaching Hungarian at Indiana University continued after World War II. Due to the work of Professor Sebeok, backed by the internationally-minded President of the University Herman B. Wells, a global variety of area-and-language programs took root. One of them was the Program in Uralic and Altaic Studies, including Finno-Ugric languages and linguistics. By the mid-1950s Professor Sebeok's attention turned to other fields of study; and Uralic and Altaic Studies were left to his colleagues. In the following years Hungarian language teaching and linguistic studies continued under the guidance of Professor Alo Raun, an Estonian refugee, who had studied at the Eötvös College in Budapest in the early 1930s and was a fluent in Hungarian.<sup>1</sup>

Following the arrival from Cambridge University of Professor Denis Sinor during the academic year of 1962-1963, the Hungarian Studies Program at Indiana University witnessed a new upturn. In 1965 on Sinor's initiative the

\* Presented at the 21st annual conference of the American Hungarian Educators' Association, Montclair State University, April 25-28, 1996

Program of Uralic and Altaic Studies was recognized as a graduate department with a full range of privileges. Denis Sinor was appointed the first Chairman of the Department and he held this position until 1981. Under his guidance the Hungarian Studies Program became a foundation stone of the curriculum in the Department of Uralic and Altaic Studies (since 1993 Department of Central Eurasian Studies) and an organic part of Indiana University's curriculum. In addition to the teaching of language, the program has consisted of various history and literature courses, such as *History of Hungary up to 1526*, *History of Hungary after 1526*, *Hungary in the 20th Century*, *Hungarian Literature up to the 19th Century*, *Hungarian Literature in the 19th Century* and *Hungarian Literature in the 20th Century*. The history courses were taught by Professor Sinor himself, while teaching literature belonged to the duties of Professor Gustav Bayerle, who joined the Department in 1966. Although Gustav Bayerle's main professional fields have been Ottoman Turkish and Ottoman History, his involvement in the Hungarian Program was quite natural since he was not only a native Hungarian, but before leaving the country in 1956, he had studied Hungarian history and literature in Budapest as well. The third person who contributed to the development of the Hungarian Studies Program was Professor Gyula Décsy, who joined the Department in 1978. Aside from Finno-Ugric languages he offered courses in Hungarian linguistics focusing on the history of the language. Hungarian offerings on this scale had never existed and do not at present exist at any other university in the United States.

Although the relations between the United States and Hungary were far from friendly at that time, through the innovative efforts of Denis Sinor, the Department, beginning with 1968, regularly employed Hungarian language teachers directly from Hungary. Since that time the Hungarian language has been taught on three levels in Bloomington: elementary, intermediate and advanced. An important side benefit of this policy was that many young Hungarian men and women were thus offered the opportunity directly to experience American life and were also able to improve their knowledge of English in the last thirty years. Several of these language instructors have made good use of this opportunity; they have pursued excellent careers and at least one of them served Hungary abroad as an ambassador.<sup>2</sup>

The Hungarian Studies Program reached a new level in 1979 when an agreement was signed by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and Indiana University on the establishment of a Hungarian Chair. It was agreed that the Chair was to function within the Department of Uralic and Altaic Studies and that the holder would have full professorial rank. In 1980, to create and sustain the Chair, the Hungarian Academy transferred to the University Foundation



a sum of 250,000 USD for the basic endowment. This action was, and remains, unparalleled in the relationship between the United States and any formerly socialist country. As for the university, it undertook to contribute to the operating budget of the Chair an annual amount not less than the earnings of the endowment for the same period. In fact, ever since that time the university has overfulfilled its obligation. The agreement also specified that the Hungarian Academy of Sciences would continuously contribute to the library of the Chair. The appointment of the Chair was assigned to a special search committee consisting of five members, two designated by the Hungarian Academy, two by Indiana University, and Denis Sinor the ex-officio Chairman.<sup>3</sup>

The first holder of the Chair Professor György Ránki, Deputy Director of the Institute of History and Member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, began his work in the spring semester of 1981. Up to 1986 György Ránki spent both semesters on the campus. From 1986, however, when he was appointed Director of the Institute of History, until his unexpected death on February 19, 1988 Ránki was able to be in Bloomington only one semester in every year. In his absence Professor Mihály Szegedy-Maszák (1986), Professor Kálmán Kulcsár (1987) and Professor Tamás Bácskai (1988) taught courses. Since that time Professor Sinor has served as the coordinator of the Chair's activity.

After his arrival in Bloomington, György Ránki took over the teaching of Hungarian history from Denis Sinor. As Professor Sinor, he divided Hungarian history into three chronological sections: up to 1526, from 1526 to 1918, from 1918 up to the present. Moreover, he offered different, more specialized seminars on modern Hungarian history, culture and civilization. Since 1981, when he was appointed Chairman of the Department, Professor Bayerle has ceased to teach Hungarian literature. His job was partly and temporarily undertaken by a former graduate student: András Boros-Kazai.<sup>4</sup>

One of the main goals of Professor Ránki was to make Bloomington an internationally recognized conference center for Hungarian topics. During his tenure he organized a number of forums and symposiums - each with a clearly focused topic. He was able to gather on campus distinguished scholars from Hungary, the United States and other countries. The first such conference held in the spring of 1981, and its topic was *Hungarian History - World History*. The second one, held in the spring of 1982, focused on *Bartók and Kodály*. In order to make Hungarian topics and researchers better known in the United States, Professor Ránki launched the series *Indiana University Studies on Hungary*. The first volume, which contained the papers of the first conference, was published in 1984. The second, which appeared in 1987, included the presentations of the *Bartók-Kodály Symposium*. The third, published in 1989,

concentrated on Hungary's role in European civilization. All of these volumes were edited by György Ránki, published by the Hungarian Akadémiai Kiadó and supported by the Hungarian Chair. After Professor Ránki's death the series ceased to appear.<sup>5</sup> We must not fail to mention, however, that the *Indiana University Uralic and Altaic Series*, edited by Professor Sinor, has published several volumes on Hungarian topics as well, such as the English translation of Thuróczy János' *Chronicle of the Hungarians*.

After György Ránki's death in February 1988 the Chair was renamed the György Ránki Hungarian Chair. In the summer of 1988, Professor Sinor on behalf of Indiana University and Professor Kulcsár on behalf of the Academy agreed that the Chair be occupied by Professor Mihály Szegedy-Maszák of Eötvös Lóránd University, who - as mentioned above - had already spent a semester at the university. He stayed in Bloomington for three academic years. During his tenure the offerings of the Hungarian Studies Program underwent some modifications. As a distinguished literary scholar he placed more emphasis on literature and culture. He introduced new courses such as *Hungarian Literature to 1900*, *Modern Hungarian Literature*, *Hungary between 1890 and 1945*, *Hungary from 1945 to the Present*. A traditional part of the program, teaching Hungarian history, was shared between himself and Professor Bayerle, who rejoined the Hungarian Program by offering every second year a history course entitled *Hungarian History and Civilization to 1711*. As before, the offerings of the Hungarian Program have been enriched by the linguistics courses given by Professor Décsy. Since 1989 Professor Jeffrey Harlig has also taught Hungarian linguistics courses.

