NHQ

The New Hungarian Quarterly

BÉLA BARTÓK 1881–1945

Contributions by Paul Arma, Béla Bartók Jr., János Breuer, Ferenc Csaplár, Andor Földes, Gyula Illyés, György Kroó, András Wilheim

On Hungarian Foreign Policy — *Frigyes Puja, János Berecz*

Aspects of Structural Change — *József Bognár*

Poems and Fiction — *István Vas, Judit Tóth*

A Hungarian Chapel in Rome — *Iván Boldizsár*

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This issue went to press on 17 November, 1980

SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT

There really is no need of the usual introduction, whose explicit purpose is to provide a guide to the mass of material in an issue, but which implicitly serves as a summary of the more important articles. Every article is of equal importance to those who put together a paper, but we are all aware of course that readers' time is not unlimited. It is a paradoxical aspect of editing a paper of this sort, a quarterly, appearing in the language of the target-readership, and not of those who write and edit it, that those whom we should most like to receive the journal, and to read it, have least time to do so. It is, therefore, the purpose of the preface both to spell out the most important messages, and to draw attention to particular articles, prompting and urging that they be read in their entirety.

There is no need whatever to point out that Béla Bartók is at the centre of the current issue. 1981 is Bartók Year, in Hungary, and the world over. I am certain I can include the latter without risking an accusation of patriotic prejudice. It does make you think that one of the great 20th-century composers, still considered highly modern, whose message is addressed to man today, and is about us, living in the present, should have been born a hundred years ago, and be dead for thirty-five years already, dying at the height of his creative powers. To quote one of his last letters, when he already knew that leukemia was about to carry him off: "All that I am sorry for is that I have to go with my trunks full." The luggage he left behind has grown as the years have passed, more people, and more countries, now have access to it. What we are trying to do is to present the timeliness and modernity of Bartók, his impact on his own country and on the world.

I was present at Béla Bartók's June 1940 farewell recital. There I sat in the last row of the gallery of the large auditorium of the Budapest Academy of Music, that is I really stood; I found myself behind a pillar,

but also because I still felt young enough to go down from the gods to the banister, not only to hear better, but to see Béla Bartók, and his wife Ditta Pásztory, at the piano. When the recital was over and Bartók stood in front of the piano, receiving the applause, we started to sing "I started out from my beautiful country, famous little Hungary..." an old soldier's song which Bartók had collected and arranged. Everybody sang, Bartók, head bowed, hurried out of the hall without waiting for the applause to start up again. My throat still tightens, remembering how moved I was.

Another memory is much more recent. In October 1980 I was a member of the Hungarian delegation at the Unesco General Conference in Belgrade. I had the honour to present a draft resolution, relating to the Bartók centenary. The preamble points out that Béla Bartók's work is equally important in Hungary and in the world, folk music being one of its sources, not only the music of the Hungarians, but also that of other peoples, of neighbours in the first place. This pure source, to use Bartók's own term, not only fed and repeatedly renewed his own work, but it served as an example to musicians the world over, and to others who were not musicians as well. In this way Bartók's work turned into an organic part of the heritage of man, but the draft resolution also stressed—and this is repeatedly apparent in our current issue—that Bartók, to the very end, fought against inhumanity and for human progress, in his art, and in his daily life. The draft resolution invited Unesco member states to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Bartók's birth, and to support the Hungarian Memorial Commission in their efforts to arrange concerts, recitals and exhibitions in other countries, and to be of service to them using records, films and radio and television programmes. The Director General of Unesco was invited to inform non-governmental artistic and other organizations of the above.

Chance or fate led to me being the first to take the floor in the discussion, the point of the agenda concerned dealt with much else, not only the Bartók centenary, nevertheless all of the ninety seven who spoke after me assured the Conference that they not only accepted the resolution, but they all listed the concerts and exhibitions, publications and other functions, which their own countries, spread throughout the world, were arranging to honour Bartók's memory.

*

Nevertheless this is not a Bartók Special Issue, and not only because there is much else in it, but because the subject will take up much of all our four 1981 issues; we shall endeavour to publish articles and documents

of a kind that are unknown or difficult to come by in other countries. "Béla Bartók's guiding principles" by György Kroó, the musicologist, serves as an introduction. 'Idea' does not really cover the term or concept which Kroó discusses, which Bartók used about himself, in German, as *Ideen*, when writing to friends abroad. In other words: guiding principles, that is those ideas and thoughts, that philosophy, which Bartók found after long searching for them, on which he based his life and which guided him in his work. Both in life, and after his death, Bartók has been a subject of considerable interest to the intellectual world. His relationship to a Hungarian contemporary, Lajos Kassák, the poet, writer, editor, draughtsman and designer, father of the Hungarian avant-garde, was most interesting. Ferenc Csaplár's article evokes a friendship that bore fruit in the work of both. Adorno's views on Bartók were far from unequivocal. János Breuer, in a piece that heavily relies on long quotations, guides the reader through the changes which Adorno rang in his opinions on Bartók's work.

Outstanding musicians express something personal about their relationship to Bartók in this and future issues. We start the ball rolling with Andor Földes, the erstwhile child-prodigy pianist, now one of the leading performers on the instrument in Europe. His description of first meeting Bartók, as a fifteen years old boy, is a moving personal memoir. Pál Arma, another former pupil who became a friend, and now lives in Paris, contributes, from personal memory, important addenda to the features of Bartók, the man, the scholar and musician, to that Bartók image which is about to turn into a legend. A memoir by Bartók's son, a civil engineer, concerning his father's relationship to painting and sculpture, is sure to be of interest. Two contributions of a widely differing character that nevertheless belong together, complete the section of this issue devoted to Bartók. One is András Wilheim's Bartók bibliography, the other is Gyula Illyés's poem "Bartók" (in a translation by Claire Lashley). A line from it, on the horror that finds absolution by being expressed, is quoted again and again by Hungarian writers, poets, critics, and pundits.

*

Most of the rest of the paper was conceived with a sense of changing decades that may well imply a succession of ages (as in industrial *age*, or post-industrial *age*) as well. The title of József Bognár's article: "Aspects of Structural Change," looks like that of a highly abstract work, the article it heads is however as concrete as an article can be. Professor Bognár's starting point is the decision to alter the structure of the Hungarian

economy, pointing out that there is need to switch to intensive economic development, then going on to discuss the implications of the end of an age, and the beginning of a new one, in the world economy. (Let me add, in parentheses, departing from our usual Hungarian understatement, that this notion was first expounded, in the pages of this journal, by Professor Bognár.) He discusses the problems of disequilibria, stressing that present Hungarian economic strategy, and economic policy, moves in a much wider lane, and at much greater depth, than the 1968 Economic Reform. Why and how this is so is explained by the article.

A paper by Tibor Huszár, who occupies the Chair of Sociology at Budapest University, in many respects complements Professor Bognárs' argument. He discusses the training of professional men and women, and the education of intellectuals, examining the conditions for an intellectual way of life of a new type in Hungary today.

*

Frigyes Puja's address to the 1980 session of the UN General Assembly documents the principal features of Hungarian foreign policy. This paper as a rule prints the Foreign Minister's UN General Assembly address each year—and when we do not, another important foreign policy statement takes its place. Those interested are thus given an opportunity to follow the Hungarian foreign policy line, being able to judge for themselves that it rests on principles, that there is continuity in the statements made; and what changes there are within what is unchangeable. János Berecz in turn discusses a question which is of considerable interest to observers of Hungarian foreign policy, that is the dialectics of independence and solidarity.

*

I mentioned in the preface to NHQ 80 that we commissioned Daniel Hoffman to translate a number of poems by István Vas, member of our Editorial Board, who recently turned three score and ten. The verses, printed in this issue, prompted Professor Hoffman to continue and perhaps compile an entire volume of Vas poems in English.

A Hungarian writer, and three artists, who all live abroad, figure prominently in the current issue. Lajos Szalay, the graphic artist, has been living abroad for close on thirty-five years, first in Paris, later in Buenos Aires, more recently in New York. Béla Adalbert Riez's stretch in France,

or rather Monaco, is longer still, and Vera Székely has been domiciled in Paris so to speak since the War. It is part of the fortunes of the exhibition calendar that their works appeared simultaneously on the walls of Hungarian galleries. It was not change, however, that after a long absence, all three were happy to show their work to the Hungarian public, and that Hungarian critics responded in a manner that accords with their high status.

László Cs. Szabó, who is seventy-five, and lives in London, recently paid a private visit to Budapest after an absence of more than thirty years. András Mezei interviewed him in London before his recent trip. Where do those who live abroad really belong, what is their relationship to their country of origin and to that of their second home? These days that is a timely and burning problem the world over. The phantoms László Cs. Szabó speaks of point to the depths to which this problem reaches.

Now, looking through a bundle of typescripts, writing this preface, I realize that another contributor is a Hungarian writer living abroad. Judit Tóth, the poet, is a Parisian by marriage. Her first—autobiographically inspired—novel *Kifutópálya* (Runway) was one of the greatest Hungarian publishing successes of recent years. The excerpts we publish were translated by Éva Rácz and Christine Outram. The heroine wrestles with the same phantoms—or their kin—which haunt László Cs. Szabó. The novel is of high literary value, and most readable, saying much in a few words, about *la condition humaine* in France and Hungary. It is dearly to be hoped that "Runway" will be published in one of the major languages. And yet it is part of this human condition—and I say this after thirty years in the business, which have given me plenty of time to lose any illusions I may have entertained in my youth—that publishers abroad do not like Hungarian books of this sort. And, just to contradict myself a little let me say how happy I am to be able to report that *Modern Hungarian Poetry*, the anthology edited and introduced by Miklós Vajda, with a preface by William J. Smith, has been re-issued by Columbia University Press as a paperback.

THE EDITOR

BARTÓK

1881–1945

BARTÓK'S GUIDING PRINCIPLES

by

GYÖRGY KROÓ

I.

In a letter Béla Bartók wrote in German to the Rumanian musicologist, Octavian Beu, on January 10, 1931, he said:

"My own idea*, however—of which I have been fully conscious since I found myself as a composer—is the brotherhood of peoples, brotherhood in spite of all wars and conflicts. I try—to the best of my ability—to serve this idea in my music; therefore I don't reject any influence, be it Slovakian, Rumanian, Arabic or from any other source. The source must only be clean, fresh and healthy!"**

This principle, referred to by Bartók in the singular, formed the basis of a period in which the works he wrote he viewed as his own compositions, of the direction he was to follow consistently and very consciously as a man and composer and of the artistic creed that guided his entire life and work. Bartók was fifty when he arrived at the vantage point of *Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita*. The road which, via works such as his *String Quartet No. 4.*, *Cantata Profana*, *Piano Concerto No. 2.*, *String Quartet No. 5* and his *Music for String Instruments, Percussion and Celesta*, had led him to this position which offered such a wide and clear perspective of his life—one no other point in his life could offer—had, certainly been long. A brief analysis of the composer's life on the centenary of his birth will reveal a few similar vantage points that, possibly to a limited extent, throw light on one or other section of that road. And beyond the horizons seen from these vantage points, Bartók's world outlook may emerge.

* Although 'idea' is the official translation of the original in the letter cited above, a more appropriate expression in this instance would be "guiding principle."

** *Béla Bartók Letters*, p. 201; Corvina Press, Budapest, 1971.

2

Bartók was a true child of the 19th century. He spent his early years in small towns in south-eastern Hungary. When he was thirteen he made his first prolonged acquaintance with a large town when his family moved to Pozsony, the erstwhile seat of the Hungarian Parliament (1526–1848) and, ever since Mozart, the Hungarian outpost of Viennese musical life and culture. His studies there included piano playing and musical theory. He had a remarkable teacher in the person of László Erkel, son of Ferenc Erkel, the outstanding composer who established the Hungarian romantic (historical) patriotic opera (*Hunyadi László*, *Bánk Bán*, etc.) as a genre and who also wrote the Hungarian national anthem. But it was not until he went to Budapest where he studied under István Thomán (piano), himself a pupil of Liszt, and Hans Koessler (composition), a great advocate of the Brahms tradition at the Academy of Music that he encountered the intellectual current which—conveyed by German Romantic music (Brahms, Wagner before he composed *Lohengrin*, and Liszt)—opened his eyes to the historical and musical problems of 19th century Hungary and therefore had a decisive influence on his whole intellectual, moral and creative make-up.

In a curriculum vitae written in 1918 Bartók gave a negative interpretation of this influence that had such a decisive influence on his development, describing it as a "chauvinistic political trend".* But the then 22–23 year old composer's entire life, attitudes and approach to music were imbued with a spirit of patriotism following the "wave of independence" that accompanied the celebrations marking Hungary's millennium. Bartók took to wearing the formal suit of the Hungarian gentry, made a growing number of anti-Habsburg political remarks in letters to members of his family and wrote on letterpaper with the embossed crown and coat of arms of Hungary surmounted by the opening line of the Hungarian national anthem: "Bless the Magyar, oh Lord . . .", These were all but external indications of his inner conviction. And it was this conviction that led him to his choice of musical tradition, his very definite and committed style and his view of his career which was really akin to an artistic credo. "This was the basis of the *Kossuth Symphony*", Zoltán Kodály recalled in 1946. "It is impossible to express political party affiliations in music, but it was possible to convey the feeling of the momentum of the war of independence. This music at the time represented a clear political stance."

* "The point was to create something specifically Hungarian also in music. This idea carried me with it and I found myself turning to Hungarian folk music, or rather, to what was in those days regarded as Hungarian folk music."

And only three weeks after completing the orchestration of the *Kossuth Symphony,* Bartók wrote his famous letter from Gmunden on September 8, 1903, in which he expressed his *first* guiding principle. "Everyone, on reaching maturity, has to set himself a goal and must direct all his work and actions towards this. For my own part, all my life, in every sphere, always and in every way, I shall have one objective: the good of Hungary and the Hungarian nation." * It was this principle that prevented all Bartók's composing activity undertaken with new impetus along the path chosen by Richard Strauss *(Zarathustra, Heldenleben)* from being merely the occupation of a promising *terra incognita* and that in fact gave it the quality of a true intellectual and musical conquest. The major milestones in that conquest were his *Rhapsody* (Op. 1.) in which he discovered a new aspect of Liszt and his two orchestral Suites (Op. 3. and Op. 4.). A study of the melodic content of Bartók's music and its harmonies might create the impression that Bartók abandoned the land he had conquered once he had learned what genuine peasant songs were like, after completing his first collecting tours and his first arrangements of the songs (1906), when he became preoccupied with Slovak and Rumanian folkmusic (1907–1908). This impression is false. The conquest was to last for his entire life.

3

Although Bartók abandoned the idiom and style of what had remained of late 18th century–early 19th century army recruiting music which took the form of either instrumental folk music or composed music, he always remained faithful to the *verbunkos* as a *symbol of the Hungarian people,* and also retained the rhapsody form (pairing of slow and fast movements) that the *verbunkos* so often assumes. In his Hungarian Rhapsodies, Liszt relied on songs composed in the folk vein that he thought were genuine folk songs: Bartók's Op. 1. is based on themes of his own, his two *Rhapsodies* for violin and piano composed twenty-four years later is based on genuine folk material, and he uses his own themes once again in 1938, in his *Contrasts,* originally written in two movements, which again follows the rhapsody form. But the *verbunkos* character and the rhapsody form he inherited from Liszt also survive separately in what is generally termed Bartók's "folk music period." The former character is represented in the series of great works composed in the late thirties: the first movement of the *Violin Concerto* (originally entitled "*Tempo di verbunkos*"), the opening theme of the *Diverti-*

* *Béla Bartók Letters, op. cit.* p. 29

mento and the start of the *Marcia* in the *String Quartet No. 6.* Indeed the rhapsody form assumes central significance in Bartók's works. But as early as 1907—on the threshold of his folk music period—that the pairing of slow and fast movements is combined with the character variation which may be interpreted as a Faust-Mephisto symbol and which he also inherited from Liszt. Among the works in this genre and form we find his early *Violin Concerto* and the related *Two Portraits* (Op. 5.), *Two Pictures* (Op. 10.), the Preludio-Scherzo pair of movements (regarded as the core of his *Four Orchestral Pieces*) and *the Second Sonata for Violin and Piano:* but also the *String Quartet No. 3.* and, as mentioned before, in its original version even *Contrasts* can be traced back to this prototype. Moreover, the principle of character variation which diverges from the rhapsody form characterises almost all of Bartók's three or five movement cycles ranging from *String Quartet No. 4.*, through his *Second Piano Concerto* and *Quartet No. 5.* to the *Violin Concerto* (1928–1938).

If, in addition to the process in which Bartók perfected his intonation and form during his first creative period, one considers the consistency of his programmatic view of music (which found expression even in his titles) and, in that context, how the 19th century symphonic poem served as a model for his music for both stage and concert hall*, one detects the numerous direct and intricately indirect ways in which Bartók's first principle, which initially was inspired by patriotic feelings, influenced the direction and nature of his work.

While this principle never lost its value for Bartók, a fresh one began to emerge in 1906, reaching its clearest and perhaps classical form of expression at the turn of the 1920s. Following in the footsteps of Rousseau, Bartók developed an approach to nature and people that gradually grew into a conviction that was to occupy a central place in his view of the world. In his autobiography he discussed the importance of his preoccupation with folk music merely from the composer's point of view. "I began my research work from a purely musical standpoint and exclusively in a Hungarian-speaking area", he writes. But on the basis of letters he wrote between December 1904 and August 1905, one is tempted to add that in his initial unpractised enthusiasm, which recalls Ferenc Liszt's sudden fervour in 1838**, the distorting influence of patriotic ideals gave a some-

* (*The Wooden Prince, Dance Suite, The Miraculous Mandarin,* the central movements of his *String Quartet No. 6.*, the *Concerto for Orchestra.*)

** "*de m'enforcer seul, à pied, le sac sur le dos, dans les parties les plus désertes de la Hongrie*"—Liszt; "I have a new plan now, to collect the finest examples of Hungarian folksongs, and to raise them to the level of works of art with the best possible piano accompaniment. Such a collection would serve the purpose of acquainting the outside world with Hungarian folk music."—Bartók.

what chauvinistic flavour to his first attempt to establish comparisons. "From what I know of the folk music of other nations, ours is vastly superior to theirs as regards force of expression and variety."* In a lecture he gave to the American Pro Musica Society in 1928, Bartók conveyed some of the romantic atmosphere that must have flavoured his first folk music collecting tours and that recall the enthusiasm and exhilaration of the editors of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn:* "In our first exploratory steps, we were led by a longing for the unknown, a kind of vague intuition that we could find genuine folk music only among the peasants." The sharply negative way in which Bartók contrasts "blissful modern city education" with the "primeval conditions" in the villages** clearly points to his early progress in the footsteps of the author of the *Discours sur l'Origine de l'Inégalité.* Later Bartók clearly realized that peasant music was a "product of nature", a "natural phenomenon" (and that therefore an artist relying on folk music "models his creation on nature") that must be examined both as a piece of music and in its spiritual essence. As he said in the same lecture in America: "Anyone who wishes fully to understand the heart and soul of this music must experience it and that is possible only through direct contact with the peasants... It is not enough to learn the melodies. It is equally important to see and learn about the surroundings in which these melodies live. We must see the peasants singing, we must take part in their dances, weddings, Christmas celebrations, burials...". Of course this would not have been possible had Bartók not been convinced that folk melodies were "just as perfect on their own small scale as a Bach fugue or a Mozart sonata." The same aesthetic judgement finds its way into many of Bartók's comments relating to musical composition, which are in themselves an indication of his views on society. For instance: "most important of all, the composer must grasp the soul of folk music, so that it may be absorbed in all his works and inspire his whole personality and attitude."

One possible interpretation of this view and its connection with Bartók's first principle was offered by Kodály in 1946. "What was it that he valued above all else in the villages? First and foremost, he found constant stimulus. He found an unknown world of Hungarians believed to be long

* *Béla Bartók Letters, op. cit.*, p. 50.

** "The villages are full of illiterate people... If you land unexpectedly in such an area, you feel as though you have arrived in the Middle Ages... All the major events of human life—Christmas, harvests, weddings, deaths, etc. are inevitably accompanied by certain ceremonies. Important and organic parts of these are the appropriate songs; each event of this kind takes place according to strict rules, like a religious ceremony...", he writes in his article on Rumanian folk music which appeared in the *Schweizerische Sängerzeitung* in 1938.

extinct but which was in fact flourishing. This was enough to revive his faith in the Hungarian people." Kodály referred here to the feeling of loneliness Bartók drew from Nietzsche's philosophy, his emotional crisis, his Tristan-like passion and the experience of the community that cured him of all these ills; but at the same time, he also alluded to the new dimensions of Bartók's national awareness, when his experience of the people transformed his ideas of country and nation and gave them a new meaning. Bartók himself probably had both of these aspects in mind in 1928 when he spoke the famous words: "Those days which I spent in the villages among the peasants were the happiest days of my life."

This idea developed to the full into its own antithesis allowing Bartók to depict an entire fresco of class society in the period between 1929 and 1936, in the "sad songs" of his *Twenty Hungarian Folk Songs,* the portrait sketches of "the oppressed" in his *Hungarian Folk Songs (The Prisoner, The Rover),* and in the words of *From Olden Times.* His convictions as an ethnomusicologist and his academic and artistic experiences also led him to reject nationalism and to refute the idea of racial purity in a Europe under fascist rule.*

From an idyllic view of the people to a realistic view of society, from national awareness to the idea of the brotherhood of peoples—this was how Bartók's ideas on folk-music, as expressed in his writing and musical works, developed over three and a half decades. As he points out in *Folk-Music Research in Eastern Europe* in 1943, "at a time when these peoples murder one another on orders from above, when it appears as though the various nations in the world want to miss no opportunity of killing each other off, it might be topical to point out that in the peasants there is and never has been any trace of violent hatred for other peoples... There is peace among the peasants; hatred for their brothers is fostered only by higher circles." We have seen how the idea of the people was initially linked to that of patriotism. For the road to lead from there to the heights mentioned above Bartók needed the guiding light of another, fourth principle. This was the idea of freedom.

5

For Bartók, the idea of freedom emerged after his patriotic illusions faded away when he fell under the influence of Nietzsche. It brought a feeling of both isolation and consolation for the young man who was then

* *Folk-Song Research and Nationalism,* 1937; *Race Purity in Music,* 1942.