Mihály Szegedy-Maszák successfully continued the traditional organizational activity of the Chair. He was able to obtain significant subsidies for the program which made possible the organization of new conferences such as *National Identity and Culture: Hungarians in North America (1990)* and *The Life and Times of Ernő Dohnányi (1991)*. The presentations of the 1990 symposium were published in *Hungarian Studies*, a periodical of the International Association of Hungarian Studies, of which Professor Sinor has been member of the Board of Editors since 1985 and Professor Szegedy-Maszák has been editor since 1985, and editor-in-chief since 1988.<sup>6</sup> The journal, which is now in its 12th year of publications, has occasionally been subsidized by the Hungarian Studies Program as well.

Another outstanding achievement of Mihály Szegedy-Maszák was to secure important private libraries of Hungarica for the Chair's library. The collections donated by the widow of Ambassador Aladár Szegedy-Maszák and Mr. Lajos Szathmáry are especially valuable. The Szegedy-Maszák Collection contains 4,500 volumes specializing mainly in the history of the Second World

War and American foreign policy. The Szathmáry Collection contains 5,000 books including many volumes of early twentieth-century Hungarian literary journals such as *Nyugat* and *Új Idők* and some rare Hungarian language cookbooks. Additionally, the Paul Marer Collection (about 3,000 items focusing on the Hungarian economy during the socialist period) and a 3,500 volume collection obtained from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Hungarian Embassy in Washington, D.C. and built continuously by Hungarian Chair Professors, deserve mention. The total holdings of the Hungarian Library now amount to 17,000 items and constitute an impressive research collection for Hungarian studies. The library is located in the Hungarian Institute, which was established in 1991 under the directorship of Professor Gustav Bayerle.

The University was so impressed by the teaching, scholarly reputation and achievements of Mihály Szegedy-Maszák that in the spring of 1991 he was offered a tenure full professorship by the Department of Comparative Literature. Professor Szegedy-Maszák accepted this offer, which meant that the Chair's budget no longer had to provide his salary. Since that time he has taught courses within the scope of the Department of Comparative Literature and the Department of Central Eurasian Studies as well.

In 1991 a new period began in the history of the Hungarian Chair. Unlike the previous practice, a one-year rotation was introduced. In the academic year of 1991-1992 the Chair's holder was Professor Csaba Pléh, a psycho-linguist and in 1992-1993 Professor László Csorba, a historian. In the fall of 1993 they were followed by Ignác Romsics, a historian, who arrived for one year, but remained 3 semesters and, after half a year break in the spring of 1995, returned for one more year in the fall of the same year. All three came from Eötvös Loránd University and taught *Hungarian History between 1890 and 1945*, and *Hungarian History from 1945 to the Present*. In addition to these basic courses they offered several more specialized seminars on different Hungarian or East European topics in accordance with their interests and specializations. Their teaching activity was complemented by the usual contributions of the Department's above mentioned Professors such as Gustav Bayerle (*Hungarian History and Civilization to 1711*), Gyula Décsy (linguistics) and Jeffrey Harlig (linguistics). Mihály Szegedy-Maszák, who has spent three semesters on the campus in the last five years, enriched the offerings of the Hungarian Studies Program as well. Beside some specialized subjects he usually taught modern Hungarian literature and culture. And there has always been, of course, a Hungarian language instructor from Hungary, who has continued to teach the Hungarian language on three levels.

During the last five years the Hungarian Chair has hosted three international conferences. The first one, held in April 1992, focused on modern Hungarian linguistics. Most of the papers presented at this conference were collected in a volume of the series called *Approaches to Hungarian*.<sup>1</sup> The second conference entitled *Religion and Churches in Modern Hungary*, was held in April 1993. The papers presented were published in 1995 in a special issue of *Hungarian Studies*.<sup>8</sup> The third conference took place in March 1994 and its participants lectured on different aspects of the theme *20th Century Hungary and the Great Powers*. The papers of the conference were published in two separate volumes; one in Hungarian and one in English in 1995. The English version appeared in a series of Atlantic Research and Publications, the Hungarian version in a series of the Teleki Foundation in Budapest.<sup>9</sup>

Since its foundation, the Department of Central Eurasian Studies has been a graduate department and, as such, an independent degree-granting academic unit. This means that it offers the degrees of Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy, but does not offer B. A. or B. S. C. degrees. Nevertheless some of its courses, including all of the language courses, are open to undergraduates. This applies to all of the area studies programs within the Department including the Hungarian Studies Program. The requirements at the M. A. level combine two key features: knowledge of language and knowledge of various aspects of Hungarian Studies. Courses, which satisfy these requirements, include at least two Hungarian language courses (3 + 3 credit-hours) and at least three courses on Hungarian history, culture or civilization (9 credit-hours). Among the other required courses are an area survey course *Introduction to Central Eurasian Studies* (3 cr.), a professional research methodology course (3 cr.), and two électives or open courses (6 cr.). The total (minimum) credit-hours at the M. A. level are 30. The M. A. program is completed by the acceptance of a thesis, which should be not less than fifty and not more than seventy double-spaced pages of text and notes.

A candidate for a Ph. D. degree must have an M. A. degree in Hungarian Studies or fulfill the course requirements leading to that degree. In the latter case, the student must complete the Hungarian Studies Program's M. A. requirements for a total of 30 credit-hours. The total (minimum) credit hours at Ph. D. level are 60. To fulfill these requirements the candidates must take at least 7 relevant courses on Hungarian Studies (21 credit-hours); 4 focusing on history, culture or civilization and 3 dealing with language and/or linguistics. The Ph. D. program is completed by written and oral examinations, and by the defense of a dissertation.<sup>10</sup>

From 1965 to 1995 the Department granted nineteen M. A. degrees in Hungarian Studies (out of a total of 124) and six Ph. D. degrees (out of a total of 60). These figures indicate that in regard to M. A. theses the Hungarian Studies Program is second only to the Tibetan Program which awarded

twenty-three degrees; and in regard to Ph. D. dissertations to the Tibetan and Mongolian Programs with thirteen degrees each.<sup>11</sup>

Of course most of the students involved in the Hungarian program have obtained neither Ph. D. nor M. A. degrees. Referring only to my personal experiences in 1993-1994 I had 30 enrollments in my courses, but only 3 of the students prepared an M. A. thesis under my guidance. In this academic year I have 20 enrollments, but I serve as thesis adviser for only two students. To these figures must be added the enrollments for the three language courses (10-15 students per semester) and the enrollments for the other courses offered by the Hungarian Program. All in all, the number of students involved in the Hungarian Studies Program (taking into account some overlaps) varies between 20 and 30. Some years ago, during the Golden Age of the Program, this figure was higher and we hope that it will be again.

### Notes

1. Thomas A. Sebeok, "Uralic Studies and English for Hungarians at Indiana University: A Personal View," *Hungarian Studies* 7/1-2 (1991-1992): 149-152.
2. Based on interviews with Distinguished Professor Emeritus Denis Sinor and Professor Gustav Bayerle.
3. Megállapodás az Indiana Egyetemen létrehozandó Magyar Tanszékről. Cf. Sinor Dénes, Fókusz. *Magyar Tanszék az amerikai Középnnyugat szívében*, in *USA* (37/1982) 81-88.
4. Ibid.
5. György Ránki, ed., *Hungarian History - World History*, Indiana University Studies on Hungary 1 (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1984); György Ránki, ed., *Bartók and Kodály Revisited*, Indiana University Studies on Hungary 2 (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1987), and György Ránki and Attila Pók, eds., *Hungary and European Civilization* Indiana University Studies on Hungary 3 (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1989).
6. *Hungarian Studies* 7/1-2 (1991-1992).
7. István Kenései and Csaba Pléh, eds, *Approaches to Hungarian*. Volume Four: *The Structure of Hungarian* (Szeged: J ATE, 1992).
8. *Hungarian Studies* 10/1 (1995).
9. Ignác Romsics, ed., *20th Century Hungary and the Great Powers* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), and Ignác Romsics, ed., *Magyarország és a nagyhatalmak* (Budapest: Teleki Alapítvány, 1995).
10. *Description of the Graduate Program of the Department of Central Eurasian Studies, Indiana University* (Manuscript, 1994).
11. Greg Rogers "Breakdown of Ph. D. Dissertations and M. A. Theses in the Department of Central Eurasian Studies from 1965 to 1995" (Manuscript, 1996).

## TEACHING HUNGARY AND HUNGARIAN AT BELOIT COLLEGE

Founded in 1846, Beloit College is a private liberal arts college on the Wisconsin-Illinois border. The enrollment is around 1,100, and its campus is located in the middle of Beloit, an industrial community of some 40,000 people. The endowment stands around \$40 million, and the physical plant is above average. The campus has a state-of-the-art \$3.5-million library, a \$5-million sports center, and the latest equipment for the natural sciences.

The college's World Affairs Center (WAC) stresses exchange programs as well as recruitment from abroad. Each year about 100 of our students are from outside the United States.

Since András Boros-Kazai's arrival in 1989, courses on Central Europe, the Balkans and Central Asia have become more or less regular components of the curriculum at Beloit. An Indiana University-trained historian, András Boros-Kazai is a Senior Fellow of the World Affairs Center. At Beloit he teaches courses with such titles as *Central Europe, The Balkans, Central Inner Asia, Ethnicity and the EurAsian Nation-State*, as well as seminars on how to approach diverse cultures and epochs through the medium of film. There is sufficient student interest in these topics, as indicated by an average enrollment around twelve. Average class-size at Beloit College is ten.

Since Boros-Kazai also teaches *Introductory Hungarian*, he is additionally listed as an Adjunct Associate Professor in the Department of Modern Languages and Literature. This eight-week course has been offered during each fall semester since 1990. The course was originally designed to be taken by students preparing to go on the Hungary Exchange during the following spring. However, since Beloit College has been sending only three or four students to Budapest, while enrollment in the Hungarian class has been between six and twelve (except for one year when it was scheduled for eight o'clock in the morning), we can note that there is healthy interest in the language in its own right.

The Hungarian Exchange program was initiated in the 1980s by Michael Simon of Beloit's Art Department. Mr. Simon, a photography teacher, established an exchange program with the Eötvös Collegium of the Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem (ELTE). Within the terms of this undertaking, Beloit sends up to five students to Budapest, where they take courses (in English) for credit. While Eötvös Collegium sends up to five students to Beloit, where they attend courses of

\* Presented at the 21st annual conference of the American Hungarian Educators' Association, Montclair State University, April 25-28, 1996

their choice but earn no Hungarian credits. At the same time they are able to improve their English language skills, and visit America.

The Center for Language Studies (operating within the WAC) for the past 20 years or so offered intensive summer sessions. Originally concentrating on so-called "critical" or less commonly taught (LCT) languages, these sessions covered, at one time or another, Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Spanish and ESL. Hungarian has been offered since 1990. Czech, Turkish, Portuguese and Indonesian have also been added since. Enrollment averages around eight to ten students, who come from diverse backgrounds and range from high-school to retirement age.

Introductory Hungarian is taught by a trained language teacher from Hungary, thus assuring that the instructor's language is up-to-date. Intermediate conversation courses and those that survey the social, cultural and political development of the region (i.e. Poland, the Czech and Slovak lands, as well as historic Hungary) have been taught by András Boros-Kazai.

This may change in the near future because Beloit College has recently acquired two tenure-track experts on Central Europe. One has specialty in German history, while the second one is an economist who spent a year in Cracow.

In recent years Central Europe has been placed on the academic map at Beloit College. Several students opted for, or at least considered, a self-designed minor in Central European Studies; a few went on to study the region at the graduate level (two of them at Indiana University), a number of alumni spent time in Hungary or in the region (teaching, working for international organizations or business firms, or as tourists), and the library's relevant holdings have greatly improved in recent years.

Alas, the outlook for the future is at best uncertain. As of April 1996 no full-time (or even semi-permanent) faculty member specializes in the region. It is, after all, a component of Europe, which is not currently academically fashionable in the United States. As a result, Beloit college has no Europeanist in its celebrated department of Anthropology, the European Studies concentration appears to be moribund, and proposals to expand (however minimally) teaching on the region have met with no response.

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## HUNGARIAN CHAIR AT TORONTO: EXPERIENCES OF THE 1990s

Seven years ago, the American Hungarian Educators' Association held its fourteenth conference in Toronto, in conjunction with the fifth annual meeting of the Hungarian Studies Association of Canada. As I recall it was a chaotic and frustrating event. Others have assessed it more generously. My colleague and friend Nándor Dreisziger wrote to me: "It will be probably remembered as the last great North American conference on Hungarian Studies." From the perspective of the Hungarian Chair, this prophesy has certainly come true.

I have written so much about the establishment of the Hungarian Chair (most thoroughly in issue 1, 1990, of the *Hungarian Studies Review*,<sup>1</sup> and in Hungarian, in a 23-page booklet published in 1990<sup>2</sup>) that I am reluctant to repeat myself. I wrote about the heroic attempts of the culturally conscious Hungarian-Canadian community to establish a university chair; the fundraising campaign achieving success by 1978; the opposition of the history department at the University of Toronto against the original plan to use the endowment for a chair in Hungarian history; and finally, the inauguration of the chair of Hungarian language and literature studies in September 1978. Earlier I had reported optimistically about the achievements, and more recently, in an interview given to *Hungarian Life - Magyar Élet* (February 17, 1996),<sup>3</sup> bemoaned the hard times that have fallen on the chair in the 1990s. Aside from the numerous copies of the above publications, I mailed a number of fliers to the organizer of the present panel in order to inform those who may not have heard about Hungarian Studies at the University of Toronto. These fliers are no longer up to date: they do not include recently approved graduate options and two new courses - however, the current masters of the administration do not think that allocations from the endowment for such luxuries as printing a new flier can be afforded any more.

Instead of repeating the often told stories, let me share with you some never told ones. You can be sure that they will have a disturbing moral.

Needless to say, I love the Hungarian language and literature the teaching of which is a tradition on both sides of my family. Thus it hurts me all the more when I hear, or read, primitive putdowns of language and literature in favor of politics or history. (The most recent of these pitiful remarks I found in a book on the history of the Rákóczi Foundation, Toronto 1994.)\*

\* Presented at the 21st annual conference of the American Hungarian Educators\* Association, Montclair State University, April 25-28, 1996



Nevertheless, from the beginning I regarded my position as a spearhead for the expansion of Hungarian Studies. For an eventual goal I envisioned a center to coordinate research in such a way that, little by little, courses in Hungarian history, social conditions, art history, and geography etc., could enter the university curricula. Visiting scholars and younger research associates could have performed the dual task.