24: "[...] I am absolutely alone! And I prophesy, I have a foreknowledge, that this spiritual loneliness is to be my destiny. [...] For solace, I would recommend to anyone the attempt to achieve a state of spiritual indifference in which it is possible to view the affairs of the world with complete indifference and with the utmost tranquillity. [...] to attain this state [...] is the greatest victory man can ever hope to win: over other people, over himself, and over all things. [...] The time may come when I shall be able to stay on the heights."* In 1911–1912, Bartók felt the stifling bonds of loneliness to be unbearable. His bitter political disillusionment and feeling of unhappiness in love, to which he almost succumbed when he wrote his youthful *Violin Concerto* and his *String Quartet No. 1.*, were now followed by the realization that he was gradually isolated in his work, his style and folk idiom and that the more he discovered himself, the more final was his separation from the world and his audience. He also realized that ten years of guest performances abroad had not really started him on the road of an international career. So he completely withdrew from the concert hall in 1913 and had to suffer in isolation persecution by a chauvinistic press that dreamed up charges of lack of patriotism on the basis of his collections and arrangements of Slovak and Rumanian folk music. "And it will always be night ... night ... night." The last sentence of Bluebeard sounds as if it were Bartók's own confession.

The Wooden Prince does not solve the problem: it merely sets it in the idyllic world of the folk tale, in the forests of Romanticism. The first indication of a new direction appears in *The Miraculous Mandarin* where loneliness is lifted out of the personal sphere and becomes part of a universal, symbolic, social perspective, representing a passionate and determined stand that rejects compromise. The theme of loneliness grows into a giant shadow over the score, but this is no longer the loneliness of disappointment, unhappiness and frustration. The Mandarin's isolation is a declaration of greatness that embodies nature and the human character alike: in fact, the Mandarin's "inability to die" and his unquenchable desire are symbols of freedom. How admirably this sums up a human life and a whole era was seen clearly as early as 1919–1925 by Bence Szabolcsi, who wrote: "*The Miraculous Mandarin* [...] is the vision of a whole life that cannot continue in the same way: it is a vision of good and evil, violence and the will to live, West and East, humanity and inhumanity, chaotic metropolis and the appalling fate of the peasants, civilization and primitive forces fighting one another and mortally intertwined with one another..."

* *Béla Bartók Letters*, pp. 53–54.

6

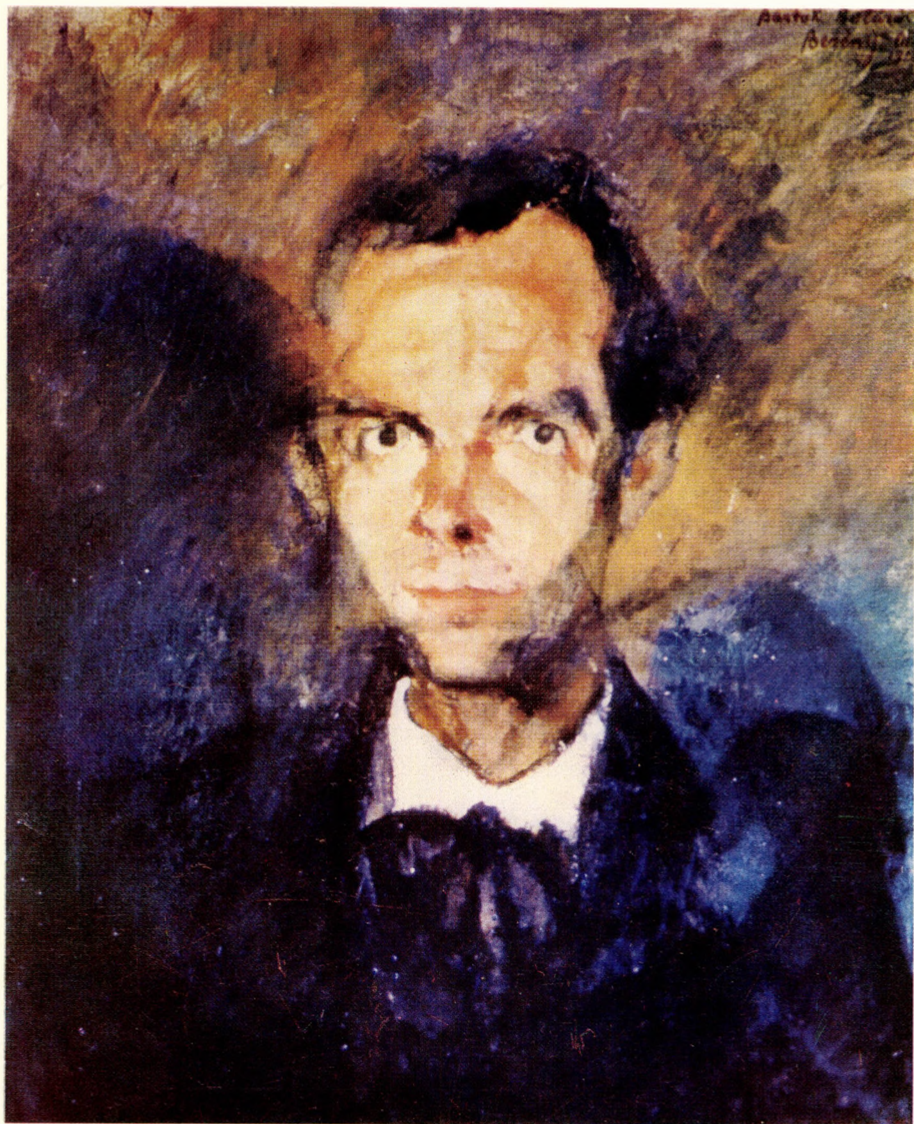
The Mandarin was followed by the key composition of Bartók's entire œuvre, the most complete and most symbolic expression of his closely-related ideas of the people, internationalism and freedom—the confession of the *Cantata Profana*. This work, composed on the basis of the somewhat altered text of a Rumanian colindă, was planned by Bartók to be accompanied by a Slovak and a Hungarian composition and the tryptich was to have represented the principle Bartók expressed in his letter to Octavian Beu. The endless longings of the *Cantata*, its thirst for woods and springs is the insatiable desire of the Mandarin which, viewed as an universal symbol of life, is also connected with the memories of "Those days which I spent in the villages among the peasants were the happiest days of my life," and the belief Bartók inherited from Rousseau in natural man, and in the sameness of the people and nature itself. It is here that Bartók's love for the people and his longing for the village broadens into a pantheistic creed. And in the passion of the terrible curses called on the modern world (society) in response to those who kill the Mandarin, Bartók suddenly comes to view nature as a symbol of the ideal of freedom: "The source must only be clean."

Of course, Bartók's was not the only message of its kind in Europe in the 1930s. His voice was accompanied and given added weight by similar cries from the composers of the *Symphonie de Psaumes*, *Moses und Aaron*, *Mathis der Maler* and the *Cris du Monde*. Yet, although these all cry out against the approaching night of fascism, none of these spiritually related works possesses the universality that combines pagan folk poetry, the biblical world of the Bach passions, the great and lasting forms of European music and a creed that is genuinely 20th century in words and tone; and therefore none of them can express so emphatically and powerfully the spirit of protest, the proud spirit of "no return", the uncompromising acceptance of the loneliness of "eternal freedom". As Aladár Tóth wrote after the *Cantata Profana* was first performed in Hungary in 1936: "And our antlers cannot enter the doorway" ...—"This titanic music... is the wolves' song in an age of servility."

All the works Bartók wrote around this time, as well as his previous and following works, including the last unfinished ones, were for him in their own way the embodiment of his principle of freedom. The *Dance Suite*, the internationalist peasant suite Bartók composed on the basis of his own themes, was written for the celebrations of a chauvinistic ruling class; *Village Scenes* and the *1st Piano Concerto* underline the need for the

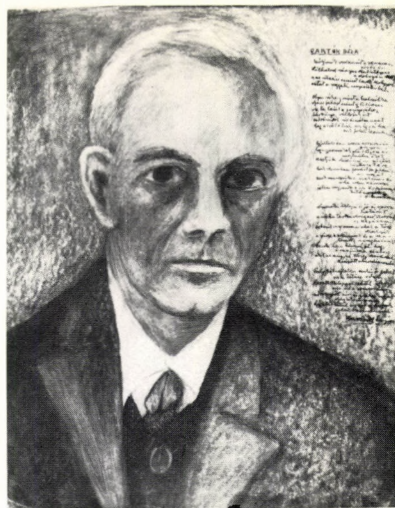
continuous and uninterrupted quest for information, for openness as opposed to inflexible conservatism which endeavours to petrify the world in its given state; his techniques, atmosphere and movement-types reminiscent of Bach in the piano works he wrote around the same time and of Beethoven in the *4th String Quartet* and the *2nd Piano Concerto*—draw into these works the fight for the preservation of traditions, the search for one's roots and ancestors in the sphere of artistic freedom; and finally the loneliness of nocturnal hallucinations, of temptations and heart-rending, solitary monologues, the loneliness of an artist fighting alone to preserve freedom for the world in an age where freedom is suppressed, is replaced by a vision of freedom in the great works of the 30's that synthesize the composer's beliefs and principles: from the *Music for String Instruments, Percussion and Celesta* to the *Concerto for Orchestra*, to project jubilant round-dance finales on to a screen of hope.

Bartók's ideas and principles sum up for us everything that is worth considering in our century and to which we should clarify our own reactions: in ethics and arts, on the issues of nation and mankind, individual and community, society, country and freedom. His works, which contain and embody all these principles are like a bright star guiding us along the right path in the labyrinth of our conscience.



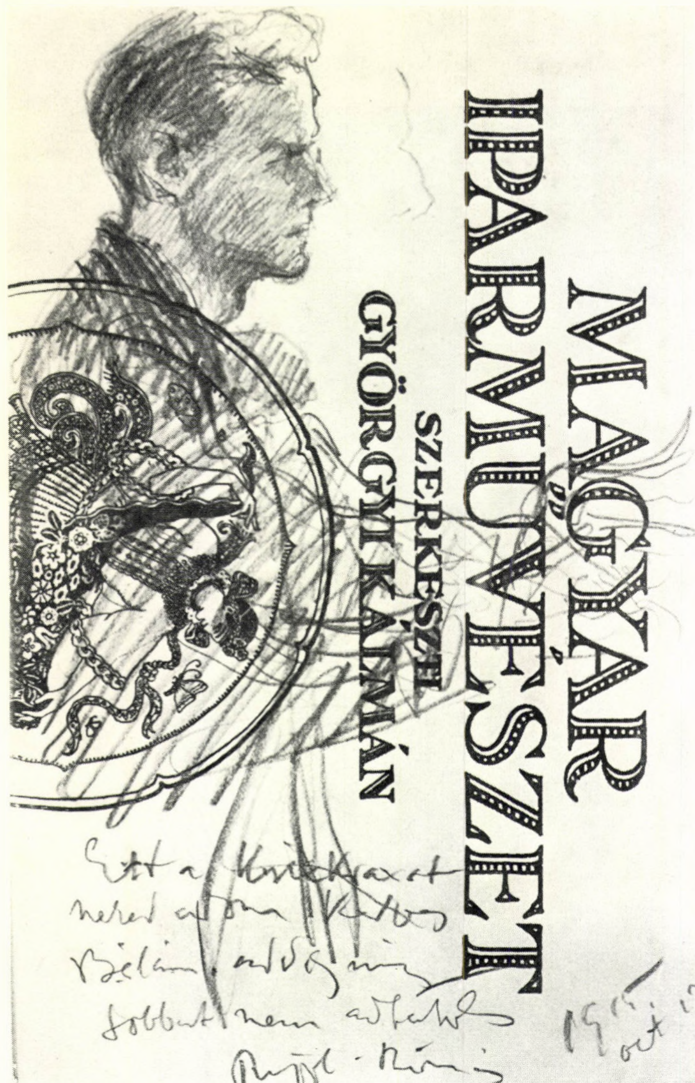
Bálint Flesch

Róbert Berény: Portrait of Béla Bartók (1913)



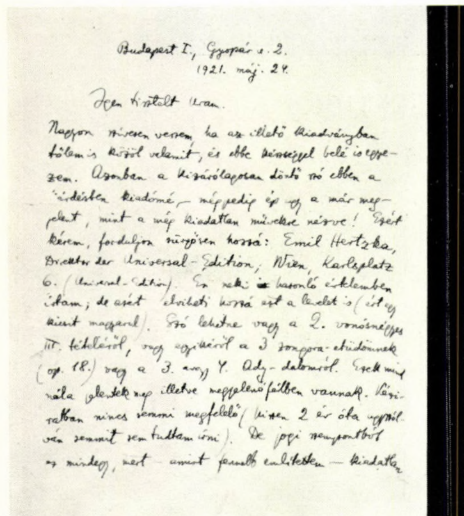
Bálint Flesch

Lajos Kassák's Bartók portrait and poem (1953)



Ottó Vahl

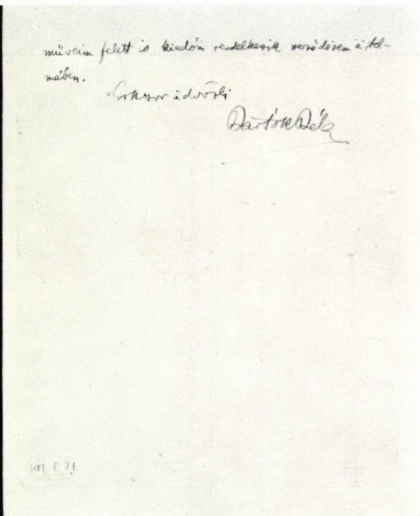
József Rippl-Rónai's pencil sketch and inscription to Bartók (1915)



Budapest I, Gyopár u. 2.
1921. máj. 24.

Igen tisztelt Uram.

Nagyon szívesen venném, ha az illető kiadványban tőlem is közöl valamit, és ebbe [illegible] bele is egyezem. Azonban a kisérőlapokon [illegible] szó ebben a értelemben kiadómé, — mégpedig épp úgy a már megjelent, mint a még kiadatlan műveké részére! Ezért kérem, forduljon ügyesen hozzá: Emil Hertzka, Direktor der Universal-Edition, Wien, Karlsplatz 6. (Universal-Edition). Én neki is hasonló értelemben írtam; de azért elviheti hozzá ezt a levelet is (ezt [illegible] magyarul). Szó lehetne vagy a 2. vonósnégyes III. tételéről, vagy egyikéről a 3 zongora-etüdömnek (op. 18.) vagy a 3. vagy 4. Ady-dalomról. Ezek mind nála [illegible] illetve megjelenő félben vannak. Kéziratban nincs semmi megfelelő (kisen 2 év óta [illegible] semmit sem tudtam írni). De jogi szempontból az mindegy, mert – amint fennebb említettem – kiadatlan



műveim felett is kiadóm rendelkezik szerződésem értelmében.

Szíves üdvözlettel

Bartók Béla

Bartók's letter to Kassák (1921)

Tibor Mester

SÁNDOR FENYVES'S PEN DRAWING OF BARTÓK (1936)

ERVIN VOIT'S
BARTÓK CARICATURE (1931)

Ottó Vahl

Tibor Mester

BÉNI FERENCZY: BÉLA BARTÓK—DRAWING (1936)

Ottó Vahl

BÉNI FERENCZY: BÉLA BARTÓK—MEDAL (1955)

GYULA ILLYÉS

BARTÓK

'Harsh discord?'—Yes! They think it thus
which brings us solace!
Yes! Let the violin strings,
let singing throats
learn curse-clatter of splintering glass
crashing to the ground
the screech of rasp
wedged in the teeth
of buzzing saw;—let there be no peace, no gaiety
in gilded, lofty far
and delicate, closed-off concert halls,
until in woe-darkened hearts!

'Harsh discord!' Yes! They think it thus
which brings us solace!
that the people live
and have still a soul
their voice is heard! Variations on the curse
of steel grating crashing against stone.
Though on the tuned and taut
piano and vocal cords
to stark existence their bleak truth,
for this same 'harsh discord,'
this woeful battle-cry disturbing hell's infernal din
cries out
Harmony!
For this very anguish cries out
—through how many falsely sweet songs—and shouts

to fate: Let there be Harmony,
order, true order, or the world is lost,
the world is lost, if the people
speak not again—in majesty!

O stoic, stern musician, true Magyar
(like many of your peers—'notorious')
was it ordained by law, that from the depth
of the people's soul, whither you descended
through the trumpet, the as yet mine-shaft throat
of this pit, you should send up the cry
into this frigid-rigid giant hall
whose soft-lights myriad candles are?

Frivolous, soothing melodies played in my ear
insult my grief:
let no light-tuned Zerkovitz sing the dirge at this,
our mother's funeral;
homelands are lost—who dares to mourn them
with grind-organ arpeggios?
Is there hope yet in our human race?
If this be our care and the reeling brain battles
benumbed, speak you
fierce, wild, severe, aggressive great musician,
that—for all that!—we still have cause
to hope, to live,

And that we have the right
—for we are mortals and life-givers—
to look all that in the eye
which we may not avoid.
For troubles grow when they are covered.
It was possible, but no more,
to hide our eyes, to cover our ears
while storms wreak their havoc,
and later revile: you did not help!

You do us honour by revealing what
is revealed to you,
the good, the bad, virtue and sin—
you raise our stature by
speaking to us as equals.

This—this consoles!
What different words are these!
Human, not sham.
It gives us the right, and so the strength to face
the harshest despair.

Our thanks for it,
for strength to take victory
even over hell.

Behold the end that carries us on.
Behold the guidon: by speaking out
the horror is dissolved.
Behold the answer to life's riddle
by a great mind, an artist's spirit: it was worth suffering
through hell.

Because we have suffered such things that still
there are no verbs for them,
Picasso's two-nosed women,
six-legged stallions
alone could have keened abroad
galopping, neighed out
what we have borne, we men,
what no one who has not lived it can grasp,
for which there are no words now, nor can be perhaps,
only music, music, music, like your music
twin lodestars in our sky of sound,
music alone, music alone, music,
hot with ancient breath of mine-depths,
dreaming 'the people's future song,'
nursing them to triumph,
setting them free so that the very walls
of prisons are razed,
for bliss promised, here on earth
praying with blasphemy,
sacrificing with sacrilege,
wounding to cure,
music now lifting
worthy listeners to a better world—

work, a good healer, who lulls not to sleep;
who, probing our soul
with your chord-fingers, touches
where trouble lies,
and how strange, how wholesome is the salve you give:
the plaintive call,
the lament which would spring from us,
but cannot spring,
for we are born to dumb stillness of heart:
your nerve strings sing for us.

(1956) *Translated by Claire Lashley*

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FROM OUR NEXT ISSUES

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REHEARSING WITH BARTÓK

by

ANDOR FÖLDES

I was 15 in 1928 when I first met Bartók.

I had once seen him before from afar, from the balcony of the Budapest Royal Cinema where he gave a piano matinée. His powerful, virile, and beautiful playing, infallible sense of rhythm impressed me. He played Mozart's Fantasia in C Minor, Beethoven's Sonata in F Major (op. 10, No. 2), and his own 15 Hungarian Peasant Songs. I wanted to meet him, but I venerated the Master—I did not want to be a nuisance.

So it was left to destiny to bring us together. Not long after the concert at the Royal a friend and colleague, Lajos Hernádi, asked me if I would turn over pages for him and Bartók at the recording of a four-handed recital in the radio studio. Hernádi was his student at the Budapest Academy of Music. He had moved from there to Ernő Dohnányi at the Master School where we were colleagues for three years. Of course I leapt at the offer, and I was at the studio exactly on time. A small man faced me, with penetrating, beautiful eyes, bursting with energy. I cannot tell why but there was something fascinating about him, before he even uttered a single word.

"Do you know Schubert's Fantasia in F Minor?" was the welcome, and I confessed with fright and shame that I had never heard that composition. "Then here is a great surprise for you," the conversation went on and with this sentence it came to an end. Bartók invited Hernádi to be seated next to him and within minutes Schubert's unforgettable heart-gripping melody filled the room.

My breath failed me when I heard the first chords. Everything I had heard about Bartók, everything adults had told me about him which I had accepted with childish belief, without criticism, was shattered by the experience.

Perhaps I should mention that my mother's family was a real musician's clan. My mother began as a pianist, later she taught the piano and did so to the end of her life. My aunt taught singing, my uncle was one of the founding members of the famous Budapest String Quartet. There was music in the family for all our waking hours—it would have been a real wonder and a proof of no ear for music on my part had I not become a musician.

Since early childhood I had always heard that Bartók was such a revolutionary and that

he composed atonally. In our family everybody was conservative about music, except my uncle, and this conservativism was—successfully—handed over to me. I was 15 then, I had no musical judgement of my own, so I blindly accepted what I had heard at home.

Here, in the half-light of the radio studio all this programmed prejudice fell from my eyes like scales. I realized with astonishment that all I had heard about Bartók did not agree with reality. A person who sounded a composition of another great, romantic composer with so much love and care, who played each chord with the total commitment of his personality with an intensity straight from the heart, such a person could not be a revolutionary who wished to overthrow all the hitherto known laws of music. Here there was a great musician at the piano who brought to life another musical genius's work with his own heart's blood. All of a sudden I understood the truth—things were different from what I was told at home.

During the short recital a Mozart Sonata and Stravinsky's Small Suite were performed. I don't remember how I managed to take myself out of the radio building, but I knew and felt that something important and vital had happened to me. I met Bartók and felt that my life would never be the same after this.

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I started the following day by dashing into a music-shop. "I want to buy Bartók piano pieces," I said with noble simplicity.

"Which one would you like?" I was asked.

"All of them," I said, not realizing how stupid I sounded. First I took home Sonatina, 1915, which had three short themes, and lasted barely four minutes. I thought this was the best start. After four weeks practice I gathered strength and phoned Bartók. With a trembling voice I reminded him of our first meeting and asked him if he would hear me before I played this piece in public. At that time I was preparing for my first Budapest solo recital. The programme included Sonatas by Mozart, Beethoven and Liszt, and Sonatinas by Bartók and Ravel.

A few days later I was sitting in Bartók's study and started playing the Sonatina with a beating heart. Bartók listened attentively, then he sat down at the piano without a word and played a few beats of each theme. "Your interpretation is somewhat more virtuoso than mine; I play it a bit slower, but it does not matter really, if you play it with conviction, it will be fine." I left the house relieved yet excited. I thought what it would have been like if Bartók had taught me to play the piano—late regrets, of course. So we agreed that if I learned another piece of his, I would phone him and he would hear me (he said), with pleasure.

But before it could come to this, I played the Sonatina first in Budapest then in Vienna—with great success on both occasions.