Realizing the obvious fact that the materialization of such an ambitious plan surpassed my ability and energy (not to mention my fundraising skill), in 1982 I developed a three-page draft for the rationale and tasks of such institute, and gave it to persons whom I regarded as trusted friends and colleagues. I should have taken an introductory course in psychology instead.

In 1986, when the Hungarian Research Institute of Canada was inaugurated as a "research ancillary of the University of Toronto", I found that the incumbent of the Hungarian Chair had no place on the twelve-member Board of Directors or on any of the many committees. I protested very loudly and reassessed my relations with my old acquaintances. Within two years I was graciously admitted to the Board of Directors, but nobody has ever asked for my opinion or cooperation ever since. The present president, secretary, and the third most important men of the institute are a dentist, a professor of food engineering, and a retired professor of political science who moved to Paris years ago. Aside from a handful of invited lecturers, all that the institute has sponsored during the past decade was the translation of the three-volume *History of Transylvania* (Erdély története, 1986). Judging from last year's activity report, the expensive project must still be very far from publication. And I still wonder: is a research institute needed to sponsor a translation and publication project?

After my failure to help Hungarian Studies branch out into other academic fields, I have confined myself to other, tested and rewarding activities such as teaching and research. But I have also run the administration of the Hungarian Studies Association of Canada, and co-edited the *Hungarian Studies Review*. Did I have any allies in these efforts? Yes, my loyal friends who constitute our association; yes, my editor partner Nándor Dreisziger. Unfortunately, I can hardly speak about the Hungarian-Canadian community as allies, which is regrettable for this community. Finally, the schizofrenia. Yes, I have received much-appreciated support for twelve years from Hungary's officials and authorities, especially the World Federation of Hungarians - books by the hundreds, subscription to some twenty periodicals, and much else. There was also contact with the Ministry of Education, Hungarofilm, and other institutions. Of course, I was walking on a tight rope: getting as much as I could without reciprocating it with politically exploitable material.

Since 1990, these contacts have evaporated. Hungary's current cultural authorities, including the World Federation, cannot care less about Hungarian higher education and scholarship on this continent, or at least in Canada. The illusion of the current and past government is that Hungary's future depends exclusively on economic indicators. Apparently, it has been forgotten that any government has a duty to represent and promote its culture abroad, and a responsibility to support the aspirations of that culture's members, whether they live (as in Hungary's case) in Romania, Austria, or Canada. Neglecting this responsibility will sooner or later result in dismal consequences. Do we have the right to expect substantial support from Hungary? I think we do.

The first decade of the so-called "Research Institute" demonstrates the price of incompetence. On the other hand Hungary's present attitude toward the North American Hungarian intellectual community appears to me as an example of callous indifference. We are left to cope with the post-communist maelstrom. I am sorry not to be able to listen to the reports of the colleagues from two American strongholds of Hungarian Studies, or to learn professor Hidas's view who has taught Hungarian courses at McGill University. Maybe they have a more optimistic message than mine. As for me, I have no illusions. Without radical and positive changes, effective Hungarian presence at North American universities will not survive the next decade, endowments notwithstanding, because these are insufficient. The University of Toronto's measures against the Hungarian Chair are ominous signs of what is forthcoming. In 1992 the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science refused, without advance notice, to pay the chair's mail, xerox, and phone expenses incurred during the past year. She could not find \$ 600 in her budget for this purpose. Neither did she have enough secretaries to notify me in time. If this is the present situation, what will the future be like? But again, kings, presidents, and professors have often prophesied that after them the deluge would come. I wish my presentiments would prove to be wrong.

The indifference affecting Hungarian Studies in Canada is all the more paradoxical since the demand for Hungarian courses has been on the rise in Toronto since 1989. This year I have had forty students in three courses. I am happy that I did not have more, since I have no teaching assistant. How could I effectively teach a hundred or more students alone? Assuming that the slow growth continues, neither the university nor Hungary or the Hungarian-Canadian community will have the pleasure of seeing that they are adequately taught, unless they finally wake up and take an active part in remedying the situation.

## Notes

1. *HSR*, XVII, 1 (1990), 19-28.
2. *A Torontói Egyetem magyar tanszékének első évtizede*. Toronto, 1990.
3. "Azt is eltűnőfélben levőnek találom, ami van? Beszélgetés Bisztray György professzor úrral a Magyar Tanszék múltjáról, a jelen gondjairól és a nem túl rózsás jövőről."
4. Arday, Lajos: *A Rákóczi Alapítvány története* (Toronto, 1993), 84.

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*George Bisztray*



## REVIEWS

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Thomas Bender and Carl E. Schorske (Ed.)

**Budapest and New York:  
Studies in Metropolitan Transformation**

New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1994. 400 pp.

Comparative history is a fascinating field but the road leading to it is full of dangers. The risk of publishing a collection of essays on New York and Budapest by American and Hungarian scholars is that neither side would be familiar with the history of the other. Fully aware of the difficulties of their pioneering work, the editors of this volume have decided to solve this problem by writing a general introduction and an afterword. Except for these two texts, comparison is virtually limited to the brief introductions to the five sections. Although no name is attached to these interchapters, it is safe to assume that the American editors are responsible for their composition. Since their knowledge of Hungarian history is second-hand, their summaries are inevitably one-sided.

Most of the essays on Budapest are analytic rather than synthetic. When some details are taken out of their original context and placed in a new one, the result may be an interpretation that will not hold up under scrutiny. Sometimes a shift in emphasis may lead to misunderstanding, as in the case of the discussion of the 1919 Commune in Hungary. In the general introduction it is mentioned that "one of the actions of the brief revolutionary government in Budapest in 1919 was to abolish the admission charge to Margaret Island" (16). While this statement is absolutely correct, it may mislead a reader who is unaware of the consequences of the dictatorship introduced by Béla Kun and his colleagues after March 21, 1919. In a similar way, the argument that Admiral Horthy represented "Hungarian reaction and provincialism" (9) seems farfetched if compared with the much more complex characterization of this statesman given by Thomas Sakmyster in his recent book *Hungary's Admiral on Horseback: Miklós Horthy, 1918-1944* (Boulder, Colorado: East European Monographs, 1994).

The most valuable chapters are those in which the contributors seem reluctant to draw parallels. The analysis of municipal policy in the two cities gives the reader a chance to reach his own conclusions. Here the excellent American contribution is preceded by an equally subtle examination of the interrelations between the adoption of liberal ideas by the city leaders and the rise of the Hungarian capital. Somewhat less perfect is Part II. While the essay on New York's Central Park is highly illuminating about changes in the use of public space, the equivalent chapter on Budapest suffers from lacking a clearly defined focus. Once it has been established that Városliget "was and has been the only urban public park of the city that can be compared to well-known urban gardens elsewhere" (89), the reader would expect a history of this "City Grove." Instead of such a systematic approach, the author devotes special attention to a working-class demonstration held in different parts of the city on May 23-24, 1912. The 1896 exhibition is neglected, although it was held in Városliget and is generally regarded as an unquestionably significant public event that made a lasting impact on the life of Budapest as a whole. As is wellknown, the first subway line and several important public buildings and monuments date from 1896 and continue to remind citizens and tourists of the Millennium Celebration which had radically changed the image of the Hungarian city.