The recital in Vienna was not at all that simple. My parents organized it at their own expense, and the rent of the hall, the publicity, the printing of tickets cost a great deal. It involved great financial risk for my father and we were not rich. I therefore travelled to Vienna, with my parents, two days before the recital, so as to play something to a prospective patron living there. The idea was that if he liked my playing, he might take over a hundred or two hundred tickets, bettering our chances. On the day of our arrival we went to see this gentleman, who received us very kindly, he even offered us some tea. I played for him and apparently to his satisfaction, because he said afterwards that he was willing to take on himself all the expenses of the concert. This made my parents and me extremely happy and we were just about to leave when he asked what my programme would be. I proudly recited the names of the composers, but when it came to Bartók I noticed that something had gone wrong. My future benefactor went red in the face and began to shout.

"You are sure to fail if you play Bartók in Vienna," he cried. "Here they don't like moderns like him, especially not in the programme of a young and unknown artist."

I was at a loss facing this outburst.

"Change the programme, play anything but Bartók, I will pay for the printing of the new programme and all will go well." My parents looked at me in expectation. I knew what was at stake—what a sum could be saved by changing a four-minute piece of music. I thought for a minute, then resolutely said: "Bartók stays." This was the first time I stood up for Bartók but certainly not the last.

The recital proved a great success, in spite of the fact that having caused such extra expenses owing to my stubbornness weighed on my conscience. The hall remained half empty but the enthusiasm was great and there, in the last row, my almost-patron sat, who applauded heartily after each piece—let it be said in his favour that he did so even after the Bartók Sonatina.

On the next occasion I played the 15 Hungarian Peasant Songs for Bartók. This time our meeting passed in a somewhat more relaxed atmosphere. I was beginning to find my tongue, and after playing we chatted a little. His wife Ditta was present and I also met young Péter. It happened then that Bartók called my attention to the fact that in the fifth piece, the Scherzo, there was a major misprint. He made me correct it immediately with a coloured pencil.

"Why don't you tell the publisher to correct it in the next edition?"

Bartók smiled sadly and made a discouraged gesture.

"There won't be another edition." I did not know what to answer. During the coming forty-five years it was reprinted at least five times.

Next time I played him the Suite, Allegro Barbaro, also parts of Night Sounds and Out of Doors, slowly what I consider a wonderful human relationship came into being between the Master and me. I worshipped him and he – if I may so – liked me.

When in 1933 my friend, Louis Kentner performed Bartók's *Second Piano Concerto*, in Budapest he played it to Bartók a few weeks before the performance, and asked me

to accompany him on another piano. So after a few week's work I more or less learnt the orchestral part from the hand-written score. I still look on this half-hour-attempt in Bartók's home as one of my few acts of musical heroism. I do not know myself how I gathered the courage to undertake such a job and how I managed to accomplish it, but I am grateful to destiny for the chance, since it is quite probable that this encounter, these weeks of study helped me to learn this beautiful, epoch-marking masterpiece later. I played it on more than forty occasions in different parts of the world – I was the first to record it in Paris in 1949, and I performed it in New York, Buenos Aires, Tokyo and Johannesburg and many other places.

In 1933 this wonderful piece was still a profound secret to me and probably to many other young musicians. I performed it in 1947 in New York, two years after Bartók's death and I was the most astonished for not having understood this piece at first hearing.

As soon as Kentner began to play the Piano Concerto to Bartók, Bartók, who was standing behind us and followed his piece from a score on a stand, tapped Kentner's shoulder and said: "Please, don't play it in such a Bartók manner; more gracefully, please, in the French style."

I was struck dumb. At that time all Bartók-compositions were looked on as the Allegro Barbaro's cousins. Bartók's remark took me by surprise. He sat down at the piano himself and we could hear the first powerful chords, transparent, etheral, irresistible. I learned more Bartók-style from this short scene than I could have by studying monographs for months.

*

When I performed the Second Piano Concerto in New York in 1947 (Bartók wrote a very warm dedication on the very same score from which I had accompanied Kentner long ago when both of us were living in New York and Bartók wanted to give me more chances to play in public) all the music critics were taken aback: how was it possible for this masterpiece to lie about for so long unperformed in the United States? They did not realize that between 1940 and 1947 (in 1947 at last I was able play the concerto in Carnegie Hall) I had shown the score to every conductor I could contact. None of them were willing to undertake the difficult and thankless job of performing this work. "It needs too many rehearsals," one of them said. "Who can tell how it will work out?" he added.

Sadly several of the conductors were Hungarians and yet they did not risk facing the critics and an audience that had not yet shown much understanding for Bartók's music.

Let me remark that I played the Piano Sonata in Europe wherever I could, even before my trip to the United States. In 1937, in the spring, I played it in Vienna, in the Netherlands, and also in Paris. I gave my first solo recital in London in March 1939. My programme

included Brahms's Paganini Variations, Bartók's Sonata, and Kodály's Dances of Marosszék. This is how the London *Times* wrote about the concert: "Földes took us with Bartók's Sonata to Purgatory, but he redeemed himself later with the Dances of Marosszék of his compatriot Kodály."

Little did I or the critic know that within twenty years the BBC would engage me for six Bartók recitals, during which, for six times 45 minutes, I played almost all the important piano pieces. This was the first such series of Bartók cycles in the BBC, and as far as I know it has not been repeated so far.

In 1955 I suggested to the Deutsche Grammaphon Gesellschaft the recording of 200 minutes of Bartók piano music on four records. First they firmly refused, saying that such an enterprise would certainly not pay. Later they allowed me my cherished wish—for half pay. When it came out at last, it was a great success not only everywhere in Europe, but also in Japan, the U.S., Australia, and South-Africa. Not long afterwards these four records were awarded the Grand Prix de Disques in Paris. Bartók and Földes—Földes and Bartók, the two names were inseparable for a long time in the world of music performers and music lovers. At first, as in Vienna in 1929, I had to beg for the right to play Bartók. Later the shoe was on the other foot: on certain occasions it was me who asked the impressarios to let me play Mozart or Beethoven for once with the orchestra which had invited me.

My youthful worship grew, with the passing years, into reverence, affection, then—I think I may say so—into true friendship.

Bartók the musician as well as Bartók the man has ever been my ideal since I first turned over the pages for him for Schubert's Fantasia in the Budapest Radio Studio.

I have not met a more honest and steadfast character all my life. He often knocked his head against a brick wall, but in a hundred out of a hundred cases it was the wall that broke, not Bartók's head. The famous letter, in which he refused, for political reasons, the Greguss Award, was remembered for a long time by everybody who read about it in the papers. The affair of the Corvin Collar and Wreath—which he also refused—was another beautiful example of Bartók's firm self-respect.

But—steadfastness, principles, and honesty may be beautiful but all that does not make a genius. Béla Bartók succeeded in conjuring up and expressing the soul of the Hungarian people with his compositions, and those who enjoy and understand Bartók's music get to know and understand Hungary much better. Few geniuses can claim so much.

I am grateful to destiny that I was able to play a small part in getting a few hundred people here, a dozen listeners there, somewhat nearer to Bartók. A performing artist cannot possibly aspire to more.

MAN, MUSICIAN, SCHOLAR

by

PAUL ARMA

I am still seized with a profound emotion speaking in commemoration of the hundredth birthday of Béla Bartók who honoured me with his teaching and friendship.

Béla Bartók, this characteristically Hungarian musician, who was born in 1881, in the South-east of Hungary, and died in 1945, in New York, where he lived in exile, having left Hungary because of Hitlerism, is one of the most universal figures of the art of music.

Today his name, made large by prestige and glory, has the run of the world.

This vertiginous rise of his name and work took place in the recent past. Bartók, like so many others before him, could not escape his strange and almost inevitable fate: death had to take him away for mankind to become aware that he was no more.

From his youth he had foreseen, with keen eyes, the isolation and loneliness which were to remain his lot for life.

At the age of 24, his start was marked by a tremendous fiasco: in 1905 he went to Paris to compete for the Rubinstein Prize. But the old-fashioned examiners appreciated neither the pianist nor the composer in Bartók. The piano prize was awarded to another candidate, and the members of the jury found none of the competitors worthy of the composition prize.

The only solace Bartók found was in the opportunity to see Paris, from where he wrote to his mother: "...a godless divine city... the centre of the world..." (from Paris where, in 1939, the three of us—Bartók, his wife Ditta, and me—went for long walks, for our very last walks together...). He had said there in 1905: "I can foresee—I am sure of it—that my lot will be that of a loner... I have almost become accustomed to the thought that it can't be otherwise and that it must be so..."

His whole life consisted of unremitting work. He wrote as early as 1905: "...to work and study, again to work and study, and again and always to work and study; this is the only way to attain something..."

He never allowed himself the briefest break, nor a slackening of effort in spite of his frailty; fatigue never overcame him.

It is true that he died relatively young, in the prime of creative life—he was only 64 years old!—but it is no less true that in his lifetime he carried out an unequalled musical and scientific mission.

*

In order really to like and know this music, really to understand the greatness of it and the humanity it embodies, it is necessary first of all to come close to the primordial element without which Bartók could not have been what he was. What I mean is folk music. His genius revealed its real features only when he discovered the secret of its revival in a particular elaboration of the peasant musical material.

By substantially integrating folk music into art music, by intimately linking these two elements—which had earlier been isolated and alien to each other—Bartók conveyed to us one of his most salient teachings, which he formulated as follows: "Folk music is the unparalleled brevity of expression, the rigorous suppression of everything accessory; this is indeed what we have aspired after most of all in order to counteract the verbosity of the age of romanticism."

*

He mapped out his own path with foresight and kept to it with singular firmness without ever departing from it.

He liked to argue with his friends. Bartók's curiosity and genius were not indifferent to art of any kind. He made me read Dostoevsky and Stravinsky, Victor Hugo and Darius Milhaud. We read and played new works together: with an infallible glance he took them to pieces, passed judgement on them and recomposed them.

Occasionally he made concessions, but not once to platitude, to tawdriness or to fashion. He was able to retain the reserve indispensable to any real force seeing its path and knowing its goal.

He was exceptionally modest, very kind, often fatherly, but not indulgent; a single injustice was enough to provoke his violent reaction, to bring out his toughness, to make evident his upright and intractable character. His nature, faithful to his ideas, to his conceptions, his convictions and his friends, did not allow him to tolerate disloyalty.

*

The instinctive affection that pushed him towards Hungarian folk art, a fundamentally cosmopolitan culture and humanism that placed him on the highest summit of music—these are the factors which enabled him to realize an exceptional synthesis: his work is unques-

tionably Hungarian and essentially universal; for the same reasons and by the same means his music is meant for the public as well as for the most erudite musicians. This synthesis is the credo of Bartók's humanism.

*

He was always faithful to his ideas, his conceptions, his convictions: always faithful to himself. He loved the simple, natural, and truthful things and people, he felt concerned about the fate of human society. The politicking of politicians hardly concerned him, but his heart beat in time with the heart of mankind, his mind always compelled him to take sides with those who suffered from some injustice.

This is how, with the courage peculiar to him, he publicly condemned the Hitlerites for their anti-Semitism; this is how he protested, in Horthy's Hungary, against the attacks on liberal journalists; this is how, in 1940, he chose to go into exile because "...I cannot live nor work in a country where the newspapers cannot freely express their opinions."

Even those who are not familiar with Bartók's music will understand the significance of this sorrowful sentence: "All that I am sorry for is that I have to go with my trunks full," as he told his doctor when, on 25 September 1945, he regained consciousness for a few moments. The next day he died in a small room of the Westside Hospital in New York...

A service in the Universal Funeral Chapel, with only a handful of fellow countrymen present, and a quiet funeral procession to Ferncliff cemetery (where he still lies buried): this is how the life and voluntary exile of this wonderful artist, this patriot, staunch democrat, and anti-Nazi, broken by leukemia, ended in what was certainly a hospitable land where, however, he received more of the marks of respect than of the means of support and care.

*

Whatever field of activity he approached, whatever his genius intended to mould, whatever subject attracted his intellect, whatever truth he espoused and advocated desperately and courageously: he never displayed even the least sign of hesitation; his instinct guided him securely everywhere, his absolute simplicity—often even his childish naïvety—his natural modesty remained his dominant characteristics, his most disarming moral strength to the very end.

Having had the exceptional luck to know him closely, to work and live with him, I find it difficult even today, 35 years after his death, to be rid of the grief that overcame me when I came to know...

For, if the art of music lost a master in him, and musicology lost a torch, then mankind—together with us his many friends—lost a man in the real sense of the term.

ADORNO'S IMAGE OF BARTÓK

by

JÁNOS BREUER

On May 5, 1964, Adorno gave a talk broadcast from a studio in Bremen about the difficulties of composing music. "Already in the generation of Schoenberg, Stravinsky and Bartók—unjustly known as the 'modern classics'—there were composers who were inherently incapable of making full use of their own innovations and who thus, in a way, held themselves back. One of the greatest and most original of these talents was that of Béla Bartók. [. . .] Once, during a conversation on New York City radio, Bartók told me that he could not break away from tonality; this was to be expected in the case of a composer such as himself, whose work was based on folk music. You can believe me that Bartók, who left his country for exile and poverty in protest against Fascism, was never tainted with any chauvinist ideology whatsoever. Yet under the pressure of his origins and traditions—which in the end proved stronger than his creative achievements—he lost contact with all he had dared in his boldest work, the *Two Sonatas for Violin and Piano.*"[1] Unfortunately, we have no further details of Adorno's conversation with Bartók since no-one has been able to establish either the exact topic under discussion or when and on which of New York's radio stations it took place. However, unlike the many unrecorded meetings the two men are assumed to have had in the period 1922–33, it is known for certain that sometime between 1941 and 1945 this personal encounter did take place. The above quotation illustrates Adorno's view that works inspired by folk music lend ideological support to Fascism—although Bartók is cleared of this suspicion—and that folk music acts as a definite brake on the development of essentially new works. This is valid as far as German music of the 1920s and '30s is concerned; but Adorno's education, combined with his musical and philosophical background, made him unable to understand the impact from outside the cultural

[1] *Impromptus.* Suhrkamp. Frankfurt am Main, 1968. pp. 98–99

scene that the peasants and their music had on Hungarian and East European music in general.

Adorno was only 19 when, in 1922, he started to write music criticism, whilst studying philosophy and music. He published three or four hundred reviews of concerts and operas in Frankfurt, his home-town. These short but important articles are mostly unknown even today, and will remain so until his collected works are published. In the collections compiled during his lifetime he considered very few of these articles, and not even one dealing with Bartók, worth republishing. Thus I cannot be sure that the concert and opera reviews of Adorno's younger days form the basis of his philosophy of music, as set out in *Philosophie der Neuen Musik*, *Dissonanzen*, and *Die Soziologie der Musik*.

Adorno, the critic and later on the philosopher, took to writing in defence of Schoenberg, his circle and the trends in music he represented. This was before he became Alban Berg's pupil which shows that it was not Berg's influence that led him to write all these articles: indeed I would suggest that it was the interest that attracted him to Schoenberg's circle that also led him to choose Alban Berg as his master.

Adorno, as the apologist of Schoenberg, could not have found a better basis for his work than Frankfurt. Although Berlin, with its multi-faceted musical life, was the musical capital not only of Germany, but practically of the whole of Europe until Hitler came to power, Frankfurt was culturally extremely alive and supported the new music more unanimously than any other musical centre; thus it provided a good basis for a "provincial" opposition to conservativism. He could hardly avoid noticing Bartók, who with regular presentations of his compositions, several world-premières and personal appearances, made a great impression on the Frankfurt musical scene. Adorno wrote some fifteen articles dealing wholly or partly with Bartók: this analysis covers the composer's entire œuvre to date and, taken as a whole, could form an outline for a full-length study. The writings demonstrate an honest conflict in Adorno: he appears to understand and master Bartók's aims, but then always withdraws this understanding.

His ambivalence is apparent in two great articles on Bartók, written as far back as 1922, at the beginning of his literary career. He came upon Bartók's works in the form of sheet music and developed his theories when engaged in a thorough study of the composer's œuvre for the article *Béla Bartók*.[2] This initial contact proved very significant in the formation of his image of Bartók since he was to use the theories he developed at this time as

[2] *Béla Bartók*. Neue Blätter für Kunst und Literatur, vol. 4, 1922. pp. 126–128

a measuring-rod for every work by the composer that he heard subsequently. "Unlike Schoenberg's atonality, his harmony is marked by a rough pleasure in dissonance, to which he secretly adds consonance in thought. He turns to the chamber music form, and without sacrificing the sensibility of the modern sonata, he reinforces its firmness with the broad, strict rhythm in which his soul meets the spirit of the people. The conventional pattern is dissolved in this rhythm, the wild energy of the movements spans the quality of the themes which only flash up like campfires as one passes across the steppes. Two of his string-quartetts (op. 7 and 17), written in a similar style to the new *Sonata for Violin* (op. 21), are technically speaking a criticism of the sonata form. He restricts the number of movements to three—Scherzo, Rondo and Allegro flow into each other. The Adagio appears as rhapsodically dissolved, and points into the darkening distance." After studying the piano score of *Prince Bluebeard's Castle* and *The Wooden Prince,* Adorno declares: "It is here that the essence of Bartók's art is revealed." The European or, rather, the German sonata is the form which Adorno continually contrasts with Bartók's later compositions, and he bases his judgements on whether or not the composers conform to his critic's picture of him. Adorno's insight starts to give out after a couple of months. After an all-Bartók concert in Frankfurt, on April 24th 1922, and the opening nights of two of his works for the stage on May 13th, he writes about the *First String Quartet:* "After the painfully tender introduction, an obvious emptiness opens up in front of us, folksy natural sounds are brought in as mere filling-matter and it is as though apparently this long drawn-out organism was artificially created and not allowed to grow naturally."[3]

The opening of the *First String-Quartet* reminds Adorno of Wagner and Reger, striking a personal chord with the critic and enabling him to perceive not merely the score of the composition, but also its overall effect. But he could neither follow nor accept the way in which the piece unfolds. He became even more critical when he heard the works for the stage: he disliked Debussy's influence in the opera and the way he felt Bartók played around with musical imagery in a post-Straussian way in the ballet. Summing up he declares Bartók to be "[...] a victim of bad *Europäertum.*"[4]

Adorno's review is partly supported by Bartók's bitter letter from Frankfurt: "What bad violinists, what a bad quartet, what bad opera are out to destroy my compositions here! I am in for a sad first-night."[5]

[3] *Bartók-Aufführungen in Frankfurt* (Bartók-performances at Frankfurt). Neue Blätter für Kunst und Literatur, vol. 5, 1922. pp. 5–8.

[4] Ibidem.

[5] *Bartók Béla levelei* (Béla Bartók's Letters) ed. by János Demény. Zeneműkiadó, Budapest, 1976. p. 281.

The increasing severity of the German political crisis and the progress of Nazism led Adorno to write in 1925: "Everything appearing in the guise of folk music serves ideological (i.e., Nazi. *J. B.*) interests; but music in the people is unconditionally subjected to reified society. Anyone who composes folk songs nowadays is a cheat; anyone who uses folk-song themes in his own music with the intention of preserving values is a romantic of the romanticism which passed away like the folk song before it."[6]

The middle of the 20s was, of course, a watershed from the point of view of the new music as well. Post-war illusions about the coherence of different trends in new music disappeared. Schoenberg's "Verein für Musikalische Privataufführung" in Vienna, which had impartially popularized both Stravinsky and the folk-song arranger Bartók, had long disappeared. Schoenberg was already working in dodecaphony and wrote a satire against Stravinsky, who even at the peak of his success emphasized that his music was tonal. After the first two string-quartets and the two sonatas for violin and piano, Bartók added neo-classicism to his style, bending it to fit his own image. This divergence increasingly irritated Adorno.

At the Prague ISCM Festival in 1925 he heard for the first time the *Dance Suite* (1923) which commemorated the 50th anniversary of the union of Buda, Óbuda and Pest [. . .] "this composition is occasional as regards its essence," he writes. "In vain we search for the storm and silence of that first great sonata for violin and piano, and for the adventures in sound, tempo and form of the second sonata. A few transparent recognisable dance-characters are loosely brought together; the ritornels connecting the dances are more for filling the gaps than for organizing the overall composition [. . .] Briefly: the intention of the *Suite* is bland and successfully accomplished. [. . .] Bartók's relationship to Hungarian folk music, rhapsody, monody, and dance is not as certain as it is hoped by the romantics."[7]

Although in the front line of the battle over the New Music, Adorno did not realize that the *Dance Suite* with its Hungarian, Rumanian, and Arab themes is one of those great compositions, the aims of which the composer expressed in 1931 as follows: "My own idea. . .—of which I have been fully conscious since I found myself as a composer—is the brotherhood of peoples, brotherhood in spite of all wars and conflicts. I try—to the best of my ability—to serve this idea in my music."[8]

[6] *Volksliedbearbeitungen* (Folk-song Arrangements). Die Musik, vol. 17, May 1925. pp. 583–585.

[7] *Béla Bartók's Tanz-suite* (Béla Bartók's Dance Suite). Pult und Taktstock, vol. 2, July–August 1925. pp. 105–107.

[8] *Béla Bartók: Letters.* Ed. by János Demény. Corvina Press, Budapest, 1971. p. 201.

After hearing the world première of the *First Piano Concerto* in Frankfurt, Adorno further revised his earlier impression of Bartók: "To the present time Bartók has differed from all other folklorists in that he used folk-music only as a basis to provide inspiration for his musical talent and to influence his subjective intentions. Now, after the *Dance Suite,* he has fallen back into naive folksiness which he was beyond when composing his best works; folk themes are decorated with dissonance, without being crushed by it, and often float undisturbed above the diffuse harmony, as is the case in Kodály's music. At the same time Bartók became fascinated by Stravinsky's classicism, and he gives this form impetus with a pseudo-Bachian drive."[9]

That the critic, who deliberately entitled his late collection *Der getreue Korrepetitor* (The Faithful Coach), thought that Bartók should conform in his artistic development to his own conception of him instead of forming his conception from the pattern of the composer's works, is plainly illustrated in his opinion of Bartók's *Third String Quartet.* Unusually, Adorno wrote three reviews of the composition, soon after hearing it in 1929: two short critiques immediately after the work's first night performance in Frankfurt and a third, extensive analysis which was prompted by the publication of the score.

Adorno welcomed the return of the Bartók-sonata: "Rarely does a composer return richer to his own sphere than Bartók in the *Third String Quartet.* He again reaches the peak from which he strayed and from this peak he now endeavours to continue at a level which earlier would not have been possible. The formal ideas that appeared in the second *Sonata for Violin* are now developed with the extensive use of *counterpoint,* the booty Bartók carried home from his classical adventures to his camp of restless improvisation. Not that Bartók was unable to write counterpoint before [...] But counterpoint, once tool, has now become material, like figures, chords and movements [...] The *Third String Quartet* surpasses all his previous works in this respect, too [...] Bartók discovered for himself the productive power of colour in the *Third String Quartet* in a very original way. Not only does this guarantee the masterpiece's brilliance, but it opens up a perspective of all that is to come."[10] But the critic's enthusiasm did not last. Two years later, having listened to another performance of the *Third String Quartet,* he wrote: "The third Bartók was performed, which I still rather like, though it is probably more blandly conceived than scored."[11]

[9] Die Musik, vol. 19, September 1927. pp. 881–882.
[10] Anbruch, vol. 11, November–December 1929, pp. 58–60.
[11] Die Musik, vol. 23, February 1931, p. 37.

In Spring 1932 Adorno listened to the local first night performance of Bartók's *First Rhapsody* in Frankfurt. "Szigeti gave an adequate rendering of Bartók's *First Rhapsody,* this folksy arrangement which is so pure and true in its detail, so wise in its attitude to the two basic forms of Hungarian dance that one's ear happily ignores the delusive effect of this combination."[12]

This occasion was memorable for József Szigeti as well. In his autobiography (*With Strings Attached.* Alfred Knopf, New York, 1947), he wrote that he played to an almost empty hall, because Adolf Hitler was giving a speech at an assembly in Frankfurt on the same day.

Thus the hall remained empty in Frankfurt, in the very town where there were so many devotees of Bartók's art. The reason why Adorno spoke of the delusive effect of the folk element in Bartók was perhaps also why he was to protest against the false and misleading Nazi ideology, the chauvinist ideal put to the people, and all the sins which were going to be committed in the name of the "people." The Hitlerian concept of people and folk-music did not mean peasant-music; it referred to the Horst Wessel Song and every other sabre-rattling march as can be seen in the numerous musical documents dating from the Third Reich. The folk-music that inspired Bartók's music did not exist any longer in Germany—by the time of Adorno's activity it had been completely swallowed up by composed music.

Thus, it was inevitable that after 1945 Adorno should withdraw practically everything that in his early youth he had believed Bartók to represent. "In fact [. . .] Bartók's later compositions, such as the *Violin Concerto,* though not fitfully fragmented, are traditional pieces, remakes of something long gone by, yet almost naïve continuations of the Brahms-line; they are late works of art, it is true, yet, domesticated, they are no longer the manifestations of the menacingly eruptive, the unseizable. Bartók's development has a special retractive power. In this light some of his most radical works, such as the first *Sonata for Violin,* are much blander than their mere sounds and chords. What once appeared to be a praerie-fire, gradually reveals itself as a csárdás, and even the most exposed pieces of *Out of Doors* today give the impression of dried-up Debussy, a sort of marinated atmospheric art. Bartók's patron saint is Liszt's *Mazeppa.*"[13]

The harsh tone of the above is that of Adorno in the 50s. Although his views retained their essence, they became modified with time by the beginning of the 60s. I quote from the chapter *The Nation,* in his *Introduction*

[12] Die Musik, vol. 24, July 1932, p. 771.

[13] Theodor W. Adorno: *Gesammelte Schriften* (Collected Writings) Band 14. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1973. pp. 146–147.

to Musical Sociology: "[...] the extremely folkloristic tendencies of the 20th century embodied in the work of important composers such as Bartók and Janaček, cannot simply be described as a continuation of national schools of late romanticism. Although that is where they have their origins, they in fact attacked manipulation, as the oppressed peoples protested against colonialism. No matter how much the early Bartók has in common with his compatriot, Liszt, his music is, nonetheless, a violent protest against the palm court-music of the cities. His own research into folk music was polemically directed against Gypsy music fabricated in the cities, a product of the decay of national romanticism. The national element could again, temporarily, become a creative force in music. The revival of idioms unscathed by reified western music emerged at the same time as the revolt of advanced new music against tonality and the rigid meter that went with it. In fact, Bartók went through his radical period during the First World War and the beginning of the 20s. [...]"

Young Adorno's image of Bartók is but one step from here and Adorno takes this step in his radio talk in 1964, quoted above.

Adorno's struggle to understand the Hungarian master's music was spread over more then four decades, and is without doubt marked by the influence of musical and political change. Yet it is to his credit as a philosopher and aesthete that on sensing the fundamental difference between his own musical education and traditions and the roots of Bartók's art, he endeavoured honestly to understand the composer and his aims. In this article I have been able to give no more than a fragmented account of how he achieved this; but even so I trust that it has illustrated how this outstanding philosopher of the twentieth century developed his appreciation of Bartók.

KASSÁK AND BARTÓK

by

FERENC CSAPLÁR

What Gyula Illyés said about Bartók's admirers amongst his contemporaries also goes for Lajos Kassák. "The writers of his time were enthusiastic about Bartók and were ready to take up cudgels on his behalf because their senses transmitted the same message to them; each was or wanted to be a Bartók in his own field."

Kassák first heard a Bartók work in 1913. Of the youthful compositions, Kassák was most deeply impressed by the piano work, *Allegro Barbaro* and the *1st* and *2nd String Quartets.* Many years later, he recalled these early impressions: "I was not particularly keen on his folk song transcriptions but I completely surrendered to his squeaking, screaming, painfully beautiful string quartets."

In 1916, he first met Bartók at a concert at the Budapest Academy of Music: "We greeted each other like old acquaintances. He knew my writing and I knew his music and we progressed more or less along the same road." The human and artistic relationship that emerged between them was characterised by interest and trust on Bartók's part and absolute respect on Kassák's.

The Hungarian avant-garde writers and artists who formed a group under Kassák's leadership, around the periodicals *A Tett* (1915–1916) and *Ma* (1916–1925) recognized in the passionate, explosive music of young Bartók the realization of their own aspirations, the expression of "motion in the direction of the objectives and possibilities", of "will finding its freedom" of "forces awakening to self-consciousness", the musical vision of approaching revolution. Kassák who edited the periodical, and organized the movement, indicated already in the period of *A Tett* that he regarded Bartók as an ally of the Activists in Hungary and one of the most outstanding modern Hungarian artists. In fact, he welcomed the enormous success of the

first performance of *The Wooden Prince* at the Budapest Opera House on May 12th 1917 as a breakthrough of the new art and an outstanding event holding out new prospects and hopes for the Hungarian activist movement.

The relationship between Kassák and Bartók grew increasingly intimate in the Great War. In the music issue of *Ma*, on 15th June 1917, Kassák published a song Bartók composed to a poem by Endre Ady, *Nem mehetek hozzád* (I cannot go to you). And on February 1st, 1918, a complete issue was devoted to Bartók. Kassák's deep respect for Bartók's music was indicated by the cover of the number which carried part of a score in Bartók's handwriting. Neither then, nor later, did he know or try to find out which work the excerpt was from. But his editor's instinct lead him to the most effective solution. For the excerpt carried on the front page of the periodical, *Ma*, is a document of the composer's victory over his own inner crisis. Originally, it was meant to be a piano postlude of the first of the *Five Songs*, marked Opus 15. The same tune emerges in a different register but unmistakably in *The Wooden Prince* when the lovers find true happiness in each other. It is an indication of the good relationship between Bartók and Kassák that Bartók, who dreaded to display any part of his private life, gave Kassák the excerpt from this song connected to his personal, private life and that, as if he forsaw the future fate of the *Five Songs*, the unlikeliness of their being published, he chose the journal *Ma* to disclose his feelings. On the inside pages Kassák published another Bartók work, the finale of the *Piano Suite* Op. 14. The same issue carried a print of the Bartók portrait Róbert Berény painted in 1913 and an article in which music critic Miklós Náray analysed Bartók's work. Náray's article indicated that the *A Tett* and *Ma* movements did not regard folk song collecting and composition, the efforts to reach back to peasant music and be modern, as two different, distinctive activities, in fact, in their view, Bartók could be modern because he reached back to peasant music. Presumably, the notion of carrying on Bartók's ideas beyond the limits of music, to literature, for instance, occured to some members of the Hungarian avantgarde. But Kassák was devoted to Bartók not only as an editor but as a poet as well. The same issue of *Ma* included a poem he dedicated to Bartók, *Greeting the Sun* (Napraköszöntés). The poem is the manifestation and transfiguration of monumental power, of energy that knows no bounds. In other words, it appreciates and hails all that characterised the personality and music of Bartók in his explosive period. One should mention that Róbert Berény used strong shades of red when he painted the portrait of the composer in 1913. And the red sun featuring in the poem was also one of the most important revolutionary symbols of Hungarian activist literature and art.

But Kassák offered a platform to Bartók not only in *Ma,* but also at various events organized by the *Ma* group. At the first morning recital that took place on December 9th 1917 at the Academy of Music, Bartók's pupil, the pianist Piroska Hevesi, played the 4th piece of his *Sketches* and the third piece of the *Three Burlesques.* One year later, the musical part of a *Ma* morning function on December 29, 1918, included *An Evening With the Székelys* and *Bear Dance* played on the piano by János Baranyi. The concluding work of the concert at Kaposvár on May 31st 1919 was *Allegro Barbaro*—performed by Piroska Hevesi. We do not know the exact programm of the promotion concerts at the Medgyaszay Theatre in Budapest on April 8th and 9th and May 13th and 14th 1919, but by going by curtain-raisers published in the periodical, works by Bartók also featured at these concerts.

The special place of the Bartók works in the programme of the *Ma* morning functions and their important role in creating a revolutionary atmosphere indicates that the explosive, unrestrainably dynamic music of the young Bartók was regarded by the Hungarian Activists as art with a revolutionary impact. Characteristically enough, at the *Ma* function at Kaposvár, *Allegro Barbaro* followed various literary works by members of the *Ma* staff, as a musical follow-up, or in fact, intensification of the revolutionary tone of these works. In his introductory announcement at the *Ma* function in Szeged, Gyula Juhász, the noted poet, made special mention of the close links between the call to action of the *Ma* group and Bartók's boldly new and powerful music.

In the closing years of the Great War, Bartók and the Hungarian activists found themselves on increasingly intimate terms. In a letter addressed to his Rumanian friend, Ion Busiţia, in August 1917, he wrote about the prospect of "Hungarian-Rumanian friendship that is to come": "Thanks to Apponyi's *blessed* activities, this friendship is still delayed, but the time will come when old men with long beards will have died out and will have been replaced by the youth of this age, the men of (the periodicals) Világ, Nyugat and Ma (!)" The exclamation mark in brackets after *Ma* shows that Bartók was fully aware of the pioneering role of the Hungarian activists and regarded them as the vanguard of progress in Hungary.

Under the Hungarian Republic of Councils, Kassák and Bartók played an active role in establishing the cultural institutions of the dictatorship of the proletariat: Bartók as a member of the music directorium and Kassák in the art, and later the theatre, directorium. We know from Kassák's autobiography *Egy ember élete* (The life of a man) that Bartók attended the *Ma* function of April 8th 1919 and the music function on May 13th. As Kassák recalled in 1961, "Under the two revolutions, we frequently discussed the

artistic possibilities of the new period then opening up to us. But there was too little time to create something significant and typical."

Their relationship never survived the difficult years following the defeat of the Hungarian Republic of Councils. In 1921, Kassák wrote to Bartók from his exile in Vienna, asking for a contribution to *Új művészek könyve* (The Book of New Artists), an anthology he was editing with László Moholy-Nagy. The letter has not come down to us, but Bartók's reply gives us a fair idea of what its contents might have been:

Budapest I., Gyopár u. 2.
24th May 1921.

Dear Sir,

I regard it as a great honour that you wish to include a work of mine in the publication you mention and I am ready to agree to the idea. But the final decision must be made by my publisher concerning both my published and so far unpublished works! Therefore, please contact urgently Emil Hertzka, Direktor der Universal-Edition; Wien IV Karlsplatz 6. (Universal-Edition). I have written to him to the same effect, but you might also present him with this letter (he understands some Hungarian). The piece to be included might be the third movement of the 2nd String Quartet, one of my 3 piano etudes (op. 18.), or No. 3. or No. 4. from the cycle of Ady songs. All of these have been published by him or are under way there. I have nothing appropriate in the way of a manuscript (since I could write practically nothing for two years). But this makes no difference from a legal point of view, for, as I mentioned above, my contract stipulates that all rights concerning my unpublished works are also reserved by the publisher.

Yours truly,
Béla Bartók

Today it would be impossible to tell why no new Bartók work was included in the *Új művészek könyve* after all. But one thing seems to be certain, that Kassák was not in a position to undertake financial obligations by accepting the usual conditions of the Universal Edition.

After his return from exile in Vienna, from the end of the 1920s, Kassák took part in discussions on Bartók as a composer and collector of folk music. Kassák was then the editor of the periodical, *Munka* (Work) in which

he included an article by the composer György Justus at a time when Bartók had for years withdrawn from the concert life of Budapest, following attacks against him. By carrying Justus' piece on Bartók, Kassák showed that in 1933, he still regarded Bartók as a revolutionary and ally of the socialist movement. As another sign of solidarity, the periodical presented a series of three articles on Bartók's work, „Our folk music and the folk music of neighbouring nations" in 1935. In March 1936, Kassák included a pen-and-ink sketch by Sándor Fenyves and an article by the French cultural attaché François Gachot who used the pen-name George Lamarque, under the title "Bartók and Stravinsky". *Munka* paid tribute to the fact that Bartók was elected a member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (1935).

Following Bartók's example, two young painters who had belonged to Kassák's group in 1928–29, Dezső Korniss and Lajos Vajda, proclaimed, in the mid-1930s, their own programme aimed at creating modern central European art. Although to some extent instinctively, a similar road was chosen by the dancer Etel Nagy, Kassák's step-daughter, and the first wife of the poet István Vas. She started her career with a dance choreographed to Bartók's piano piece, *For Children*. For her first solo night in Budapest in December 1933, she prepared her own version of *Bear Dance* and *Night with the Székelys*. The latter also featured in the programme of the performance in honour of Kassák's 50th birthday at the Academy of Music, on March 20th, 1937. The series of dances Etel Nagy choreographed to Bartók's music widened in 1937–38 to include the *Rumanian Dances*. "We thought at the time,"—wrote Iván Boldizsár following the early death of the dancer—"that the art of Etel Nagy might create a school and lead to the same sort of miraculous change in the art of the dance as that produced by Bartók and Kodály in music."

The 1930s saw not only Bartók's high artistic achievement, but also right-wing attacks on him in response to his stout anti-fascist stand. Although the famous lines of Bartók's will, written in 1940, were not made public until after 1945, his contemporaries knew from reading the papers that Bartók refused to accept the Corvin wreath, an official cultural award of the times from the hands of the Regent Miklós Horthy, who had led the Counter Revolution in Hungary, that he refused to attend government receptions and, in 1937, did not permit Italian and German radio stations to transmit recordings of his piano performances. It was also obvious that he emigrated to America as a protest against growing fascism in Europe. In fact, Bartók's farewell concert at the Academy of Music on October 8th, 1940 turned into an anti-fascist demonstration.

Kassák recorded Bartók's firm behaviour, and moral courage, the typical

features of his attitude on the concert platform, the characteristics of his piano performance and the dramatic world of his music in a poem he wrote in 1939. Its first title, *A mérleg serpenyője* (The dish of a balance) was later changed by him to *Béla Bartók.*

The news of Bartók's death, the feeling of deep shock over his loss, prompted Kassák to write another portrait. His powerful poetic obituary was published in the periodical, *Új Idők,* on 13th October 1945. The characterisation of the obituary is somewhat different from that of the poem. It is more authentic, more accurate regarding Bartók's work, especially his last creative period. In the poem, the metaphors "rattling" and "barking" might easily be associated with the idea of anarchy and absence of form. In his obituary Kassák emphasised the perfection of structure and classical moderation of Bartók's music.

After the war, as an editor of the periodical *Alkotás* (Creation) in 1947–48 and vice-president of the Hungarian Arts Council, Kassák considered to be important that Bartók's music be accorded the central place it deserved in the cultural life of the new democratic society in Hungary. In its January–February 1947 issue *Alkotás* carried a facsimile copy of two letters Bartók had written as a young man. It gave special emphasis to their message by printing a French translation of the periodical's programme below it. Kassák tried to keep the Bartók question on the agenda: No. 5–6 of the same periodical in May–June 1947. included an article by the musicologist, Bence Szabolcsi with the title "Two Portraits". He was also involved when the Arts Council commissioned János Demény to collect all available Bartók documents and they were published by the Arts Council in 1948.

From the moment the idea was first mooted, he attached tremendous significance to the successful organization of the planned Bartók Memorial Competition. Kassák realized that in this case, problems of Bartók's public standing lay behind the practical issues. Finally, the Bartók Competition was organized in harmony with the suggestions of Kassák and the Hungarian Arts Council in September 1948. With this large-scale series of events linked to Bartók's name, the new Hungarian democratic regime made a major contribution to the contemporary European cultural scene.

After 1949, in the years of dogmatism, Kassák drew strength from Bartók's music and the example of his behaviour to endure the burden of enforced silence and internal exile. Summing up, in his diary, his feelings and ideas while listening to the *3rd String Quartet,* he wrote:

"Alone and stripped a man suffers in a storm. Listening to this music one almost dreads the approach of utter destruction, the whole motion of the world is embodied in strange variations of sounds, things are perceptible

in their ancient essence, without any refinement and stylization. Appropriately enough, this period in Bartók's development is usually described as passing through hell. Personally, I have never experienced such a struggle of the universe with itself. I have never come across this fatal order of disorder, such frantic indignation of the human ego.

It is not raging hatred, but the fanaticism of the search for truth, the fever of self defence in the purest sense of the term, that prompts and incites this struggle.

Bartók does not pass through hell in order to take delight in the suffering of those thrown into the fire. He identifies with the victims: raging and shouting with them. But, unfortunately, the road to the clean source of light leads through these horrible places. Passing through hell is a final trial of strength for him. It will either kill him or he will get through, the span of his career will either break into two, or be realized in its entirety.

He managed to reach the other bank. By the end of his relatively short life there emerged the crystal-clear sounds of his music interwoven with clear harmonies, wisdom and confidence. Although it was not given to him to complete his life's work, his violin concerto explains Bartók's creative battle, not unlike a life-and-death struggle. It is obvious to us that he on top was not overcome by errors that might have pulled him down or trapped him."

In 1953 Kassák painted a portrait of Bartók and evoked his poem first published in 1940. In the poem, images like "the fire goes out", "the virgins dissapear" or "the soldiers die" and in these, in particular, the verbs "disappear" and "die", or the chain of metaphors, "rattling, crying and sometimes barking" reminded contemporaries of the events they had just lived through. Not unlike Illyés' poem on Bartók published in 1956 the poem as a whole could "express and resolve"—the experienced vicissitudes. At the same time, it was an act of solidarity to paint that portrait and to write that poem. Kassák decided to recall Bartók in the flesh and spirit at a period when official cultural policy declared most of his works to be aristocratic, formalist or even decadent, and therefore undesirable for public performance.

The portrait does not reach the level of the poem as art. But it illustrates Kassák's intention and his position. The portrait is that of a face reflecting moral purity and firmness. A smooth forehead and tight lips indicate austerity. Only the white hair above the forehead and on the temples reveals the traces of suffering and the experience of passing through hell.

When *The Naked Face of Genius* by Agatha Fassett was published in Hungarian in 1961, Kassák wrote a memoir of Bartók for the monthly *Valóság*.

In 1963, preparing his contribution to the radio programme, "Hungarian Writers on Béla Bartók," he put on paper once again the brief summary of what he felt was most important in his relationship with Bartók. In 1964, he produced another Bartók-inspired poem printed in his volume, *A tölgyfa levelei* (Oak Leaves). He reintroduced in his prose poem "Music" "the moment of elevation," an image he used in his earlier poem. Searching for an artistic expression of his respect for Bartók's art, it was almost inevitable for him to arrive at the image once already used:

"I look at my watch. 0.10. The radio announcer says: The Second Sonata for Violin and Piano by Béla Bartók. I listen to the music because I am very sad and I feel someone must tell the world about my sorrow. I see already through the walls of my room how the black-and-white keys, and the stretched strings of the violin gleam in the light of chandeliers.

And the sounds. Hardly audible, they advance from a distant, unknown land, breaking through the bones of a skull or rising from the depth of a soul. As if they were roving, they are trying to find their bearings groping in the dark. They fall behind, then become clogged. They refuse to be tamed and are contradictory. They have swishing wings as well as claws of steel. They turn me inside out and then the big identification takes place.

Everything resounds, rises and spreads.

I take part in the siege of hell and the moments of elevation.

I would like to defend myself but I give up.

This is music, space and my star."

BARTÓK AND THE VISUAL ARTS

by

BÉLA BARTÓK JR.

Béla Bartók—my father—took an interest in all branches of art besides music, and he happily studied both the works of past masters and more recent trends. Even as a child he was fond of drawing and later—particularly in his correspondence—he very often used drawings, mostly in a humorous way, to lend colour to his writing. He liked to draw for his children to amuse them, and in my childhood he had a separate drawing book for me in which he would from time to time record certain episodes—an outing, folk-songs we had heard, a visit to the zoo—in sketches.

His ability to draw was already evident in his musical notation; his manuscripts are intelligibly and neatly written and easy to read for anyone. He also paid great attention to the designs for the covers of his musical works. At one time his cousin, Ervin Voit, designed them and Bartók would give him precise instructions as to the theme of the title-page, its colouring, and the distribution of the text. In the case of folk themes he laid particular stress on the Hungarian character of the design.

He was fond of visiting museums and exhibitions even when his time was cut out for him. With his mother he viewed the Budapest Millennium Exhibition of 1896 with interest. And when he attended secondary school in Pozsony, it was easy for him to go to Vienna, and my father was very probably among the members of his 6th form class who visited museums there on May 1, 1897.

When Bartók came to stay in Budapest he mentioned this interest several times in his letters. He wrote in January 1900: "I went to see the winter picture exhibition, but which I must visit again because I could only see three rooms carefully, and there are twelve of them. The trouble is that one tires so quickly." In May 1902, outlining his strained financial circumstances, he mentioned: "I must also go to see the notable sights of Budapest... I shall visit all the galleries, exhibitions, museums; and lastly I must see Budapest itself. And all this costs money."

In the course of his trips abroad—even on those specifically for concert purposes—he made a point of seeing the towns, their museums, and all their individual exhibitions and of buying as many pictures of them as he could, which he would carefully classify afterwards at home.