Of particular interest is the next section entitled "Neighborhoods: Class and Ethnicity." On this occasion the methods followed by the two scholars are different: the inquiry into the residential distribution of immigrant groups in New York City is based on published sources, whereas the description of St. Imre Garden City relies on field research. In the Hungarian essay social history is happily combined with semiotic investigation. What I find not quite convincing is the theoretical underpinning in this interdisciplinary study. In my view it was not Roland Barthes but John Stuart Mill who "worked out the denotation - connotation antithesis," in *A System of Logic* (1843), translated into Hungarian in 1874-77; Peirce, Derrida, and Gadamer cannot be characterized as representing "a historical analyses of semiotics;" and it is an exaggeration to assert that "the historical disciplines - with the sole exception of ethnography - have made little use" of semiotics (175).

The last two sections are devoted to the cultural life of the two cities. While it is perfectly understandable that popular culture is taken very seriously by specialists of urban history - vaudeville, operetta, and journalism are given a substantial and thought-provoking treatment - it is somewhat surprising that only accidental references are made to musical activity in Budapest. The libretto of *The Gipsy Baron* is based on a text by the Hungarian novelist Jókai, but it was composed by an Austrian for his native Vienna, and even *The Merry Widow* was originally intended for a Viennese audience. Dohnányi, Bartók, and Kodály, on the other hand, lived and worked in Budapest in the early 20th century and were attached to such institutions as the Budapest Academy of Music, founded in 1875, or the Opera, opened in 1884. The first president of the Academy was Liszt and the Opera had directors as distinguished as Erkel, Mahler, and Nikisch.

Historians examine works of art as social documents; it is not their task to do justice to aesthetic value. Still, I find some of the conclusions reached by the authors of the last essay questionable. If we remember such paintings as *The Eastern Station at Night* (1902), by Tivadar Csontváry Kosztká or the cityscapes of János Vaszary (two major artists not even mentioned in the book), or the long line of novels written about Budapest, we may have doubts about the relevance of the statement that "the city of big tenements and brownstone schools, of the eclectic and ambitious public buildings, of millenary monuments and broad avenues, does not surface in the picture painted or stories told of Budapest" (317). *Midás király* (King Midas, 1891-92), a long novel by Zoltán Ambrus, opens with the naturalistic presentation of a tenement in the Budapest of the late 19th century; *Budapest* (1901) by Tamás Kóbor is about the life of prostitutes in a rapidly changing city; *A vörös postakocsi* (1913, published as *The Crimson Coach* in 1967) by Gyula Krúdy portrays the life of actresses; *A kristálynézők* (Crystal Gazers, 1913) by Kálmán Harsányi is about the work of Ödön Lechner, the most important Art Nouveau architect in Budapest; *A régi ház* (1913, published in New York as *The Old House* in 1922) by Cécile Tormay deals with the transformation of Biedermeier Pest-Buda into a capitalist metropolis; and *Anna Édes* (1926) by Dezső Kosztolányi tells us the story of a district of Buda in the politically crucial years 1919-22.

It is an interesting hypothesis that in Budapest aesthetic modernism was opposed to urbanism, but the validity of such a generalization may be limited if we do not forget that Hungarian artists could hardly paint skyscrapers. The social and political criticism formulated by some of the contributors is also somewhat vulnerable. It is easy to ridicule the Hungarian gentry; it is far less easy to explain why so many original artists and writers of the early 20th century came from that class. In view of the fact that several among these composed their best works in the interwar period, it is a simplification to maintain that "the 1919-1920 emigration completely broke the continuity of Hungarian culture" (322).

The reason for some of the weaknesses of the volume may be careless translation. The statement that "Ady created the unforgettable figure of Kornél Esti" (360) suggests that

inconsistencies are probably due to the translator's imperfect understanding of the original Hungarian text. *Kornél Esti* (1933), one of the landmarks in twentieth-century Hungarian literature, is a book of Kosztolányi. It is unlikely that the author of the essay in which this work is mentioned is responsible for such a misstatement. Another possibility is that the notes added to this chapter may have been supplied by some other person. In the text a book by Zsigmond Móricz is mentioned as "She Has Her Say" (364), whereas in the notes "As Asszony Közbeszól" [sic!] is given as the Hungarian title and the English version is "The Woman Interferes" (366). The original title is "Az asszony beleszól," so the correct translation is given in the essay and not in the notes. Other parts of the book have similar imperfections: the map of Budapest has some inaccuracies (37), the first permanent bridge of the city is mentioned under two different names (1, 3), and Hungarian words are misspelt and titles mistranslated in several parts of the book. Minor as these errors may seem, they occur quite frequently and may remind the reader that the distance between New York and Budapest is so wide that coordinated projects run the risk of being uneven. Yet the shortcomings of the editorial work should not make us forget that this collection includes several brilliant essays and the American-Hungarian project has helped break the ice for further experimentation with the comparative study of regions which have very different historical legacies.

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Armin A. Wallas (Hg.)  
 Zeitschriften und Anthologien des Expressionismus in Österreich.  
 Analytische Bibliographie und Register.  
 Band 1: Analytische Bibliographie;  
 Band 2: Register  
 München/New Providence/London/Paris: K. G. Saur, 1995.

Expressionistische Periodika in Österreich: Bestandsaufnahme und Analyse

Alle Forscherinnen und Forscher, die sich mit dem literarischen Expressionismus bzw. mit der literarischen Avantgarde befaßt haben, wissen, daß Zeitschriften und Anthologien oft die wichtigsten Quellen sind. Die literarischen Texte in diesen Publikationen sind zumeist Erstveröffentlichungen. Darüber hinaus ist - schreibt Armin A. Wallas, der Herausgeber der neuesten, umfassenden Bibliographie in seiner Einleitung - „den expressionistischen und aküivistischen Periodika [...] ihr Manifest-Charakter gemeinsam: oft nur kurzlebig, in geringer Auflage verbreitet, artikulieren sie die kulturpolitischen Vorstellungen und ästhetischen Positionen ihrer Herausgeber und der um sie gescharten Gruppierungen. Anhand der Periodika und Anthologien läßt sich geradezu paradigmatisch die Rolle von Expressionismus und Aklivismus als ästhetische und ethische, nicht nur Literatur und Kunst, sondern auch Philosophie und Politik erfassende Erneuerungsbewegung untersuchen. Die Zeitschriften könnten als interdisziplinäre Gesamtkunstwerke interpretiert werden: sie enthalten nicht nur literarische Beiträge, sondern auch Graphik, Reproduktionen, Photos,

Nolenbeilagen, Beiträge aus dem Bereich der bildenden Kunst und Musik, Manifeste, Übersetzungen, theoretische Essays, Buchrezensionen, Besprechungen aktueller künstlerischer Ereignisse und - insbesondere aus der Revolutionszeit 1918/19 - politische Stellungnahmen." Die analytische Bibliographie von Wallas erschließt 53 deutschsprachige Zeitschriften und Anthologien des Expressionismus in Österreich. Sie sind in der Zeit zwischen 1910 und 1925 erschienen, der Erfassungszeitraum ist demnach identisch mit dem des „Index Expressionismus“, des von Paul Raabe herausgegebenen 18 bändigen Standardwerks. Als Verlagsorte werden Wien und Innsbruck, Prag, Brunn und Salzburg genannt, bzw. deutsche Städte wie München, Berlin oder Leipzig, falls Wiener Gründungen in Deutschland ihre Fortsetzung gefunden haben.