Early in 1905 he went to Vienna for a prolonged stay and in the very first weeks began to visit the museums. Together with his mother, who came to see him, he went to the Museum of Natural History on January 26, and on the next day to the Museum of Art History. In the summer of the same year he took a trip to Paris where he was completely dazzled by the many artistic sights. According to his description: "The Tuileries, the Place de la Concorde, and the court of the Louvre unite into one vast expanse, which is still further expanded by the open areas on the far side of the Seine. The effect of this, one might say, largest urban park in the world is striking. ... Not to mention the Louvre! ... So far I have just about half seen only four or five of its halls." Naturally he went all through the rest of the museums as well, and even on subsequent trips there he could never get his fill of the beauty of Paris.

In the following year he linked his Iberian concert tour with visits to many towns, among them Strasbourg, then part of Germany, which he found "beautiful," and Venice, which he described as "divine." But he also managed to tour the towns of the Iberian peninsula and the French Riviera, and also to visit the Milan International Fair.

In June 1909, he went to Venice with his sister and my grandmother. Although they stayed for only eight days, they saw practically every church, picture gallery, and other sights of the town in that time. After the congress of music in Rome in 1911 he spent a few days acquainting himself with the artistic sights of the city.

At the beginning of summer in 1914, after his conference in Paris, he went to Normandy for ten days. From there he wrote the following to his wife: "I have cathedrals for breakfast, lunch and supper... the wayfarer encounters 20–30 of them in four or five days. But joking apart, there are really a few very lovely ones among them."

During his extensive concert tours after the First World War he was always most pleased when he could get to a new town and discover its sights. Thus he wrote from Cremona in March 1926 that he had ample time to visit all the notable sights of the town; in November 1927, in Stuttgart, he took advantage of the beautiful weather and strolled through the ancient part of the city; and in June 1931 he wrote about his trip to Germany: "There is one good thing about this tour: the fact that I have at long last got to Nuremberg. There is very much to see here and my time is almost too short".

During a concert tour in the West in the spring of 1932 he went to see the French picture exhibition in London. He wrote in considerable detail about this: "... comprehensive exhibitions are arranged here every year. This year the theme is French art in the nineteenth century. [According to later information there was more than this.] Material is sent here from all parts of the world, which one could only see otherwise if he travelled over half the world, and even then with difficulty because many objects are privately owned. Of course, the material is far from exhaustive. It could never be that, because sufficient space could never possibly be found for so many things, and the cost of transporting them would be too great. Nevertheless, this way a good number of things are here together, which at other times are completely scattered. I am interested only in the old and the very new; but I have

not been able to see even these very thoroughly. Therefore I have studied only the new things in greater detail. I saw a few very lovely Cézanne and Manet pictures.—The trouble is thattoo many people flock there, sometimes one can hardly move about.—Finally, I have at last 'seen' something in London—the last time this happened was 10 years ago—and this is only due to the fact that there was no rehearsal today."

Three years later he was overwhelmed by newer sights; during his trip to Egypt he endeavoured to exploit every possibility in his time off from the congress. He wrote on March 23 as follows: "In actual fact I saw the loveliest things yesterday, the like of which I had never seen anywhere before: the belongings of Tutankhamen at the so-called Egyptian Museum. I don't mean the objects of gold, but the whole thing as it is. Almost everything is as fresh and undamaged as if it had been made today; apart from this it was beautiful and varied."

Both old and new art appealed to him. While preparing for a trip to Switzerland in 1937, where he planned to visit a Constructivist exhibition of the works of László Moholy-Nagy and others in Basle, he sent word that he would be pleased to meet with the artists.—On January 21 he visited the exhibition ("There are really some very odd things to be seen there. I even obtained an illustrated catalogue", he wrote about it), but there is no record as to whether the meeting took place.

Naturally, Bartók was also interested in Hungarian historical monuments. Less than a month after the exhibition in Basle he had a sonata evening with Endre Gertler at Pápa, and the supper that rounded it off took place in an old cloister, which my father regarded as quite noteworthy.

On his Italian concert tour in 1939 he arranged his time to allow for a few hours' break in Orvieto to see the town between his concerts at Florence and Rome. "Lovely," was all he wrote to me about it. Even on his busy American tour in the spring of 1940 he was able to take some time off for sight-seeing, and in Chicago went to the exhibition of the "Origins of Modern Art."

The preservation and communication of his many visual experiences was essential for him. At a fairly young age he contrasted the retaining of musical works with the preservation of the visual arts: "You can order art reproductions, study each of them for 48 hours, until you engrave in your memory every one of their features. But not so of a musical work!" Following this principle, when he moved into his own home in February 1908 he bought some reproductions from the "Artaria" art shop in Vienna at a cost of 130.50 crowns (about a half of his month's salary) including among others a portrait of Beethoven and the *Mona Lisa*, which he framed and hung on the walls.

He not only purchased pictures of important buildings or statues for himself, but he also sent them to his acquaintances and members of his family, with appropriate notes. Visiting Kolozsvár in November 1908 he was fascinated by János Fadrusz's statue of King Matthias, and he sent a picture of it to Etelka Freund with the remark that it was "Hungary's

finest statue... it towers (over the rest of the works submitted for competition), like—a genuine Hungarian folk-song amidst the Gypsy art songs."

Around 1930, on one of his trips to Germany, he bought me a book on architecture published in Stuttgart entitled *Neue Villen, Haus und Raum,* in view of my studies at the Technological University and my particular interest, and in 1939 sent me a picture of the railway station in Florence with the note "This is the newest and most modern building in Florence."

To the extent that the visual arts appealed to Bartók he also interested the artists.

Certain of his concerts were arranged through contacts such as these. On October 12, 1927 the Bauhaus circle arranged a Bartók evening in Dessau, at which he played his own works and two compositions by Kodály. May 18, 1911 the group of Hungarian artists known as The Eight invited him to their concert at the National Salon, where in addition to Kodály's Sonata for Cello, which he performed with Jenő Kerpely, he introduced his own works entitled Four Dirges and Three Burlesques. He had ever closer contacts with certain members of The Eight; for example, Márk Vedres visited him at his home on the Rákoshegy, and Róbert Berény visited him in Paris. The latter also later did a painting of him.

A number of his artist contemporaries endeavoured to portray Bartók in his lifetime, which is fortunate, because the paintings and statues made of him in his absence, and especially after his death, are generally not very successful. That these portrayals of him were not lifelike is not so very essential, although his personal friends and particularly members of his family frequently find them alien for this reason. A recurring fundamental difficulty is that Bartók's most characteristic features were his piercing eyes and his agility. These by their very nature are either difficult or impossible to portray; and on paintings this is just where many made mistakes by, for example, inexplicably depicting him with blue eyes whereas his eyes were brown.

The most highly prized works are those for which Bartók posed, which must be regarded as the most authentic. Cézár Kunwald (Ernő Dohnányi's brother-in-law) did a series of drawings of leading musicians, including one of my father. Besides an etching and a few plaques (the best being perhaps one by Mrs. Iván Engel, Ilse Kühner, who through her pianist husband knew my father well) I should mention in particular two statues and three paintings.

The first statue was made by Ervin Voit in April 1902 who became a teacher at the School of Applied Arts. Ervin Voit was my father's cousin on his mother's side, and they were practically the same age. In his secondary school days at Nagyvárad my father lived with his family. The boys were in constant contact, Ervin Voit thus knew him not only superficially, but also as a person, and could therefore portray him more authentically. The modelling began early in April and on the 28th my father drew up an account of the cost of the completed statue. The fee for the work was 25 forints (my grandmother paid 15, and my father 10), the pouring of the plaster-of-paris cast cost 7 forints, and six hours of

posing he valued at 5 forints per hour; thus he calculated 10+7+30=47 forints in expenditure.

The other statue was done by Géza Csorba in May 1930. My father sat for it on three or four occasions and the statue was finished by the beginning of June. Géza Csorba himself expressed the opinion that the statue was too objective. This is its fault: "I was unable to express the intensity of Bartók's gaze. But I was confident that some day I would succeed at last." My paternal grandmother's main objection was precisely that the statue was not objective; but other members of the family thought it was good.

The first of the paintings depicted Bartók at a very youthful age. It was done by the painter István Vedrődy-Vogyerátzky at the time of his stay in Vienna in 1905. My father initialled the oil painting on May 21, 1905, and substituted "Bécs"* for "Wien" as its place of origin. He also inscribed on it a few notes of music from his Suite No. 1.—The picture is currently in the possession of the painter's widowed daughter, Mrs. Jenő Kenessey.

Róbert Berény painted the next picture soon after 1910, and a series of photo reproductions of the picture was also made in 1918; one of these was published on the title-page of the Bartók issue of *MA*. The painting itself was taken to the United States for the Chicago Exposition in 1916, but it remained unpacked because of the war, and was uncovered only after a lapse of four decades. It is currently in New York. The third painting was done after the First World War.

Ervin Voit, whose artistic activities were quite varied, also wanted to capture his cousin's likeness on canvas. While the Bartóks were staying in József Lukács's family's villa on Gellért Hill in Budapest from 1920 to 1922, that patron of the arts commissioned Voit to paint the picture. The work, in oil, was begun on January 9, 1921, and was soon fairly successfully completed. József Lukács purchased it, and in September 1923, after my parents' divorce, he presented it to me as a gift.

The idea of painting Bartók's portrait also occurred to other artists, two of whom were important. An exhibition of paintings of József Rippl-Rónai, with whom Bartók had been good friends for some time, opened on October 17, 1915 at the Ernst Museum in Budapest; Zsigmond Móricz, the writer, delivered a lecture at the opening, at which my father was present. Then Rippl-Rónai made a pencil sketch of Bartók on the torn-out title-page of a periodical and inscribed it: "I'm giving you this scrawl, my dear Béla, until I can give you something better." Unfortunately this never materialized. In November 1933, however, István Szőnyi looked my father up and they discussed the painting of a picture. But this was never realized either because of lack of time.

Arts and crafts also had a particular appeal for Bartók. In this respect he was fond first of all of objects of folk art, and he took pains to furnish his environment accordingly. When making up his own home he filled it for the most part with carved or painted peasant fur-

* The Hungarian word for Vienna. *The Ed.*

niture. He had a large proportion of this made by György Péntek Gyugyi, a peasant carpenter in Körösfő (a village in Transylvania), but he also ordered some things made at Marosvásárhely by György Bükkösi, and others. Some of the items of furniture (a desk, a bench-chest, a sideboard) were designed according to his own specific needs with numerous drawers or compartments. Other furnishings in his home were similarly largely of peasant origin: embroidered pillows, homespun cloths, and woollen blankets; and his shelves were decorated with jugs and plates.

He bought numerous folk instruments, household implements and garments (a long embroidered felt shepherd's cloak, embroidered stockings, and similar objects) on his folk-song collecting tours and his trips abroad, and he was always pleased to show them to his visitors.

A BARTÓK BIBLIOGRAPHY 1970–1980

The bibliography below endeavours to cover all literature on Béla Bartók originating between 1970 and 1980. It also provides the historian with some useful material; it indicates the current state of research on Bartók both in Hungary and abroad. During the period under discussion more than one important source document was discovered and a few documents were published for the first time; yet it is striking that an ever-increasing number of articles of a peripheral nature is being published, which deal with themes which do not even touch on the core of the composer's work and the useful data of which will at best be insertable into a more general and comprehensive Bartók portrait in the future. It is unfortunate that hardly any serious critical work on the sources of the composer's music has been undertaken, the reason being the separation of the estate into two parts and its preservation in two places (New York and Budapest), so that the complete chain of sources of any one work is virtually inaccessible. The few publications that have appeared on these lines (facsimile editions, outline analyses, explorations of folk-song sources, interpretation analyses) may for the time being be regarded as rather the antecedents of a future comprehensive source investigation.

Bartók's relations with his contemporaries and his role in 20th century music is the main theme to emerge from the writings. Bartók's folk music research is also well documented: collections of nearly all his important works on folk music have already been published. Gradually the time is approaching when a historical evaluation of the spiritual legacy of Bartók the ethnomusicologist could usefully be undertaken.

The analytical exploration of Bartók's music is another richly documented area of research. Alongside the analyses familiar from an earlier period the number of detailed exploratory works has increased. A specific aspect of the analyses, however, is that their themes are taken from a relatively narrow sphere of Bartók's work; for example, literature on the string quartets continues to increase in scope, whereas other genres are deemed virtually unworthy of the analysts' attention. No academic work covering Bartók's style, musical idiom or technique (either in detail or as a unified whole) was published in the period in question.

One cannot deny the fact that the preparation of a complete critical edition of Bartók's works would give great impetus to Bartók philology—but certain obstacles, by no means only of a musical nature, still stand in the way of such a series. Its appearance will undoubtedly reshape our image of Bartók, just as the publications being prepared for the centenary of Bartók's birth and the acceleration of research work will

certainly have a bearing on my impressions of Bartók literature of the past ten years as I described them above.

This bibliography comprises the books and periodicals published between 1970 and 1980. It does not include articles from the daily press, reviews of books and scores (unless they contain significant corrections of the work under discussion), concert reviews, record sleeves and record reviews. I have not sought to give a complete survey of the theme in question: but I have tried to give an indication of all the important publications indispensable for research.

If, according to the data at my disposal, an English or French edition of a given publication in any language exists, I have always given preference to these over the Hungarian. After the non-English (or German, French) titles I have also given their English translations in square brackets. Sources given in italics refer to periodicals.

ANDRÁS WILHEIM

ABBREVIATIONS

BC International Musicological Conference in Commemoration of Béla Bartók 1971. Ed. József Ujfalussy and János Breuer. Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1972.

BD Bartók-dolgozatok. Szerkesztette László Ferenc. [Bartók Studies. Ed. Ferenc László.] Bukarest: Kriterion, 1974.

BMR Béla Bartók şi muzica românească. Ediţie îngrijită si prefaţată de Francisc László. [Béla Bartók and Rumanian Music. Ed. F. László.] Bucureşti: Editura Muzicală, 1976.

DocB/4 Documenta Bartókiana. Heft 4. Herausgegeben von Denijs Dille. Budapest: Akadémiai, 1970.

DocB/5 Documenta Bartókiana. Heft 5. Neue Folge. Herausgegeben von László Somfai. Budapest: Akadémiai, 1977.

MZT/3 Magyar Zenetörténeti Tanulmányok [3.] Mosonyi Mihály és Bartók Béla emlékére. Szerkesztette Bónis Ferenc [Hungarian Studies in Musicology 3, In Memory of M. Mosonyi and B. Bartók. Ed. F. Bónis.] Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1973.

MZT/4 Magyar Zenetörténeti Tanulmányok [4.] Kodály Zoltán emlékére. Szerkesztette Bónis Ferenc. [Hungarian Studies in Musicology 4, in Memory of Zoltán Kodály. Ed. F. Bónis.] Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1977.

SM Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae. Budapest: Akadémiai, 1961– (yearly)

ZESE Zeneelmélet, stíluselemzés. A Bárdos Lajos 75. születésnapja alkalmából tartott zenetudományi konferencia anyaga. [Music Theory, Style Analysis. Papers Presented at the Conference of Musicologists Held in Celebration of the 75th Birthday of Lajos Bárdos.] Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1977.

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MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING THE RESULTS OF DÉTENTE

by

FRIGYES PUJA

At this as at every session we have to analyse the main trends and facts of the international situation, exploring the underlying causes of both favourable and unfavourable processes, working together for resolutions which will strengthen peace and security and facilitate social progress, in keeping with the Charter of the United Nations. As most of the speakers before me have pointed out, the present situation urges sober deliberation and the encouragement of constructive endeavour.

The people of Hungary welcomed with satisfaction the impressive achievements of the 1970s in the consolidation of international peace and security, the settlement of certain complex international problems, and cooperation among countries with differing social systems.

Today we maintain a firm belief that preserving peace and warding off the danger of a new world war are vital for mankind. The Hungarian government still regards this as its primary task and is doing its utmost to contribute to preserving and improving the achievements of détente.

In the current situation it is of particular importance to maintain and strengthen ties which have been established in recent years among countries with different social systems, doing so on the basis of peaceful coexistence. As far as possibilities permit, bilateral relations should be further developed and all efforts to block that road should be opposed. Paramount importance attaches to ensuring that dialogue between leaders of countries will not cease even for a moment in this time of tension, which we trust will be but transitory. We are convinced that there is no single international issue left unsettled which, given the necessary goodwill, could not be settled by political means.

Address of the Foreign Minister at the 35th General Assembly of the United Nations Organization given on October 9, 1980.

The present situation is characterized by elements of détente and tension, which exist concurrently. Recent years have witnessed sober endeavours followed by various steps which have worsened the international climate. In our view, the principal causes lie in the fact that the leading countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) initiated a new stage in the arms race at their summit conference in Washington as far back as 1978, and made no secret of their intention to obtain military superiority over the Warsaw Treaty member states. To that end they increased the military expenditure of the NATO countries, started a long-term arms build-up programme, including the deployment in Western Europe of new American medium-range nuclear missiles that are strategic in nature, postponed the ratification by the American Senate of the SALT-II agreement and created rapid deployment forces for purposes of intervention—to mention only the most striking instances. If one adds the undeclared wars and acts of political and ideological subversion carried on by imperialist circles to weaken progressive régimes in numerous countries, then there looms ahead a by no means negligible danger to peace and security.

Manœuvres by the extremist circles of imperialism to the detriment of peace are supported and even encouraged by the leaders of China. This is another important element in the present increase in international tension.

Some believe that what the extremist circles of imperialism aim to achieve by increasing the arms build-up and by political steps reminiscent of the cold war is no more than a domestic political manœuvre or something of that sort. Nothing could be further from the truth. If that were so then before long the world would be in a position to breathe a sigh of relief. We believe that the new phase of the arms drive has deeper roots, and those are a desire by extremist circles to exert political pressure on the peoples of other countries, aimed at containing progress and at regaining their lost positions by applying the well-known formulae of the policy of strength. We know that that is futile, but it should nevertheless be condemned for jeopardizing peace and security.

Mankind today feels an ardent desire for and a vital interest in upholding peace, in strengthening security and in expanding cooperation which is radically opposed to the endeavours of the above-mentioned extremist circles. The government of the Hungarian People's Republic, like that of the other countries in the socialist community, is ready to work together with all those governments committed to act in unison and with a sense of responsibility, with the fate of their peoples in front of their eyes, in order to achieve those great aims.

The Hungarian government agrees with the view of disarmament tasks as expressed in the memorandum which the Soviet Union has submitted to this forum, and it fully supports the adoption and implementation of the Soviet proposals, which envisage urgent measures for reducing the danger of war.

The government of the Hungarian People's Republic believes that the continuation and speeding up of disarmament talks, the adoption of effective measures to curb the arms race, and the attainment of equal security at ever lower armaments levels are absolutely necessary.

I wish to reaffirm the Hungarian government's readiness, which is shared by the other member states of the Warsaw Treaty, to negotiate and to assume treaty obligations on the limitation, reduction, and complete destruction of all types of weapons on the basis of equal security and reciprocity. It is on that basis that the socialist countries have taken the initiative in different fields of disarmament.

It is a matter of concern to us that the Geneva Committee on Disarmament has once again, in the current year, failed to make any notable headway. The Committee has spent too much time on organizational and procedural questions. At the opposite pole from the socialist countries who took the initiative to solve disarmament problems, certain Western Powers try to avoid undertaking any firm commitments. There is little hope for progress if some members of the Committee on Disarmament fail to summon up the political will necessary in the quest for solutions for the issues under discussion.

The Hungarian government has repeatedly stated that it attaches great importance to the conclusion and implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We cannot but deplore the failure of the second Review Conference to produce the hoped-for results. We believe it necessary for all members of the United Nations, even without formally adopting a final document, to promote the observance of the provisions of that Treaty, the strengthening of its universal validity and, as a result, the prevention of the spread of nuclear weapons.

There can be no further delay in finding solutions to tasks of common concern, such as the prohibition of the manufacture of chemical weapons and the development of new types of weapons of mass destruction, as well as the prevention of the spread of radiological weapons.

It is our conviction that the entry into force of the SALT-II agreement would be of key importance to the success of the ongoing bilateral and multilateral disarmament talks at Geneva and in other forums. This is a condition also for starting SALT-III talks on considerable reductions in

strategic arms. Furthermore, efforts to press for the implementation of the NATO decision on the deployment in Europe of new medium-range nuclear missiles that have a strategic nature should also be abandoned. The stationing of new American medium-range missiles in some countries of Western Europe would pose a direct threat to the security of Hungary. The Hungarian government fully supports the relevant Soviet proposal submitted to this forum which provides a sound basis for the settlement of this issue, and we trust that the forthcoming Soviet-American talks will be useful and successful.

Progress must also be made in the Vienna talks on the reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe. NATO tactics have made a stalemate inevitable. The socialist countries presented new and positive proposals, but the NATO countries have so far evaded a constructive response to any of them. However, we do not give up hope. The conclusion of a mutually acceptable agreement is a task of increasing urgency.

The Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty, in its declaration of last May, supplemented the earlier proposals made by socialist countries, each and every one of which serves the cause of reducing international tension and promoting peace and security. We deplore the fact that those to whom they are addressed show much less interest in them than they merit, given the importance of the cause they serve.

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The Hungarian People's Republic continues to pay particular attention to the cause of security and cooperation in Europe. It is consistently striving to develop relations with all the countries of the region on the basis of the Helsinki Final Act, and is guided by the spirit thereof in preparing for the Madrid meeting of representatives of the signatory states. In the course of preparatory work for that meeting, Hungarian diplomatic representatives have, through bilateral channels, made several new proposals designed to strengthen confidence and cooperation among the peoples of Europe. We believe that the Madrid meeting should focus attention on questions of common interest. It is inadmissible that certain Western circles should again try to use that forum for a propaganda campaign against the socialist countries, aggravating the situation, even though some evidence of this is already available. The interests of the peoples of the signatory countries to the Final Act of Helsinki would not be served if scope was left in Madrid for unbridled bickering and accusations in connection with

matters that are not within the competence of that Conference. What is needed is a constructive spirit and forward-oriented proposals.

The people and government of the Hungarian People's Republic, in keeping with their national interests, are doing their utmost to ensure the implementation of the proposals made by the Warsaw Treaty countries for the continuation of the process of security and cooperation in Europe. We believe that the chances of a successful outcome of the Madrid meeting would be greatly enhanced if the meeting decided to convene a conference on military détente and disarmament in Europe, and fixed its date and procedure, as well as the agenda for the first phase. Such a decision would make a favourable impact on the atmosphere in all disarmament forums.