Was unterscheidet nun eine analytische Bibliographie beispielsweise von den als Repertorien bezeichneten Bibliographien avantgardistischer Literatur- und Kunstzeitschriften des Budapester Lileraturmuseums Petöfi? Der Herausgeber hielt sich an die Richtlinien der von der Berliner Akademie der Künste erarbeiteten Erfassungsmethode der Analytischen Bibliographien deutschsprachiger literarischer Zeitschriften des 20. Jahrhunderts. Der Vorteil einer analytischen Bibliographie - schreibt Wallas - liege im Unterschied zu einem Index in der bibliographischen Deskription der Zeitschrift als Text. Dann zitiert er die Beschreibung von Gerhard Seidel: „Die einzelnen Beiträge werden nicht in einer Abfolge verzeichnet, die auf fremden Ordnungsprinzipien beruht, sondern nach ihrer natürlichen' Ordnung, nach ihrer Stellung im realen 'Kontext' der Zeitschrift. Diese wird also vom ersten bis zum letzten Beitrag, Heft für Heft und Jahrgang für Jahrgang mit den Mitteln bibliographischer Abstraktion reproduziert. Dieser Materialien der bibliographischen Publikation kann ‚gelesen‘ werden wie die von ihm wiedergegebene Zeitschrift. [...] Während der Materialteil der bibliographischen Reproduktion der Zeitschrift gewidmet ist, übernimmt ein System von Registern die Aufgabe der bibliographischen Erschließung.“ Die Anwendung dieses Verfahrens zeichnet ein übersichtliches, aufschlußreiches Bild des österreichischen Expressionismus und Aklivismus in der Literatur.

Etwa die Hälfte der aufgenommenen Titel sind Periodika, die vor oder in den Jahren 1918/19 erschienen sind, die übrigen sind - mit Ausnahme dreier ‚überbrückender‘ - in der Nachkriegszeit erschienen. Es gibt demnach eine kontinuierliche Präsenz expressionistischer Periodika zwischen 1910 und 1925 in Österreich, wenngleich sich drei Knotenpunkte abzeichnen: die Anfangsjahre des Expressionismus, die Zeit der Revolutionen, sowie die Jahre 1922 bis 1924. Im folgenden möchte ich das gesammelte, riesige Material aus der Sicht der ungarischen Literaturgeschichte überblicken. Es ist allgemein bekannt, daß beinahe alle ungarischen Avantgarde-Literaten und -Künstler nach dem Fall der Räterepublik im August 1919 nach Wien emigrierten (es gab wenige Ausnahmen: beispielweise Gyula Illyés nach Paris, László Moholy-Nagy nach Berlin usw.). Es gab in Wien Anfang der 20er Jahre mehrere ungarische Verlage; zwei ungarische Tageszeitungen und Dutzende anderer Periodika sind erschienen, darunter auch einige der literarischen Avantgarde.<sup>3</sup> Das zwischen 1916 und 1919 in Budapest erschienene *Ma* wurde zwischen 1920 und 1925 in Wien herausgegeben (als „aktivistische Zeitschrift“) und galt als eine der weltweit bekannten, großen Zeitschriften der Avantgarde. Daher ist es zunächst überraschend, daß weder österreichische noch ungarische Experimental blätter der Zeit selbst die Tatsache dieser unvermittelt entstandenen Nachbarschaft reflektiert haben (geschweige denn, daß sie die künstlerische bzw. literarische Tätigkeit des jeweils anderen bekanntgemacht oder kommentiert hätten). Die Zeitschrift *Ma* wird in den expressionistischen Periodika ein einziges Mal erwähnt - in Béla Bartóks Aufsatz über die Musik Arnold Schönbergs in Ungarn.<sup>4</sup> Die übrigen Wiener ungarischen Avantgarde-Zeitschriften finden keine Erwähnung. Dank Emil Szittyta (Pseudonym für Adolf Schenk), der zeitweise Mitarbeiter verschiedener Wiener Blätter war, gibt es mehrere Hinweise sowohl auf seine Budapester *i/or/zo/iz*-Flugschriften als auch auf seine Wiener *Horizont-Heile*‘, ja auch *Der Mistral*, seine Zürcher Gründung während des Krieges wird erwähnt. Bedauerlicherweise interessiert sich die ungarische Forschung bishin für diese Periodika von Szittyta kaum.



Hinweise auf Ungarn, Interessantes für den Historiker gibt es in der übersichtlichen, leicht zu handhabenden Bibliographie genug. Eine Durchsicht der Stichwörter hungarologischer Zuordnung im Sachregister (Budapest; Kommunismus: Ungarn; Österreich-Ungarn ...; Revolution: 1919: Ungarn; Terrorismus) zeigt allerdings jene Themengebiete an, für die die österreichischen Expressionisten Interesse gezeigt haben: die meisten Beiträge sind der Politik gewidmet. Im Personenregister finden sich Namen von Politikern aus der Zeit der Monarchie (Gyula Andrássy, István Tisza), aus der Zeit der bürgerlichen Revolution (Mihály Károlyi, Oszkár Jászi), aus der Zeit der Räterepublik (Béla Kun, József Pogány, Tibor Szamuely, Jenő Varga) und auch aus der Zwischenkriegszeit (Miklós Horthy). Die Räterepublik hat die stärkste Resonanz ausgelöst. Ihre Faszination gründete wohl auch auf der Hoffnung einiger Aktivisten, sie auch in Österreich einrichten zu können. Die expressionistische Rezeption der ungarischen „neuen Musik“, Kunst und Literatur hat im wesentlichen die Moderne als adäquate oder vergleichbare Strömung wahrgenommen. Sowohl die Namen der Komponisten (Béla Bartók und Zoltán Kodály), der Maler (Béla Kádár und Lajos Tihanyi) als auch die der Dichter und Schriftsteller belegen diese Tatsache eindeutig. Unter den Dichtern der Moderne dürfte Andreas Ady<sup>5</sup> den größten Eindruck auf die österreichischen Expressionisten gemacht haben (Nachrufe, Buchveröffentlichung 1921, Rezensionen, Vorabdrucke und Nachdrucke, Aufsätze über seine Dichtung). Diese Bekanntheit ist allerdings zum überwiegenden Teil seinem Mäzen, Baron Ludwig Hatvány zu verdanken, der auch die Übersetzung und die Herausgabe einer Auswahl seiner Gedichte veranlaßt hat. Nach Ady hallen Friedrich Karinthy und Desider Kosztolányi die meisten Veröffentlichungen in den Zeitschriften (*Der Brenner* 1912-1914, *Der Friede* 1918-1919). Auch die Prosa von Zsigmond Móricz fand einige Beachtung: Stefan J. Klein hat neben *Sieben Kreuzer* bzw. *Tragödie* - zwei seiner bekannten Erzählungen - etliche andere seiner frühen Prosastücke ins Deutsche übersetzt (alle in: *Der Strom*, 1912-1913). Von Michael Babits ist außer *Die Dandidén* nichts erschienen (in: *Der Friede*, 1918). Auch der sonst vielzitierte Franz Molnár ist nur mit zwei Beiträgen in den Zeitschriften und Anthologien des Expressionismus vertreten (in: *Der Strom*, 1911-1912). Die übrigen Übersetzungen aus der oder Beiträge zur ungarischen Literatur waren nicht sehr zahlreich und dürften zudem zum überwiegenden Teil von Wiener Ungarn stammen (beispielsweise anonyme Rezensionen von Zsigmond Móricz' 1921 in Berlin erschienenem Buch *Gold im Kote* oder Ernő Széps 1922 in München erschienenes Buch *Lila Akazien*, beide in: *Die Initiale*, 1922).