The position of the Hungarian government concerning the conflicts and hotbeds of crisis that poison the international climate remains unchanged. In urging action to remove the causes of crises, we reaffirm our solidarity with and support of the peoples in their struggle for progress, national independence, and self-determination, as well as against colonial oppression and neo-colonialist designs. It is in this spirit that we have taken a stand concerning the situation in the southern part of Africa, and on the policy of *apartheid*, on the Western Sahara and Cyprus questions, and on the revolutionary ferment in Latin America. While I do not intend to repeat our position on all questions, I nevertheless think it necessary to state our views on a few issues that have a particular bearing on the world political scene.

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I think it is now sufficiently clear to all that the Camp David accords —the separate deal between Egypt and Israel—have solved nothing and have shown themselves to be a blind alley. The complete withdrawal of Israeli troops from occupied Arab territories is, in our opinion, indispensable for a comprehensive and just settlement of the Middle East problem. The Palestinian people must be allowed to exercise their legitimate rights, including the right to establish a state of their own, and the security of all countries in the region should be guaranteed. We condemn Israel's decision to annex Jerusalem. We support the resolutions of the special session on the question of Palestine and urge full implementation of their provisions.

The victory of the popular forces in Afghanistan in 1978 and later the turn of events in Iran have changed the situation in the Middle East. The extremist circles of imperialism will stop at nothing to regain their lost positions, resorting to means ranging from overt intervention in the

domestic affairs of other countries, through economic boycotts and sanctions, to the supply of arms to counter-revolutionaries scheming abroad against legitimate governments.

The Hungarian government is of the opinion that the key to the Afghan situation is putting a stop to intervention by outside reactionary forces. Acceptance of the proposals made by the Afghan government on May 14 of this year would remove tension whipped up around Afghanistan and would allow the government of that country to carry out a progressive policy that broadly respects the country's history and religious traditions. The Hungarian government finds it unacceptable that, on the pretext of Soviet military assistance ot Afghanistan, the extremist circles of imperialism should be mounting an over-all attack against international détente and co-operation. The accusations against the Soviet Union are simply a screen for long-standing and well-known schemes.

The greatest problem in South-East Asia results from the expansionist and great-power policy of the Chinese government. China's aggression against Vietnam and its threats to "teach it another lesson," as well as subversive acts against neighbouring progressive régimes, including open intervention, have given rise to tension in that region.

The plight of the Kampuchean people is being gradually alleviated, despite intrigues from outside, and the results of efforts to build a new society are already in evidence. The people of Kampuchea, upon whom a terrible tragedy was visited, are rallying more and more firmly behind the People's Revolutionary Council. This has met with favourable response from progressive forces. Recognition and acceptance of the realities, international recognition of the sole legitimate representative of the Kampuchean people and its participation in the work of the United Nations, would contribute greatly to the alleviation of the tense situation. The prestige of our world Organization is impaired while the seat of People's Kampuchea is still occupied by the genocidal Pol Pot clique, which represents nobody.

It was with a view to restoring tranquillity in South-East Asia that thirteen member states, including Hungary, proposed that the item entitled "Question of peace, stability and cooperation in South-East Asia" be placed on the agenda of the 35th Session of the General Assembly.

The latest events in South Korea have again focused attention on the long-outstanding question of Korea. The Hungarian government still holds that all foreign troops should be withdrawn from the Korean peninsula and that the peaceful reunification of the two parts of that country should be encouraged. We support the relevant proposals made by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Twenty years ago, the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples was adopted by the General Assembly. Since then a whole range of countries have been liberated from the colonial yoke as a result of the persevering struggle of the socialist countries, national liberation movements, and other progressive forces. They have taken their place in the community of nations. Zimbabwe and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the newly admitted member states of our world Organization, have now joined them. On behalf of my government I wish to welcome our new member states and I take this opportunity to express satisfaction at this new result in the liquidation of the colonial system, and this new achievement of the struggle for national liberation. We wish those countries every success.

In our opinion, the anniversary of the Declaration imposes an obligation on member states to take joint and still more efficient measures with a view to the final liquidation of the remnants of colonialism and the guaranteeing to all peoples of their right to self-determination.

While indisputable results have been achieved, much remains to be done. Now that the independence of Zimbabwe has been proclaimed, the situation of Namibia becomes even more untenable. We condemn the machinations of South Africa to delay Namibia's accession to independence and to set up a puppet régime subservient to neo-colonialist interests. The Hungarian government demands the granting of independence to Namibia in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity. It recognizes the South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) as the sole legitimate representative of the Namibian people and lends it support in its struggle to attain independence.

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The Hungarian People's Republic has a paramount interest in ensuring that international economic cooperation develops smoothly, facilitating the full use of the advantages offered by the international division of labour for the improvement of the welfare of peoples, and thus improving the peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems.

We deplore the fact that, owing to the negative attitude of a few countries, the 11th Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to questions of the world economy failed to produce results. The restructuring of international economic relations on a democratic and just basis and the removal of obstacles to the development of economic cooperation remain an urgent task that brooks no delay, as required by the interests

of mankind as a whole and by the extremely grave economic situation in some of the developing countries.

During the present session Hungary commemorates the twenty-fifth anniversary of its admission to membership of the United Nations. In the course of the past quarter of a century it has been the constant endeavour of the Hungarian People's Republic to conduct its activities according to the letter and spirit of the Charter and to help the world Organization carry out, as fully as possible, its principal function: maintaining and strengthening peace and security.

It is our view that, on the whole, the United Nations has so far lived up to its mission, but we are convinced that it could be given a greater role still in the solution of international issues. We highly appreciate the work of Dr. Kurt Waldheim, the Secretary-General, in enhancing the effectiveness of our world Organization.

The Hungarian government maintains that the Charter of the United Nations has laid down norms of conduct for states, a set of rules for co-existence among nations, and a procedure against those who violate them which is still valid today. We are convinced that this carefully balanced constitution of the community of nations is not in need of amendment. The role of the United Nations can be enlarged, as desired by the majority of member states, through fuller use of the possibilities inherent in the Charter and through strict observance of its provisions. At the same time, however, the successful solution of the complex international issues confronting us presupposes closer cooperation among member states, mutual respect for the interests of others, understanding one another's problems, and an active search for solutions and arrangements.

I have endeavoured to state concisely my government's position on the current international situation, outlining the pressing tasks facing us, presenting our ideas concerning ways in which these problems might be resolved.

ASPECTS OF STRUCTURAL CHANGE

by

JÓZSEF BOGNÁR

Policies and plans dealing with the structural reform of the Hungarian economy were given the stamp of approval by the perhaps most important resolution of the 12th Congress of the HSWP in the Spring of 1980. The overall conception has matured in recent years through careful analysis of the domestic and external situation, accompanied by analysis plus debate on the economic conditions which define both the opportunities for rational economic action and its limitations. The justification for some of the more radical conclusions outlined in the new conception was strengthened by certain negative experiences acquired in the course of attempts to treat the host of new problems which have presented themselves in the latest phase in the development of the world economy with the old methods, or to deal only with their symptoms. The shock effect of these negative results would seem to have been the only means of forcing the economic leadership to break with concepts and methods which had in the preceding decade been the source of numerous economic successes.

Needless to say this new conception has not yet been transformed into a programme which would solve (from above!) all the dilemmas of development, one which would offer a coherent pattern of action, consistent in all its interconnections and effects. (In any case it may be assumed that the elaboration of any medium-range programme to solve all dilemmas "from above" is neither possible nor rational today; it would tie down too many economic forces on the basis of uncertain hypotheses, and would therefore make adaptation to change more difficult in a period in which the pace of change has accelerated, in which the exact impact of the events which affect us cannot be adequately forecast, though we know their total impact to be greater than ever before.) What the resolution of the Congress does is to outline postulates and behavioural norms for individuals, enterprises,

and the leadership which together form a set of preconditions for the restoration of equilibrium and more favourable adaptation to conditions in the world economy. The resolution emphasized certain fundamental objectives and preferences to which other actions have to be adjusted, to the extent that economic conditions make this possible. The methods and components of the new economic approach and analysis, which underly the value judgements embodied in the new conception and complement or replace older principles, were considered useful and forward-looking by the Party Resolution. Finally it was declared and emphasized that the rational system of action espoused by this conception, originating in an objective analysis of existing economic conditions, are a further step forward in the organic development of socialist society and economy, both theoretically and in practice.

It is well-known that the formulation of these new economic policies was necessitated by various developments and requirements; they appeared simultaneously, some of their effects tended to pull in the same direction, others were contradictory. Let me mention three of the impulses I have in mind.

The change-over to intensive development

1. The change to an intensive mode of economic development has become inevitable. A change-over of this nature may be initiated at a point in time when the extensive type is still functioning relatively satisfactorily but careful and thorough scientific analysis indicates that it has already passed its peak. From an economic aspect this point in time is the most favourable at which to introduce changes gradually, but the problem is that the main body of economic opinion is not yet convinced of the inevitability of change, and consequently it resists changes or applies the brakes. The change-over might have proceeded along these lines in Hungary if the national economy had evolved into its present "reform period" through gradual and organic extensions of the new economic mechanism introduced in 1968.

To resist change now, in the present situation would lead to economic collapse since due to the prolongation of extensive-type growth imbalances have occurred which this type of growth is unable to rectify; indeed they are reproduced on an increasing scale. The driving forces behind intensive-type growth are different and the dynamics of society and of the economy must be reorganized in such a way as to enable these driving forces to assert themselves. Satisfying demand, replacing the former economy of shortages,

is one such driving force; the technical progress bound up with structural change, rationalization, innovation, and the foreign trade balance are others. Experience emphatically confirms that the satisfaction of demand is not merely a quantitative and qualitative problem; it poses an organizational problem for economic policy, since the vertical profile of enterprises in the production sector is excessively narrow, whilst in the services sector many types of plant and activities are entirely lacking. This situation came into being because in Hungary economic organizations were built exclusively "downwards" according to criteria pertaining to production, and never "upwards," from demand as expressed on the market and through sales. The technical progress linked to structural change and rapid replacement of products not only demands transformation of the "product pattern." It assumes essential socio-political changes as well. As for the external economic factor, it has to be pointed out that nowadays this plays a growth-promoting role in every economy, on both the import and the export side. The Hungarian economy was not adequately prepared for this role organizationally. Recent fundamental changes in the world economy have increased the interdependence of economies to an extraordinary degree and brought similar pressures to bear on them all. It has become necessary to develop in the Hungarian economy capabilities and qualities of which only the "competitive economies" had disposed hitherto.* Naturally this development has had very broad political and social consequences, some of which will be discussed below.

It is beyond doubt, however, that in the course of socialist economic development the notion of the inevitability of competition has gained ground in connection with supplies of consumer goods, and is even held to be positive in nature.

Furthermore the increased importance of the foreign trade factor raises the necessity of ensuring for Hungarian economic enterprises active on the world market the conditions and support which will enable them to compete successfully with enterprises backed by the flexible mechanisms of the capitalist economy.

* By placing "competitive economies" in inverted commas it is implied that socialist economics, as in the past, rejects the notion of competition as some kind of automatic mechanism in the economy which discriminates among economic units for the public good. Such an interpretation of competition or of the competitive economy has changed in capitalist economies too since the second half of the 19th century, with counterpoles to free competition (co-operatives, associations, trade unions, etc.) being established, along with economic organizations which aim to eliminate competition.

The impact of a new era in world economy

2. The opening of a new era in the world economy represents at present and in the foreseeable future the second focus of effects. The expression 'a new era in the world economy' is to be interpreted as the sum of all those economic and non-economic (demographic, social, political, scientific, international, etc.) changes of fundamental epochal importance which will exercise a decisive influence over the existential conditions of mankind in coming decades. In the first place reference has to be made to such fundamental and longterm factors as trends in world population (rising to over 6 billion by 2,000), the new relationship between man and nature (symbiosis on up-to-date scientific and technical foundation), limitations in natural resources and their unequal distribution in an interdependent and delicately balanced world, world food problems approaching crisis, technological dangers (mankind has come into possession of techniques by which it can annihilate the preconditions of its own existence), the armaments race (in the guise of "mutual deterrence"), the low level of development of international political and economic conditions, given the global scale of the problems and the facts of interdependence, etc. It may be claimed without exaggeration that already in the decade which is behind us mankind was forced to choose between extreme alternatives: the era of compromises was over.

These huge changes are not purely economic in character. They have their effects over the entire domain of social and international relation. In consequence they represent a new scientific challenge and gradually they give rise to new ways of thinking which are necessary because our old knowledge and methods are inadequate for understanding new conditions.

Some of the components and symptoms of these vast, epoch-making changes are already visible in economic relations today. Suffice it to consider price explosions amounting to a price revolution and inflation as lasting phenomena which have presented themselves in new forms; not to mention grave disequilibria, a reduction in the growth rate, shortages in energy resources, the increasingly anarchic behaviour of the international monetary system and dangers to international economic relations like that posed by the U.S. embargo.

For Hungary the deep, long-term effects of these epochal changes in the world economy imply also that in the course of changing over to an intensive type of growth only such objectives or system of objectives may be formulated as are in harmony with the requirements of the new era; and in

the course of actions aiming at achieving these objectives the only methods and techniques which can be considered are those which do not run counter to this array of criteria.

The problems of disequilibrium

3. Economic imbalance is the third cluster of factors I wish to mention. Several factors have contributed to this imbalance, amongst them the following:

—the fact that in the course of the economic cycle we create a higher demand than we have the conditions or means to satisfy.

—overestimation of the potentialities of the state budget.

—the rapid growth of import requirements in the course of the change-over to intensive-type growth.

—unfavourable development of the terms of trade.

—undue shortcomings in capacity where there is a potential for economical exporting.

The termination of imbalance or disequilibrium has a special mechanism of its own. In the beginning the necessary action has rather a restrictive nature, because the elimination of the deeper causes of imbalance demands more time and more complex action. The inevitable restrictions must therefore be carried out with great circumspection and with a sound assessment of the consequences; a failure to do so may cause provisional measures to impede the development of those energies, capabilities and capacities through which equilibrium can be ensured in the longer term.

If we ponder on the one hand the great seriousness of the internal and external interests which lie behind the functioning of Hungarian society and its economy, and on the other, the elemental force, the intensity and the durability of all these impinging effects, then it becomes obvious that the tasks involved in the structural regrouping of the economy are great and complex. We are concerned not with a simple change-over, or the elimination of transitory exigencies, but with a radical transformation of the whole modus operandi, action and guidance of the economy and one which will render it capable of flexible adaptation to later change. Changes are to be expected, their pace is likely to accelerate, but their precise nature will remain unpredictable. It is, however, obvious that conversion of the system of operation, action and guidance of the socialist economy to facilitate adaptability is itself not merely an economic question but also a problem involving social, political and cultural factors, together with science and ideology.

Present reorientations in relation to the reform of 1968

It may be especially instructive to compare the substantial problems entailed by the scale of actions presently necessary to implement the new conception, of political economy, their breadth and their depth, with the factors set in motion in the course of the reform of 1968*. Looking at the matter from the point of view of economic history, that reform was of outstanding importance in the history of socialist economy in Hungary.

The reform of 1968 gave full recognition to the importance of economic relations, rejecting approaches which projected back from visionary images of the future. (Let it be mentioned in parantheses that in doing so it rehabilitated the true subject of economic science: the analysis of existing economic relations and their interconnections. Thanks to this Hungarian economic science has achieved notable results and international recognition since 1968; it has pioneered new methods and promoted the development of new schools of thought.) One of the points of departure was the replacement of a hierarchic system of individual, group and societal (public) interest by a system within which the various layers presupposed and complemented each other thereby making it possible, given appropriate economic conditions, for individual group interests to constitute a driving force to realize the pu blic interest or common weal. It was an essential endeavour of the reform to eliminate the economy of shortages and to satisfy needs more fully through competition and material incentives. The scope of measures taken in the interest of enterprise autonomy deserves emphasis, for it was only in this new framework that enterprises became genuine economic units and ceased to be outposts of ministries.

It is not our present purpose to continue a lengthy enumeration of the achievements of the reform of 1968. It is, however, a fact that the reform of 1968 concentrated intentionally on the problems of the economic mechanism (the system of guidance) and touched only indirectly on questions of economic policy and of institutions. The reasons for this were mainly political. Later this "one-sidedness" of the reform was criticized by observers who argued that it would have been better to introduce a fuller reform (embracing economic policy and the institutional system as well. I have no wish to take issue with these critics; the fact that the introduction of a more complete reform would have been better in an ideal situation does not mean that such a reform was either possible or even the most rational in the circumstances which then prevailed. It is useful to remember that after

* On the reform see *NHQ* 20, 21, 25, 32, 34, 42, 44, 50, 62, 70.

1968 scientific endeavours to broaden the scope of the economic reform were everywhere pigeon-holed for some years!).

It is essential now that, in comparison with 1968, the breadth and depth of action of the present economic strategies should be substantially greater, since the anticipated changes extend to economic policy (including foreign-trade policy) and the institutional system. Entering an intensive period of growth in itself implies changes in economic policy, but the quantity, intensity and quality of the economic policy called for are also vitally affected by the requirements of the new era in world economy. The foreign-trade aspects of the new concept of economic policy (the adoption of which is made a matter of urgency by new conditions in world economy e.g., the extent of interdependence) have the effect of making the efficiency, foresight, flexibility, speed of decision-making and reaction, etc., of the institutional system an integral function of economic competition on the world market. This question will be discussed in more detail below, but it is already obvious that in such conditions reform of the institutional system cannot be postponed.

The comparison between the economic reform of 1968 and the present policy conceptions as expressed in the fundamental principles recently adopted, may be concluded with reference to one further very important difference. The "degree of freedom" of the reform of 1968 was much higher, because there were fewer constraints. The economy was relatively balanced (although this equilibrium had been established on a substantially lower level), Hungary had scarcely any foreign debts at that time, her external economic dependence was lower, her supplies of energy and raw materials still seemed assured and the world economy was still enjoying its latter-day "golden age". Today the policy conceptions formulated in the new guiding principles are the only rational choice facing the country, and only within this overall conception can one speak of genuine alternatives.

Transforming postulates and guiding principles into action

The principal task facing the leaders of socialist society is to transform various postulates, guiding principles and endeavours with a full awareness of objective socio-economic relations and foreseable tendencies and taking due account of all the interests and structures involved into a comprehensive system of societal movements which will finally lead to the achievement of the desired goals.

However, in the course of outlining socio-economic movements one must always reckon with the circumstances that social relations are not always coincidental with the desirable economic relations. The reverse also holds, and from a social or political or security or cultural or ideological point of view one might prefer another set of economic relations and conditions. However, when programmes for action are being elaborated, full knowledge of the socio-economic relations actually prevailing is indispensable, but this analysis must be undertaken dynamically and not statically: all socio-economic systems which may change more vigorously, but they also have more static, more conservative and more rigid elements. All the facts which can be deduced from real conditions must naturally be taken into consideration when a programme for action is being put together.

Is contemporary socialist economic science able to transform various, scientifically established postulates and endeavours into a system of societal movements which takes due account of complex interest relations, and structures? Economics is charged with building up an adequate system of knowledge of economic reality, economic relations and their interconnections. Obviously these relations and circumstances are themselves changing, and hence their nature, their effect and the system of interconnections are also being transformed. The data increase, the methods of investigation practised by the discipline become more refined (within the walls of scientific institutions) and changes also occur in the rest of the world. However, these changes do not modify the fact that the primary objective of economic science has been and remains the perception of the economic relations in the dynamic sense.

This body of knowledge, like the corpus of knowledge built up in other branches of science—is abstract, (to be more exact it is of an abstracting nature); it sets out from the assumption that economic relations and processes are influenced by economic factors alone.*

Viewed practically, these assumptions, however abstract, are extremely important; the implication is that economic relations can be changed only via methods which are in harmony with these relations. Now, in the case of political systems which pride themselves on their commitment to action, optimism and a strong system of values, this finding is of special importance. Such systems are often inclined to "transform" dynamically-interpreted economic relations by administrative methods (governmental interference). These usually lead to very grave economic situations, and place undue

* In principle the foundations of political economy deny such a narrow view and presuppose a thorough analysis of political, social and cultural factors, etc. But in practice it is hard to find works of economic science in recent decades which analyse the economic situation dynamically in conjunction with politics, the potentialities of existing social structures and public opinion.

constraints upon policy-makers. This is no new phenomenon historically, since the development of the modern economy was preceded by centuries during which economic relations had not even a relative autonomy. Early economic theories (cameralism, mercantilism) considered state intervention by non-economic methods (administrative, governmental) to be necessary and rational. Classical economic science was born of the intellectual struggle against these views; it was a new science which located in the internal dynamics of the economy the self-regulating forces which would enable the common weal to assert itself.

Our view is that in addition to an adequate knowledge of economic relations intervention and guidance are also necessary. If intervention and guidance are to succeed then an adequate knowledge of economic conditions alone is not sufficient, since in real economic processes and phenomena economic and non-economic factors are inextricably intermixed. Economic phenomena do not occur in their pristine form, they have other qualities and effects and they are receptive to other influences. Consequently, contemporary economic science (and to an even greater extent the economic science of the future) has to adopt multidisciplinary methods; otherwise intervention and attempts to influence the economy will miscarry.

Mingling in the world of economic phenomena one finds factors which have concepts of their own (state-societal-security-cultural and ideological), together with their own value relations and institutional centres within the structure. These concepts, values and institutional relations may either enhance or slow down implementation of the concepts of economic policy. Therefore it is the task of the interdisciplinary approach to resolve whether the characteristic movements and attitudes of the institutions and activities bearing most closely upon the economic concepts in question will either conduce to or obstruct the realization of economic objectives.

It is now necessary to explore more exactly and practically how it is possible to act upon these various factors, institutions and value systems in such a way that they should

—assist and complement each other constructively,

—broach similar tasks in a more harmonized and co-operative way (e.g., the problem of intensive development creates a new situation and new requirements in many spheres, not only in the economy),

—co-ordinate reciprocal measures both in time and substance,

—moderate and stifle any conflicts.

These requirements demonstrate that it is not sufficient for economic science to become multidisciplinary: it is also necessary for other branches of science (law, political science, sociology, security policy, pedagogy,

educational policy, ideology, and science policy) to discover where the points of contact with the economy lie. It is necessary to strive to ensure that the different branches of science and diverse institutions concentrate their action on the achievement of the principal social objective or system of objectives through joint and well co-ordinated research, through the reconciliation of concepts, fruitful arguments and lasting agreements.

The remaining part of this article will illustrate with examples some of the conflicts which may well emerge in the wake of the economic policy conceptions adopted by the resolution of the 12th Congress of the HSWP, as well as the changes called for in the course of transforming these postulates and guiding principles into societal movements. I must stress, however, that the clashes and conflicts are no more than potential and they can be moderated and mitigated by rational action on the part of the interested parties. Conflicts between concepts are usually camouflaged in the structure as things are constructed in Hungary, because social agents follow their habitual logic and the reflexes of their institutional system without anybody taking exception to this or attaching any blame to them for so doing. As far as the essence of the matter is concerned conflict may well arise when the habitual action of one of the agents has been rendered obsolete by new development.

Clashes and conflicts during the process of transformation

The discovery of a conflict is all the more difficult because habitual action is considered by most people to be conflict-free, although this implies a value judgement which cannot be divorced from the situation and the point in time at which it is made.

A) Conflict between theoretical or ideological aspirations and the goals of economic policy.

At the time of the socialist transformation ideology represented one form in which political struggle was waged against adversaries both at home and abroad. After socialist society and its structures have been solidly established ideology may also become a form of perceiving and analyzing reality and a stimulant to society to the recognition of new problems and up-to-date solutions. This latter possibility has not materialized in Hungary and various reasons specific to development here may be put forward to explain why. Ideologists and other theoreticians were inclined to formulate their picture of the present not on the basis of an analysis of concrete conditions but by artificial projections back into the present of various elements of their

visionary image of the future. Therefore it was obvious that the rejuvenation of socialist economic science after 1953 had to be achieved without them, and in the face of their tacit or vociferous resistance. Later an atmosphere of antagonism and mutual distrust developed between economists who wanted to analyse economic conditions in all their concreteness and ideologists who reconstructed the present on the basis of their grand schemes for the future. This led some theoreticians to recognize only those changes which had already occurred as ideologically "legitimate". The situation was aggravated by the circumstances that non-economists (political, security, cultural and local-government specialists) all obtained their economic education from this stratum.

The opposition between economists who set out from the analysis of economic relations and the practitioners of high theory tends to prevent, or at least delay the introduction of economic reforms for which the time is ripe. It is obvious that in a competitive economy we cannot permit ourselves the luxury of introducing a reform only when the partial failure of rigid, conservative solutions has already set shock waves in motion. The necessity for sudden reforms (which experience shows must be introduced whenever of-the-mill solutions contrary to the economic conditions have become bankrupt) is not our main concern. We harbour primarily the fears that the socialist economy will lose ground because of conflicts within the structure at a time when competition regroups national economies in a critical situation and when the pace of change has accelerated to an extent where the loss of only a few years may have fatal consequences.

B) The main clashes and problems here, both internal to and external to the economy, arise from the entry of the Hungarian economy (together with the other European socialist CMEA economies) into the world economy. It is the aspect of exports which interests us at present; on the import front Hungary joined the world economy in the sixties and we have discussed the process in earlier studies.

Adaptation to the world economy on the export front is in itself a difficult economic and social problem; it necessitates the provision of new energies and resources and the development of new abilities. Nowadays this integration has to be achieved in the involved, contradictory and uncertain conditions of the new era which has opened in world economy. Adaptation to new economic conditions is difficult even for technically and scientifically advanced economies which dispose of large resources and reserves, and which are not merely integrated components of the world economy but components which exercise considerable influence over its processes and its markets.

Also to be reckoned with is the slowdown in the dynamism of economic growth, which in turn causes foreign trade and import growth to exhibit slower growth. Consequently competition for markets becomes extremely acute, and in this process the Hungarian economy is threatened by two kinds of strategical danger. If technical progress and the transformation of the scale of requirements of the capitalist countries proceed more rapidly than changes and modernization of the Hungarian export structure, then stagnation or even decline in the profitability of exports will ensue. Such a situation would, of course, result in a deterioration of the terms of trade. The prices of fuels and raw materials continue to rise, amidst cyclical fluctuations and transitory reductions due to over-speculation, and the exports of the most advanced technologies become more and more expensive since they are used to counteract the advantages other economies derive from their natural endowments. The second danger facing the Hungarian economy is the rapid and powerful progress of the developing countries on the world market, especially in exports of finished products. This process is economically justified, even if it is being realized amidst great extremes. It is possible (or at least it is possible to imagine) that this ground be gained in part at the expense of the socialist countries. Objective preconditions for such a pattern exist: the labour force in the developing countries stepping up their exports of industrial goods adapts extremely quickly to new techniques, raw materials are available or more easily accessible in such countries, and costs (due to low wages) are lower; they also enjoy numerous trade preferences on the markets of the developed capitalist countries.

Of course an intelligent and active trade policy might turn potential competitors into constructive partners; it is, however, questionable how the Hungarian economy can find forms of organization and co-operation which provide adequate benefits for both parties (benefits outweighing the advantages of other possible strategies), and which at the same time would assure adequate protection against the consequences of transitory political tension and cyclical changes.

Competition on the world market

Competition on the world market covers many kinds of interconnections, including the following:

a) timely predictions and prognostications of demands, situations and opportunities, and the decisions which convert predictions into socio-economic action;

b) technical standards, quality, prices, assortment, basic inputs, the abilities and experience of the labour force, adaptation to special requirements of the customer, terms of delivery, reliability (or reputation for reliability), replacements, after-sales follow-up and other services;

c) marketing innovations; (It is surely superfluous to emphasize that innovations are relevant here too, that marketing methods too may be up-to-date or they may be backward, and they have a powerful impact on production).

If competition on the world market involves so many factors and interconnections, and if the development of the Hungarian economy depends to such an extent on these factors, it is obvious that real competition is taking place not only between particular goods and services, prices and qualities, novel features, adaptation to the requirements of the user or customer etc.; competition is also embracing the national economies, the dynamic capabilities of which are reflected in all the goods and services in question. This interconnection in socialist conditions is open and direct, while in capitalist countries it is more indirect. The differences and divergencies will not absorb us in this study as they do not affect its substance and conclusions.

In speaking of the national economy we do not refer primarily to a stock of goods accumulated over the course of time but rather to dynamic capabilities the standard of which is reflected in goods and services appearing on the world market. The phrase, dynamic capabilities is used deliberately: we attribute great importance to the tasks set by situations and the requirements of the day, but it is obvious that there must be a correlation between the tasks and the capabilities. The dynamic capabilities of national economies originate from a broad hinterland; they include those components, interrelations and interactions of social-political and cultural spheres, and also ideological capabilities, which are related to the economy.

Apart from the importance of interconnections and interactions it must also be emphasized that these factors originating in other spheres have of course other functions, situations and effects which are independent of the economy; and the same holds the other way around, for "purely" economic components also play an important role in the development of the capabilities of the national economies. However, interconnections and interactions do not confine themselves to cases where the resources in question (social-political, cultural and ideological) are explicitly set in motion by economic questions; they exist and they apply at other times and in indirect situations when demands are being made of these resources in connection with their own prime functions. It is obvious that the objectives, the means

and structures developed in the course of realizing these prime functions also exercise their influence over the social adjustment of the economy. Social activity is plainly a substantially broader and more complex notion to handle than that of the economy, since society has functions, dynamics and ambitions which transcend the economic. It is, however, obvious in the interconnections and interactions of social activities that the fundamental principles and structures adopted by society in the form of its political system, and the way in which these actually work, vigorously determine the situation and role of the economy within society. The educational system and manpower training exercise a very great influence on the capabilities and skill of the labour force, the system of guidance and decision-making determines the framework and the scope of economic trends, the priorities and standards of scientific research influence the capacity of the economy to innovate. It is obvious that the standards and scope of the informational systems influence all potential perceptions concerning the evolution of world economic processes in the foreseeable future. The external economic opportunities of the state in question are considerably influenced by its room to manoeuvre in foreign policy and by its place in the international political system.

Even these brief and incomplete examples of interconnections suffice to confirm that national economies do not participate in competition on the world market in an abstract sense or solely on the basis of economic capacities and processes in a narrow sense. Through their effects and reciprocal effects on economies all of those socio-political, cultural and ideological factors and institutions come to play their part in international competition. This finding needs to be complemented by the observation that behind the competitors on the world market power relations and developmental levels are very diverse. It is obvious that a small country with relatively limited economic resources and a low market share is not able to influence conditions on the world market or relations of supply and demand; it is not able to ensure the advantageous conditions (e.g., credits) which would enable it to prevail against competitors in new markets, etc.; moreover enterprises or economies for that matter on a mediocre level technically are (from a purely economic point of view) at a disadvantage compared to competitors diposing of greater economic and technological power. The former must make up for these disadvantages in activities which do not rely exclusively on economic advantage and economic action (basically aimed at ensuring greater flexibility for the economy), but on such factors as early terms of delivery (a function of the capacity available and the speed of enterprise decision-making), higher training and ability of the labour force (a function of the

educational system), better innovative capacities (a function of the efficiency of scientific research), and better information (a function of the general flow of information in society). It is plain enough from what has been said that the non-economic components of competition play an even greater role in ensuring the competitiveness than in the case of countries and enterprises which can wield real economic power.

Factors prejudicial to competitiveness

Certain aspects of the functioning of the Hungarian economy and the social conditions determining it considerably reduce its competitiveness on the world market.

a) The organizational structure of the Hungarian economy was developed in a period when there was a lack of requisite experience. Hungarian economists were still unsure of their footing in socialist economic conditions, and consequently projections back from visionary images of how the economy was to look in the future still played a decisive role in the shaping of organizational forms. The projections were accompanied by an underestimation of the commodity relations, monetary and market relations, and by a rigidly schematic interpretation of the role of production. Consequently the economic organizations established were centred on production. They were blind to the possibility of setting out from demand and market opportunities (sales), and to the principles of economic organization which would have corresponded to this approach; they were organized horizontally and not vertically. But recent decades have witnessed a revolution in the principles and practice of economic organization, accelerated by the appearance of the computer. Hence one of the decisive conditions for ensuring and improving the competitiveness of the Hungarian economy is the development of organizational forms which are in harmony with modern organizational principles, techniques and marketing methods.

b) The excessive (well-nigh total) tying down of production capacities at the beginning of the economic period (medium- or short-term). This phenomenon is connected in part with the psychosis of the economy of shortages and partly with the unduly schematic and false interpretation of planning and economic security. Shortages lead to the seemingly logical conclusion that all capacity must be utilized, since otherwise the shortages cannot be eliminated. This reasoning is only acceptable if shortages coincide with overtaxed capacity, but it is obvious that in Hungary many shortages are due to the fact that the country is basically lacking in economic-organiza-

tional units, at any rate in forms which would be capable of satisfying the broad scale of demands for goods and services which have made themselves felt on the market. It must be borne in mind that full utilization of production capacity renders the economy inflexible and insensitive to change, and moreover it applies not only to factories assembling end-products but also to the entire vertical agglomeration, including semi-finished products, components and parts.

It is obvious that the foreign trade operators of an economy with such an inflexible production background will be incapable of satisfying world market demand in a flexible manner (vying with competitors in terms of delivery and other relevant conditions).

c) Owing to the role played by governmental guidance the decision-making system of the Hungarian economy is slow (both the making of decisions and their implementation). It is also remote from real economic processes (decisions are made at a rarefied level), too many decisions are duplicated and self-repeating and they scatter responsibility so wide as to obliterate it, not only concerning individuals but also the institutions behind them. Once the plan period has begun the organs making the decisions have neither resources (credits and capacity) nor labour power available. Decisions are economic only as far as objectives are concerned, for in respect of motives it has to be admitted that decision-making organizations do not act under the pressure of the economic relations. They have no financial interest, they cannot make a profit, they do not run risks; the best that one can hope for is that they take a moral interest in the consequences. It is obvious that such a decision-making system is of no help, much more a burden to economic enterprises which have to compete on the world market. Consequently it must be revised, with external economic requirements and conditions in mind.

d) The political and ideological requirements surrounding and influencing the economy and the expectations of public opinion have not always ensured the economy the elbow-room necessary for rational action. In the course of Hungarian economic evolution hitherto rational action based on economic relations (in the dynamic sense of course), could not always be harmonized with various political and ideological requirements and social expectations. Once again these were derived from idealistic images of the future and not from an analysis of the economic relations and possibilities. These requirements and expectations represented barriers, prohibitions and constraints upon economic action. The development of the economy was frequently marked by steps which were precipitate from an economic point of view, or which exceeded the realistic possibilities, leading to shortages, imbalances

and failure to realise potential profit or advantage. The latter was common where excessively cautious economic managers, fearing an unfavourable political evaluation (temporary or local) failed to make the decisions which might have brought them and their enterprises large profits.

It is in the very nature of things that there are and will continue to be "politically delicate zones" where economic action must proceed more cautiously. It would, however, be mistaken to assume that, wherever political and economic interests clash or appear to clash in an advanced and stable society, the latter must always automatically cede. It must be understood that in a consolidated society successful political endeavours must have their underpinnings and support in the economy. In a situation where the functioning of the economy is unsatisfactory and imbalances arise the needs of the population and of the economic cycle cannot be satisfied; this may lead to grave political complications.

Nowadays ways of thinking and opinions on the relationship between politics and the economy are more realistic than they once were. Yet it is still worth reflecting on the politically delicate zones which will face the economic policy-makers in the future, in the next few decades, and it is desirable that scientific research should help us to foresee and clarify these problems and situations.

Non-economic parameters of economic development

It is necessary to reappraise the opportunities and limitations inherent in the nature and dynamics of non-economic factors if these are to have the desired effects on the economy. A reappraisal becomes a burning necessity in a period in which economic questions have become so involved and contradictory, in which the world economy has entered a new phase, and economic interdependence has come to surpass all previous experience. First among these factors let us discuss questions connected with state guidance of the economy.

The abolition of the system of direct plan targets represented a positive turn in the legal framework surrounding the economy for it was inevitable in the circumstances that in the previous system the "compulsive" facet of the law was dominant. The more complex and advanced relations which have been established more recently have allowed other, more progressive facets and functions of the law to come to the forefront so far as questions to do with the economy are concerned. However, enterprise guidance is realized to a considerable extent through forms of governmental administra-

tion, by statute. It is a peculiarity of the situation that in contrast to many other socialist countries Hungary has no intermediate organs of guidance. At first glance such intermediate organs may seem economically attractive, since they permit economic processes to be regulated by economic organs. From the legal aspect such a pattern is "decentralized," but if one digs deeper into these interconnections one finds that these intermediate organs come to embody a substantial bureaucratic-monopolistic economic power. Consequently they endanger not only enterprise autonomy but also rapid and smooth satisfaction of demands, adaptation to changing conditions, flexibility, and swiftness of decision-making. Moreover they are not built "upwards" from the economy, but rather they grow "downwards" from governmental administration.

It is beyond doubt that a number of objective problems are raised if the state itself is to guide accelerated economic development and a model oriented towards exports and the world market. In the present situation and in the decades ahead it is realistic to assume that

a) the economy nowadays is the source not only of many opportunities but also of many dangers, both domestically and externally;

b) in this situation no essential questions can be solved via the old approaches;

c) the system of guidance, management and decision-making must be kept in tune with the nature, situation and competitiveness of the economy.

Setting out from these postulates let us reexamine the relationship between state guidance and the economy scientifically, making use of interdisciplinary methods. One of the first problems to arise is whether and how it is possible to separate the political and economic components of state power in such a way that the system of decision-making and guidance should be able to adjust to the nature of the economy without jeopardizing the unity of the state and of state power.

The tasks of education and training

It is generally accepted that labour and capital may be rationally substitutes for each other in certain fields and tasks. Foreign studies have shown that there is a lose correlation between productivity and intelligence. It is obvious that in countries which are short of capital and of raw materials the most highly qualified elements of the labour force may have a special role to play in the changing of the structure, in technical development and in domestic

adaptation to the international economic conditions. It should also be mentioned that the mechanization and improved functioning of certain types of intellectual work, an appreciation of the complexity of interconnections in the world economy and a perception of the ways in which diverse spheres interrelate all tend to impose new demands on human labour, not only quantitatively but qualitatively as well.

From the aspect of the economy and the needs of society a comprehensive revision of the Hungarian system of education and manpower training is overdue if these criteria are to be made operative. The socio-economic functions of education may be interpreted in different ways. Some emphasize that a degree (the certificate itself) is proof that some specialized knowledge has been acquired, entitling one to fill senior positions. Others—in socialist countries this view is rare—consider education and training to be instruments in a general process of selection and sifting: they perform such a function even if selection is not rigorously tied to high-standard, specified requirements. In our opinion the most advanced and socially the most useful view is that according to which the principal task of education is the development of capacities and abilities which enable individuals to behave and live rationally in an age of accelerated progress and increasingly involved political and economic conditions. The maximal development of capacities and abilities represents the only humane and rational option in conditions of accelerated progress in which knowledge becomes rapidly obsolete, social mobility is very high and generational change is accompanied by considerable tension. It will enable a highly qualified labour force to reinvigorate itself and its successors too in ways of thinking and basic attitudes over the four decades of the intellectual's career. This has the further implication that premature choice of career (at the age of 14) is not in the interests of society, and within the educational system the channels leading from one sub-system to the next must be reappraised and swept clean.

Special attention must be paid to the free unfolding of all talents *(cf. la société ouverte aux talents)*. Socialist society and the socialist economy need as many creative individuals as possible, people who can think independently and grasp the conditions that surround them, who can catch up on the lag they inherited and in so doing adjust to all the major changes of history, world politics and the advanced form of the world economy.

Of course in a socialist society and educational system the nurturing of talents cannot be the exclusive goal. Equal opportunities must be assured, but for humanitarian and other reasons to do with human needs—in accordance with the nature of the system—protection and assistance must be granted to the weak. Nonetheless an atmosphere which has been rendered

more stimulative by the talented may also assist the less gifted to rise to higher levels.

From the aspect of the economy it must be emphasized that without creative and enterprising experts who are willing to take risks and to think constructively competitive success will never be forthcoming.

A new place for science

Where economic and social structures have been reformed and needs express themselves in new ways, the functions of science must also be subjected to scrutiny. The role of science is no longer merely one of pushing back the frontiers or knowledge, explaining and interpreting existing situations or the ensuring that varying theories cohere. Science is now charged with preparing systems of action to serve the interests of society, a function which was not so crucial in the past, when intelligent actions of a routine character may still have been perfectly acceptable. We are now facing a period in which phenomena and interconnections must be approached in a creative spirit, components and effects are quite different today. The preparation of a programme or systems of action,—as noted above in the discussion of economic science—demands the development if interdisciplinary methods, not only among the various disciplines of the social sciences but also between the social sciences and the natural sciences. In the solution of socio-economic questions a whole range of problems and their effects must always be taken into consideration, from symbiosis with nature through the geological location of raw materials to the increasing application of technology. The application of scientific-technical achievements raises a great many additional socio-economic problems, affecting not only those sectors of industry directly concerned with the application but also extending to the fundamental operational conditions and order of values of society and of the economy.

Taking into consideration the further circumstance that one has above all to stand one's mettle in competition on the world market, and that the conditions of standing one's ground depend in the first instance upon science, one reaches the conclusion that science must take on a major informative, innovative and creative role in the decades ahead.

Science has to be informed directly and indirectly of social requirements, it has to assist in planning programmes to improve the situation. It must also be pointed out that thousands and tens of thousands participate in every programme, and consequently new channels must be devised for the

communication of knowledge: otherwise a gap will appear between science and public opinion, a gap which would be intolerable in a democratic society.

It must also be pointed out that the findings and conclusions of the social sciences serve the interests of the whole of society but even in socialist society they often clash with existing bodies, rigid structures, and well-entrenched vested interests, all of which defend themselves through a combination of ideological methods and sheer power. This circumstance bedevils the social scientist constantly. Ever since the industrial revolution the discoveries of the natural sciences have been considered to be of prime importance by all, including the authorities themselves. This was also partly due to the fact that the social effects of the various scientific-technical discoveries were either not yet realised else they were felt to be remote in time.

Consequently it is vital that everything possible be done to ensure freedom of research in the social sciences, for otherwise every new factor which appears will cause a delay of 5–10 years and this is simply impermissible in international and economic circumstances of today.

On the other hand society and the political leadership must be clear about what it is they expect from science. The dialectic of socio-economic evolution proves that it is not possible to ensure a society that is somehow "free of problems." The very resolving of problems creates fresh ones. The greater our knowledge the greater our awareness of new interconnections with the result that our action becomes more complicated. Growing knowledge is accompanied by increasing uncertainty. Progress has dangers and risks, and this immensely complicated situation demands ever greater responsibility and cooperation on the part of scientists.

It can be seen that the realization of the postulates and guidelines of economic policy as outlined by the 12th Congress of the HSWP demands huge and concerted efforts from scientific research, from the economy, and from the institutions which influence the situation and trends of the economy. The problems facing us are those of a mature socialist society seeming to attain a higher level of development by taking into consideration all the requirements of competition in the world economy. The solution requires more than élan and optimism, it calls for expert knowledge, a comprehensive acquaintance with conditions and the value systems, a perception of all the facets of international economic interconnections, and of the importance of creative initiative and many other factors besides.

Yet the programme being developed is sober and realistic in the sense that it is clear about the options open and the constraints which limit the

scope for action. There are no unlimited possibilities in socialist society any more than there are elsewhere, although in the period of a romanticism which culminated in terror it was believed that possibilities were unlimited. In fact they can never be so, since if they were there would be no need for economic management. In order to progress it is necessary to select goals; and sometimes even these require various trade-offs; the means then have to be aligned accordingly, and these can never be unlimited in a finite world. These economic or political limitations should not be a source of irritation, because there is no rational activity without some constraining parameters. The maturity of socialist society, the degree of selfknowledge it now possesses, the comprehensive awareness of relations, the resourcefulness of society and its capacity for rejuvenation and innovation—all this goes to establish a foundation for hope, the hope that the great national programme discussed above will be effectively implemented.

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István Kardos

ISTVÁN VAS

POEMS

Translated by Daniel Hoffman

ON A DRAWING

These hands, these thighs, these paired pelvises,
This movement is unmistakable. But whose was this
Narrow face? Whose upper lip, so deeply cleft?
This skull, almost bald—sure, but who is peering
From those eyes? This one and that one. Not merely
Two people making love here... Dead wives
And husbands, dead lovers join
In these intimate movements. Men and women.
Once irreconcilable, in these lines held rendez-vous.
What lines! What an embrace!
This trickling white that shears the background black
In copulation of lines, packed with so many things,
Is rich in innocence, innocent in lust.
Only they can be concupiscent as this
Who are no more, who live in these lines only,
Hidden in this embrace. In this translucent
Structure, sparkling, firm. And among all signs of life
From this exclusive multitude, it's they, only they
Who name the rest, these two. You and I, I and you.