Nach der Sichtung der Beiträge aus der ungarischen Literatur ist es klar, daß in den Zeitschriften und Anthologien des österreichischen Expressionismus und Aktivismus die ungarische Avantgardeliteratur so gut wie nicht rezipiert wurde. Dies ist zum überwiegenden Teil wahrscheinlich mit den literarischen Vorlieben, mit dem persönlichen Geschmack der Übersetzer zu erklären. Sieht man von Berufsübersetzern wie Stefan J. Klein oder Übersetzern, die Auftragsarbeit ausgeführt haben (Zoltán Franyó) ab, kommen eigentlich nur mehr Emil Szittyá, Paul Hatvani und Josef Kalmer in Frage. Über Szittyá existiert eine Monographie,<sup>6</sup> Person und Werk von Paul Hatvani wurden in einem unlängst erschienenen Sammelband ausführlich beschrieben,<sup>7</sup> einzig Josef Kalmer ist weniger bekannt. Josef Kalmer (1898-1959) stammte aus der Bukowina, floh jedoch noch als Gymnasiast nach dem 2. September 1914, als russische Truppen Czernowitz erobert haben, nach Wien. Er wurde Mitarbeiter bzw. Redakteur von Wiener expressionistischen Zeitschriften wie *Aufschwung*, *Renaissance/Die Kritik und Ver!*, sowie - als Gefälligkeitsdienst - in den Jahren 1921 bis 1924 des Wiener *Ma* Kassáks, da im Sinne des Pressegesetzes der verantwortliche Redakteur österreichischer Staatsbürger sein mußte. Kalmer kannte daher alle Ausgaben dieser Zeitschrift und er halte mit den Übersetzern der Zeitschrift ins Deutsche - Tibor Déry, Endre Gáspár, Andor Németh, Robert Reiter und Hans Suschny - zweifellos Umgang. Warum hat er nie Übersetzungen aus den gemischtsprachigen bzw. deutschsprachigen Nummern des *Ma* übernommen und in Wiener expressionistischen Blättern veröffentlicht? Ein einziges Kassák-

Gedicht (*Handwerker*) aus dem Jahr 1915 findet sich in seiner Übersetzung im 1924er Künstlerhilfe *Almanach der Litteraria*. Nichts von Déry, nichts von Reiter. Nach dem Grund befragt, geben sowohl die Bibliographie von Wallas als auch eine zeitgenössische Anthologie von Kalmer<sup>8</sup> eine übereinstimmende Antwort. Der zeitliche Rahmen der Kalmer-Anthologie 1900-1925 macht es klar, daß er keine Trennungslinie zwischen Moderne und Expressionismus, wohl aber eine zwischen Expressionismus und der weiterführenden Entwicklung der Avantgarde setzen wollte. Zwar stellte er im ungarischen Teil dieser Anthologie Lajos Kassák und Sándor Bar ta, zwei Avantgarde-Dichter, neben Ady, beide sind jedoch mit aktivistischen Gedichten aus ihrer Frühphase vertreten. Allem Anschein nach faßte Kalmer höchstens noch den Aktivismus als zum Begriff „Gegenwartsdichtung“ gehörende Richtung auf; abstrakter Expressionismus (sei es Wortkunst, sei es „Konstruktivismus“), Dadaismus und Surrealismus schienen ihm offenbar nicht mehr entsprochen zu haben. Ähnlicher Meinung waren übrigens Emil Szittyá und Paul Hatvani. Szittyá kannte Kassák seit 1909. Die beiden unternahmen einen langen Fußmarsch nach Paris, und Szittyá war es, der (bereits als Herausgeber des *Mistrals*) 1914 Kassák in Budapest mit Rat und Tat und Geldspende zur Herausgabe seines ersten Bandes „neuer Gedichte“ ermunterte. Auch Paul Hatvani publizierte noch im Budapester *Ma*, jedoch muß den beiden (und wahrscheinlich auch Kalmer und anderen) das heroisch-tragische Revolutionsgehabe von Kassák in den Jahren 1920-1921 eher tragikomisch vorgekommen sein. Sie haben nicht begriffen, daß Kassáks seinen neuen Stil (den er in seiner bildenden Kunst und auch in seiner Literatur Konstruktivismus nannte) im Interesse der Überwindung des „Aktivismus“ entwickelt hatte und nicht als Agitationskunst. Im Sachregister der analytischen Bibliographie von Wallas wird dieser Eindruck bestätigt: Expressionismus, Aktivismus, Wortkunst; Dadaismus, Futurismus und Kubismus kommen als Schlagworte vor, aber es gibt weder die Schlagworte Konstruktivismus noch Surrealismus. In ungarischen Periodika der Zeit vermeinten indes jüngere Autoren auch in der österreichischen Literatur konstruktivistische Züge entdeckt zu haben; Hans Suschny deklarierte ihn gar als Geisteshaltung.<sup>9</sup> Vom Typ her stand wahrscheinlich das 1922 in Wien erschienene, sehr schön gemachte 2x2 von Andor Németh und Lajos Kassák den österreichischen expressionistischen Periodika am nächsten. Besser gesagt, der erste, von Németh redigierte Teil des einzigen erschienenen Heftes. Ein ins Ungarische übersetzter Aufsatz von Gustav Landauer über den Dilettantismus leitet das Heft ein, dem zwei Gedichte Dérys folgen. Die Erzählung *Beáta húga* von Mária Lázár wurde (wie aus der Bibliographie von Wallas ersichtlich) bereits in *Der Friede* (Heft 83, 1919) als „Die Schwester der Beate“ veröffentlicht. Auch die Gedichte von Béla Balázs und Mátyás György, die Erzählung József Lengyels und das Lustspiel von Andor Németh hätten in Wiener expressionistischen Zeitschriften erscheinen können. Der zweite, von Kassák redigierte Teil ist dann wieder für die „ungarische“ Lesart der Avantgarde bezeichnend. Er wird von seinem großen Poem *Das Pferd stirbt und die Vögel fliegen aus* beherrscht, das ein Jahr später in der Übersetzung von Endre (Andreas) Gáspár gemeinsam mit anderen Dichtwerken von Kassák auch auf deutsch erscheinen wird, leider ohne auch nur eine einzige literaturkritische Reaktion auszulösen.

Die Namen jener Protagonistinnen und Protagonisten der internationalen „neuen Kunst“, die in den österreichischen und in den ungarischen Experimentalzeitschriften der Zeit gehandelt werden, müssen nach Sichtung der Bibliographie als weitgehend identisch bezeichnet werden. Von Archipenko, Arp und Arcos (nicht Arcoa, wie es in der Bibliographie heißt) über Gabo, Goll und Gropius bis Léger, Picasso und Whitman findet man die gleiche Liste auch in den ungarischen Periodika. Es gibt drei Österreicher, die auch im Wiener *Ma* publiziert haben: Josef Matthias Hauer und Jakob Mo.eno Levy sind bekannt, die (wenigen) Werke des Österreichers Hans Suschny dürften nur in der ungarischen Übersetzung überliefert worden sein. In den Zeitschriften und Anthologien des österreichischen Expressionismus finden sich wiederum solche Autoren, die

auch ungarisch publiziert haben, aber weitgehend in Vergessenheit geraten sind, wie Alexander Földes,<sup>10</sup> Josef Jarno<sup>11</sup> und Aurel Kolnai.<sup>12</sup>

Aus der Sicht der ungarischen Literaturgeschichte muß die analytische Bibliographie der Zeilschriften und Anthologien des Expressionismus in Österreich als ein äußerst interessantes Werk bezeichnet werden, das eine solide Grundlage zu neueren Forschungen geschaffen hat. Diese Bibliographie räumt endgültig mit der Mär von den literarischen Kontakten zwischen österreichischen Expressionisten und ungarischen Aktivisten in Wien Anfang der 20er Jahre auf, sie eröffnet statt dessen andere interessante Perspektiven, vor allem zur Untersuchung der jeweils spezifischen, voneinander abweichenden Beschaffenheit der nationalen literarischen Avantgarden in Mittel-, Ost- und Südosteuropa. Es wäre von großem Nutzen, eine ähnliche Bibliographie auch der ungarischen Uterarischen Avantgardezeitschriften und -anthologien zwischen 1915 und 1930 zu besitzen.

## Notes

1. Kálmán, Lászlóné (Hg.): *Dokumentum 1926-1927, Munka 1928-1939* (1972); Lakatos, Éva (Hg.): *Magyar írás 1921-1927* (1973), Illés, Ilona (Hg.): *A Tett 1915-1916, Ma 1916-1925, 2x2 1922* (1975); Illés, Ilona (Hg.): *Tűz 1921-1923, Diogenes 1923-1927* (1977); Bali, Judit - Botka, Ferenc (Hg.): *Független Szemle 1921-1923; A Kékmadár 1923* (1979)
2. *Der Anbruch 1917-1922; Der Brenner 1910-1923* (Bearbeitungszeitraum); *Verl 1917-1921*.
3. *Akasztott Ember 1922-1923; Diogenes 1923-1927; Egység 1922-1923; Ék 1923; 2x2 1922, Ma 1920-1925; Testvér 1924-1925; Tűz 1921-1923*.
4. *Musikblätter des Anbruch*, Heft 20, 1920.
5. Alle Namen in der zeitgenössischen Schreibweise.
6. Christian Weinek: *Emil Szittyá: Leben und Werk im deutschen Sprachraum 1886-1927*. Diss. Salzburg 1987 (masch.); s. aber auch: Armin A. Wallas: *Von Mistral zu Horizont. Emil Szittyá und Dada*. In: *DADAutriche 1907-1970*. Hrsg. von Günther Dank! und Raoul Schrott. Innsbruck, 1993, S. 21-31.
7. Wilhelm Haefs: „Der Expressionismus ist tot... Es lebe der Expressionismus.“ *Paul Hatvani als Literaturkritiker und Literaturtheoretiker des Expressionismus*. In: Klaus Amann / Armin A. Wallas (Hg.): *Expressionismus in Österreich*. Wien-Köln-Weimar: Böhlau, 1994 S. 453-485.
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9. Tilkovszky, Béla: *Erwin Stranik és a konstruktivizmus. Az osztrák irodalmi elinduláshoz* [Erwin Stranik und der Konstruktivismus. Zum literarischen Aufbruch in Österreich] in: Kassai Napló (Košice/Kaschau), 25. Nov. 1923, S. 11; und Tilkovszky, Béla: *Erwin Stranik: Koko Irregang* in: Új Kultúra (Budapest) 1924. H. 1. S. 21. Hans Suschny: *Manifest in Ma* (Wien), Jg. 10(1925) H. 2. S. 10-12. (in dt. Sprache)
10. Gedichtbände: *Emberország*, Wien 1922; *Tömeg*, Wien 1923. Publikationen in: *Akasztott Ember* (Wien, 1922), *Út* (Novi Sad 1923-1925), *Genius* (Arad, 1924), *Kassai Napló* (Košice, 1924-1925), *Korunk* (Cluj, 1926), *Új Föld* (Budapest, 1927) u.v.a.m.
11. Gedichtbände: *Prometheus*, Košice 1925; *Szakadó kötelek*, Košice 1926; *Börtön*, Budapest 1928. Publikationen u.a. in: *Kassai Napló* (Košice, 1923-1925).
12. Publikationen u.a. in *Tűz* (Bratislava-Wien 1921-1923).



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# The Voice of the Martians

by George MARX

The heavy storms of the history in Central Europe forced prominent Hungarian scientists to emigrate to America, but their fine schooling and rich social experiences - brought from their native country - enabled them to recognize the trends of science and history. In this way they shaped the political history and high technology of this century worldwide in a decisive way - acknowledged by a series of Nobel Prizes and other highly respected honors (Atoms for Peace Awards, Freedom Medals, Wolf Prizes, etc.). For instance,

*Theodore von Kármán* (streamline, jet flight), *Leo Szilárd* (patent of the nuclear reactor), *Eugene P. Wigner* (water cooled nuclear reactor), *Edward Teller* (hydrogen bomb), *Dennis Gabor* (holography), *George Olah* (lead free gasoline), *John von Neumann* (electronically programable computer), *John G. Kemeny* (Basic language, time sharing network, e-mail), *Charles Simonyi* (Word, Excel, Windows for computers), *Andrew Grove* (pentium microprocessor), *George Soros* (mastery of the financial markets).

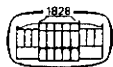
This book introduces them by describing their personality and achievements. The author discusses what is common in them, how the cultural climate of Budapest enabled them to recognize unexpected interrelations, unorthodox thoughts. Their habit of crossing disciplinary and political borderlines, their sharp vision of the future has been deduced from their Hungarian roots. The scientific community overseas likes to call them "mad Hungarians", or in a more expressive way "the Martians", who try to imitate terrestrial humans, but their incomprehensible tongue, their peculiar accent and their wild associations indicate an "alien" origin. The author - himself a physicist from Budapest - knew them; most of his descriptions and conclusions have been based on personal interviews.

*Readership:* scientists, historians, biography researchers, general public

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# Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Ungarischen

## Register

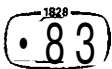
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Das „Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Ungarischen“ ist die organische Weiterentwicklung des in den Jahren 1967-1984 erschienenen vierbändigen „A magyar nyelv történeti-etimológiai szótára\*\*“. Das Werk enthält bei ca. 10 000 Stichwörtern annähernd 50 000 ungarische wortetymologische Angaben, die über die hungarologischen Bezüge der Herkunftsproblematik des ungarischen Wortschatzes hinaus auch die Gesichtspunkte der Finnougristik, Turkologie, Indogermanistik, Romanistik und weiterer Bereiche erfassen.

Der Registerband besteht aus zwei Hauptteilen. Der erste enthält das traditionelle Wortregister der beiden Bände des Wörterbuches, und zwar jene ungarischen Wörter, die an ihrer Stelle im Alphabet nicht bzw. auch anderswo erscheinen, sowie lexikalische Einheiten, die nicht als selbständige Stichwörter vorkommen. Der zweite Hauptteil besteht aus einem für etymologische Wörterbücher neuartigen Hinweisssystem, das die aus den Stichwörtern nicht oder nur teilweise erschließbaren etymologischen Zusammenhänge widerspiegelt.

*Readership:* linguists, historians, undergraduate students

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