THE BULLDOZER

(To be hung beneath a painting)

I

Mangling, grabbing, monster-born machine,
What do you hoist in your crane?
What trample beneath
The behemoth wheels on your sides?
A skull, broken in two, cracks between
The fork's dinosaur teeth.
Orange and dust-colored mist sprays
Over the deathwhite canvas.
What rubble have we here,
What dross is this
The machine has left behind?
Not a thing remains,
Only debris of stones.
What it destroys are parts
Of something it was once
Our gift to understand
Something that was, somehow,
An element of our life.

Who is that angel above the machine?
What does his upraised trumpet mean?
With his flat cap, his ruddy beard,
An impudent, heavenly *shamus.*
The trumpet blares
Ra-ta-ta, redly.
Proclaiming loudly
It's nothing he cares
For broken gate, for caved-in shed.
Shamus-angel only looks ahead:
Knows what the hidden blueprint planned
In place of this grappled refuse.
Planned, but not for us.
We may go, may disappear,
We are expected someplace, where

There is no gate.
His trumpet stuns the air:
What will be built for those to come
Is not for us to see.

2

Strong hands, firm-lined,
Grasp the wheel.
Whose hands? Who steers?
Drizzle of orange, sand-coloured mist.
Someone is hiding, someone *is*
In the intricate lines of the angel's wings,
He annunciates nothing, only steers
And behind its veil
Fate remembers everything.

A woman's face dissolves,
From behind her black veil
Intently she gazes
On the general destruction,
And, beyond all knowing, sees
What the crane raises,
And never releases
Her hand from the iron wheel.
Her shaded eyes cannot have mercy.
The future belongs to the trumpet's blast,
But from the chalky scarlet mist
Ananke, weeping, casts
Her hidden gaze upon us still.

ULYSSES' PASSED-UP ADVENTURE

When it happened I don't know, a confusion
Of nymphs and islands, the sea
Wine-coloured, wine swaying like the sea.
We were always hoisting sail, were always moving on—
Who can now remember destinations?

The image of the wife who wove, unwove
Her webbed fabric, merge with one another—which
Was which I myself sometimes forgot.
But her,
Her, I noticed precisely, outlined
Against the smoky half-darkness,
From depths of shadowed armchairs, sofas,
The glimmering of her golden hair,
And her whisper, rasping with whisky
And cigarettes, cut through the air
Pungent and determined. When I tuned in
She had just begun to speak
Of Heisenberg's equation—I didn't understand,
Then, why she was so derisive, so implacable,
What pleasure she took from knowing
That matter is transformable, and, what's more,
Does not, in fact, exist.
'Matter is what I make of it.
There is no matter—only form,' and with a severe
Movement she tossed back her hair.
'Then what,' I nervously inquired, 'is form?'
'Don't you desire me?' she unexpectedly
Replied, and shamelessly cast her large eyes on me—
Eyes muddy yellow, a coldness blew from them,
Numbing me inside. Never have I been so afraid,
Neither of the raving, one-eyed giant
Nor of the form-dissolving, honeyed strength
Of bright-voiced Circe. 'Well, I wouldn't mind your matter
But your form scares me,' I said
Uneasily, held taut in her corrosive gaze.
'But,' she said, 'I have no matter,'
And her eyes stayed fixed upon me.
And I admit that, as so many times before,
It's not that I felt fear, but rather fled
Into pretension, self-depreciation.
I drained another gin and started
Stammering incoherently,
Then just cackled, hiccupped stupidly.
'Men!' she said, contemptuously, and that night
The nymph reclining in her fragrant cave,

Heeded me no more. But, crossing
Her blue-stockinged legs,
This icy-eyed goddess of death with a modern education
Conversed with my companions.

Next day, on the sandy beach, in a slightly
Old-fashioned black bathing-suit—this was after the war,
The merchant ships had hardly yet returned—
She ran toward me. It was still Spring, the sun
Hadn't tanned her perfect body,
Whiter than limestone rocks.
Her fair hair streamed in the slanting rays,
And, reaching us, out of breath, she collapsed on the sand,
Her small breasts heaving. I stood above her.
Watching, though still afraid
To look her in the eye. 'Is my form really ugly?'
She asked, and, lying on her back
With hands clasped behind her neck, she pulled up
Her left knee, flung her right leg over it
And showed her foot's white sole. The sun shone on.
There I stood among companions, and before us
This white body lay in a black bathing-suit,
After the war, on an island.

'Up there, among the rocks, is my house
Where those four marble columns gleam
Through thick underbrush. There I expect
All of you for coffee,' she said at last,
And left with her attendants.
And I to my companions said,
'Friends, is it worth it
To climb that hill for black coffee?
We'd better make our getaway in time.' Once more
We hauled the bark down to the divine water
And had already hoisted canvas and set sail
When we noticed, in the midst of our labours,
That three good companions had deserted us
And, skulking in the bush, were climbing
The bleak slopes on untrodden paths.
By then our dark blue prow was slicing

Through white-sparkling seas, and above us,
The sail bellied, taut in the Spring breeze,
And within us the satisfaction of our breaking free swelled,
And there we were flying, not knowing whether East or
Westward.

I almost thought it was their will, stronger than Circe's,
That kept them in its sty,
But later, in the markets of more than one town
When they showed up, at first I thought
They'd gotten away unscathed.
But one, by that time, could only mumble
Ridiculous, idiot syllables;
The other gestured, raving,
His shouts an incoherent jabber
Disordered in blind rage;
The third, struck dumb, when we spoke to him
Shrugged his shoulders, flung out his arms
Helplessly, bewildered, somber shame
On his dark embittered face,
Eyes staring in lonely dismay.

Slowly I understood what strength
Had overpowered them:
Though Circe had transformed the heroes
Outwardly, changing their male bodies
To pigs' heads, bristles, tusks,
Making them wallow in her courtyard's mud,
Their minds remained untouched.
But this white-bodied death-woman
With her necromancy's cold, forbidding spell
Sucked out their beautiful male consciousness,
Leaving their forms apparently unchanged,
Though in truth only the skeletons remained,
Their infernal shadows wandering degraded among us,
And when we embrace them they will not fade from us.
They are but clay vessels whose precious contents
Have treacherously seeped away.
Since then
I have been on the island, have climbed the hill as well;

Beyond the perfidious marble columns a dark cave looms:
I too have visited the beast
That preys on male marrow,
Whose attendants waft her with incense
Distilled from her heaped-up prey.
It's true. The seductress I remembered
Is an ugly witch now,
Her stale power drifting on her isle
Like rancid fumes,
Who squats in her cave
In foul-smelling smoke—a caricature,
Goddess of a ridiculous mythology.

But you, my friends, heroes of old,
In vain our glasses clink today.
You will not board our freshly-timbered ships, a crew
Eager to try the sea once more,
Defying monsters old and new.

THE INTERESTS AND THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF EUROPE

by

JÁNOS BERECZ

It is a distinctive feature of our days that the solution to all important problems is connected with the general world situation. When judging the state of the world, particularly when it comes to determining the root causes of one or another series of events, essential differences arise between various powers, but conclusions agree on one point: ensuring the existence of mankind has become a universal problem that concerns the whole of society.

The outlook for mankind

In the latter half of the seventies world population exceeded 4,000 million. It has grown by 3,000 million since 1850, i.e. it has twice doubled itself in a space of about 130 years. The first doubling took a little more than 80 years, but the second no more than forty-five. Computed forecasts predict that, by the year 2,000, about 6,000 million people will live on our Earth, and by 2,100 their number is expected to be around 10,000 million if present trends continue. Another fact is that in 1979, according to UN figures, one-third of the world population vegetated below subsistence level, and some 500 million—one person in eight—are permanently hungry.

One may well ask whether this is really the outlook for mankind, that the growth of the world population brings with it more poverty and disease, and a multiplication of the factors that endanger the future of the species. The facts show something else. Between 1950 and 1975 world population grew by 1,500 million, i.e. by 60 per cent. During that same period bread grain and rice crops, the most substantial nutriments, grew by about 130 per cent. The increase in grain production was about the double of

population growth. According to estimates, given optimal use of available plough-lands in the world, present food production could be increased about 130-fold.

If one takes into account all the factors in the progress of mankind, it becomes clear that scientists have created the conditions which allow the human race to establish a harmonious future. Given the scientific and technological revolution mankind has brought about intellectual standards and a system of scientific devices, which—despite numerical growth—makes a life worthy of man possible for everybody. The conditions are there to guarantee harmonious satisfaction of needs, to control decimating diseases, to protect and enrich the natural environment, and to improve the division of labour and the world economic relations on a footing of equality.

But the state of human society as a whole does not as yet allow mankind to make use of this great opportunity. The social prerequisite for the realization of harmony between needs and possibilities is the establishment of socialism, a socio-economic system that is free of exploitation, and does away with oppression, all over the world. Today the socialist system already to a large degree determines the shaping of the destiny of mankind. But there exists another system, capitalism, that possesses great strength. This system, is the root cause of the accumulation, with a view to mass destruction, of immense scientific and material forces which, instead of solving the problems of mankind, threaten the nations at the core of their existence. At present the world uses up almost $2 million per minute for military purposes. The yearly turnover of the arms trade amounts to $20–$30 thousand million, and 75 to 80 million persons are employed in the manufacture of arms. At the same time the gap is widening between the living conditions and existential security of exploiters and the exploited, as well as between the backwardness of nations liberated from the colonial yoke and the waste of resources by capitalism.

Coping with the great task of assuring the existence of the human race demands peace and international security. Instead the arms race is escalating, and the independence and freedom of the recently liberated is threatened by armed imperialist intervention, so that they have to employ part of their scanty financial means to develop their armed forces. Intensifying militarization, a process which derives from the nature of capitalism, handicaps the building of a peaceful and democratic international system which is needed to ensure the solution of universal problems, such as protection of the environment, the fight against hunger and disease, and the improvement of the conditions of further progress.

It is therefore a pressing contradiction of our age that though mankind,

thanks to the development level of the forces of production and of science, is ready for existence based on the harmony of needs and possibilities, the condition of society does not permit it. What guarantees the future is that there is, both theoretically and practically, a way for the world to get out of this predicament: that is the theory of scientific socialism, and existing socialism and the revolutionary working-class movement as social realities. But progress is not steady and in a straight line, and that though for more than sixty years now there has been an answer clear in theory and practice to the problems besetting the future of mankind.

More than sixty years ago Lenin was faced with two decisive historic questions, and the answers he gave are still valid in the international practice of the socialist countries. First: is it possible for the socialist revolution to triumph in a country which is not even the strongest of the capitalist countries? Second: is it possible for the victorious revolution to hold out in an imperialist environment hostile to it? Lenin answered yes to both questions, and the answer has been proved right by history, by the progress of the Soviet Union, by the changes made in the world since then.

These two answers are of historic significance: the result was the victory of the Russian Revolution; and that socialism has been built up in the Soviet Union though it was surrounded by an extremely hostile environment. The defeat of the intervention and the blockade, but mainly the crushing of fascist aggression, contributed to the gradual assertion in practice of the principle of peaceful coexistence. As the result of a new revolutionary wave the community of socialist countries has come into existence, and today there has emerged, beside the socialist countries, a group of numerous third world countries opposed to imperialism; a good number of them have embarked on the road of socialist-oriented development.

Lenin's answers determine attitudes also in our days since the significance of peaceful coexistence has grown considerably. In our age the fundamental question is whether mankind can survive while every nation achieves social equality and freedom by going its own way. The matter at issue is the survival of mankind, and that depends precisely on whether major social changes are carried out.

The relationship between revolutions and peaceful coexistence

The relationship between revolutions and peaceful coexistence is of particular importance from this point of view. The formula of peaceful coexistence is a principle that governs relations between states. The policy

determining the relations between countries with differing social systems, a policy that expresses the existing balance of forces at any given moment, has a connection with the fundamental issues of the age, it influences the way of transition from capitalism to socialism. Peaceful coexistence is an expression of the fact that this relationship is not simply a state without war, but cooperation between countries of the two systems in the political, economic, cultural, and many other fields; and all this presupposes and necessitates the conclusion of agreements and respect for them.

Revolutionary changes take place within a concrete national framework. In our age these changes can be of a national democratic, bourgeois, or socialist character, concretely they may include features of several types and employ different methods. Irrespective of its character, however, every revolution has a bearing on international relations. Its victory is dependent on the given state and possibilities of international relations, and its outcome reacts upon the development of these relations. Every revolutionary event is exposed to the pressure of international imperialism. For this very reason revolutionary changes depend on the solidarity of progressive forces, that of socialism in the first place today. And all this implies international connections.

The détente that took shape in international relations during the past decade and a half was indicative of the most favourable condition possible for peaceful coexistence and the development of mature social changes. Détente is not a general principle, it is concrete practice: it characterizes the level on which peaceful coexistence is realized, being the most favourable degree in the given period. Détente is a relative condition that best describes the international relations of a period, a condition that means relaxation compared with previous tension and is therefore characteristically fluctuating; for it depends on the shaping of the balance of forces and on the attitude of the different political factors and currents which play a part in power relations.

Peaceful coexistence and détente will also in future remain the fundamental political attitude and ambition of the socialist countries. But while the attitudes and political activities of one side are sufficient to create a war situation or to provoke a Cold War atmosphere, peaceful coexistence requires partners. Peaceful coexistence can come true in relations between governments of countries with differing social systems. Consequently the policy of capitalist states substantially influences the development of peaceful coexistence and détente in international relations. It is an essential fact that détente is not the class policy of the bourgeoisie. The extremist circles of the bourgeoisie invented the Cold War and pursued a policy of strength

against the socialist countries. This policy of strength flourished in the fifties when international imperialism enjoyed a relative superiority of strength.

Henry Kissinger revealed that a considerable part of the bourgeoisie later felt compelled to recognize the necessity for peaceful coexistence: As owners of weapons of incredibly destructive force, he argued, they must strive to make this peaceful coexistence more tolerable, more enduring, and less dangerous, and even more constructive. Socialist society views peaceful coexistence as a natural policy at the time of the coexistence of the two systems; and yet a considerable section of the bourgeoisie—as the Kissinger of that time put it—accepts détente as a kind of "judgement" or inevitable practice which, what with the current relation of forces, has no reasonable alternative.

In the 1970s, while détente was dominant in international relations, leading circles in the United States felt increasingly that their class interests were in danger and that under the circumstances of détente the United States was pushed into a disadvantageous position in several respects.

The feeling of being threatened on the part of the American ruling class began with the loss of the monopoly of the atom bomb and became general from 1957 onwards, when the first Soviet sputnik made its appearance above the United States. This implied that the country was no longer militarily invulnerable. The United States took part in two world wars without any damage to its territory. All honour to the Americans who gave their lives to fight fascism, but their sacrifice no longer expresses the attitude of some sections of the ruling class of the United States. Not a single nation was made richer by the wars, except the United States. It did not help Great Britain, for example, to be one of the victorious powers of the Second World War, nothing could be done to prevent the subsequent fast dismantling of the British Empire. In 1957 the American ruling class had to wake up to the fact that the possibility of a world war, in which the United States could preserve its territory intact, and by which it could profit materially, had vanished. This came as a veritable shock, which was only intensified further by the defeat in Vietnam. In Vietnam it was concretely demonstrated that the United States could be defeated, and this experience threw doubt on the feasibility of the U.S. ambition to act as an arbitrator in different parts of the world.

The question of strategic superiority

The ruling class of the United States, especially the military-industrial interests, have, since Vietnam, been trying in different ways to regain lost strategic superiority. This implied increasingly severe attacks on détente, as was observable in three spheres during the latter half of the seventies. One was the development of military technology and the increase of military expenditure to such a degree as might make it impossible for others to follow suit without generating social and political tensions. The second was for the United States to return to the policy of building and maintaining military bases in different parts of the globe. This pointed in a new way to a policy of encircling the Soviet Union and the socialist countries. The third aim took shape in measures intended to upset the regional balance of power here and there. Part of this was the NATO decision to station Cruise missiles in Western Europe, as well as the rousing of military hopes pinned on China in the Far East, then the acquisition of new military bases in Egypt, Oman, and other countries with reference to the change of regime in Iran.

As an ongoing process this military and armaments policy found expression in the following: In its early years the Carter Administration launched a propaganda campaign against the socialist countries, in particular against the Soviet Union. The intention of speeding up strategic armament was manifested as early as March 1977 when the United States wanted to modify the Vladivostok agreement concluded with the Soviet Union in December 1975. At the NATO council meeting in May 1977 the United States proposed that member states should increase their military expenditure by 3 per cent; after a year of hesitation the allies agreed to an increase of 3 per cent over a period of 15 years. When this was settled the United States proposed the establishment of a system of medium-range nuclear missiles (Cruise missiles) to be deployed in Western Europe. Their allies again did not show great enthusiasm. The right mood had to be created in advance for the NATO ministerial meeting in December 1979 to sanction the programme. A propaganda campaign was started on the pretext of the alleged discovery of Soviet combat personnel—2,500 men—in Cuba. It was suggested that these forces posed an immediate threat to the United States. At the same time propaganda relying on the old tale of the Soviet threat to Western Europe was stepped up. The desired effect was achieved: the Cruise missile was accepted by the NATO council of ministers of defence.

On December 12, when this plan was adopted, the President of the United

States announced that military expenditure should be increased by 5 per cent every year. The next month, on January 23, 1980, he motivated the increase with the events in Afghanistan. Although on December 12, when the increase was first announced, what was to happen in Afghanistan had not yet taken place.

The real U.S. intention hidden behind the top-level measures is reflected by a statement made three years ago by Zbigniev Brzezinski. He had said that should both the Americans and the Soviet Union use all their nuclear weapons, about 10 per cent at most of mankind would perish. In Brzezinski's reckoning the bulk of the 10 per cent should be in the socialist countries, and also the forward defence base of the U.S., Western Europe, might be destroyed. Characteristic of this cynical calculation is that those in the U.S. know full well that it can never work since the Soviet strike potential and Soviet defensive powers are great enough to upset any such calculations.

The fact of military vulnerability

The fact of military vulnerability, i.e. the shift in the balance of power over the past twenty years, led to a controversy on basic issues in the ruling class of the United States. More and more people argued for taking note of reality, while others pressed for a continued arms build-up. At times this controversy created a very tense situation, presidents and presidential candidates fell by the wayside, but détente still prevailed. However, there occurred also other such changes which strengthened the feeling of vulnerability and, to a certain degree, of aggressiveness in the ruling top crust of the United States. One such factor is that the number of changes and events of a national and social revolutionary character has increased in various parts of the world.

The ruling class of the United States is in the singular situation that not once in the course of the twentieth century has it been forced to face any serious challenge on the part of the exploited classes. The working-class movement of the United States has not really threatened the domination of the capitalists. On the other hand, the world surrounding them is getting more and more revolutionized, and they prove to be increasingly powerless in face of this development. Looking only at 1979 events, these alone inflicted severe wounds upon them. It all started with the collapse of the Maoist dictatorship in Cambodia—which had been using socialist and communist slogans—and ended with the fact that the popular revolution in Afghanistan, purified, found its way back to the original track. Before that,

the revolution had come out on top in Iran and Nicaragua. The revolution triumphed in an Iran which, with a well organized army and 70,000 U.S. military advisers, was reputed to be the firmest overseas military base of the United States. The Nicaraguan revolution triumphed by force of arms in a region where the military and economic superiority of the United States had held sway for 150 years, ready to abort any projected progressive social change. This process had been interrupted only once before: by the victory of the Cuban revolution in 1959. In social respects, therefore, changes occurred which surprised and infuriated the ruling class of the United States and prompted it to make countermoves.

The feeling of threat in America also became stronger because of the tremendous growth of differences, between conditions in the industrially developed capitalist world and those in most of the developing countries. Having won political independence, the former colonies began to fight for economic independence. From the angle of energy supply alone, this obviously posed a problem to the developed capitalist countries. For example, the developing world provides 95 per cent of Japan's fuel imports; Western Europe relies on the developing countries for 80 per cent of its energy supply; fifteen years ago the United States was self-sufficient in energy, now it is dependent on the developing world for 25 per cent of its needs and will, according to estimates, be importing 50 per cent in 1985.

The United States, with 5.5 per cent of the world population, uses nearly one-third of the world's energy. Under the conditions of capitalism and with regard to today's energy sources it is inconceivable for the Third World to attain the level of economic development of the United States without jeopardizing U.S. energy supply. The countries of the socialist community are fortunately in a position to obtain supplies; the deposits have to be developed, that is all, though at the cost of considerable investment.

The differences are considerable in other fields as well: per capita food consumption in the developing world is one-third of that of the developed capitalist countries, per capita energy use is one-seventh of that of the developed capitalist world.

One does not have to be a socialist to recognize that this is an intolerable situation: it is no longer admissible for capitalism to thrive—as it has done for centuries—relying on the fact that a considerable part of the world's population starves, is sick and doomed to perish, while a way exists already to solve the contradiction: the socialist form of social evolution.

However, revolutionary changes, and often not even socialist ones, are frequent precisely in regions which are extremely underdeveloped but the natural resources of which serve the purposes of production in developed

capitalist countries. Thus events in Iran hit the capitalist countries on a sore spot: a stable point of that region rich in oil began to wobble and turned hostile. But these processes cannot be stopped and have incalculable effects.

In judging the situation one has to start from the Marxian recognition that evolution or change as a necessary movement, as a revolutionary process, finds a way breaking through all barriers. The U.S. and Western Europe, or more precisely the developed capitalist world, must accept as a fact that these processes are necessary and are not started by the socialist countries. No kind of doctrine can hinder changes of this character, but any attempt to inhibit them by force brings about an increase in tension. This is the effect of the Carter doctrine as well: it has weakened détente and has conjured up the spirit of the Cold War.

In such cases the socialist countries do not face a simple situation either. On the on hand, they know that social change is of an objective character, and they show solidarity with progressive forces. On the other hand, they do not wish to see international tension increase and wish to continue the policy of peaceful coexistence. Social progress is an objective necessity, and peace is a fundamental requirement of life which can be satisfied only by a certain degree of understanding between the powerful forces in the two systems, and by the assertion of the will of the masses.

Shared and differing interests

In this situation one must build increasingly on the interests and responsibilities of Europe. This continent has a special interest and responsibility not only because this is where two world wars started, and where the main fighting took place, but also because, in the event of a new world conflagration, Europe will be most vulnerable. This is why it is essential and necessary to try to reach an understanding not only with political forces of the left in Europe, but also the centre, the moderate liberal bourgeoisie, and in general with all forces inclined towards political realism when it comes to the vital problems and tasks they share.

This is very difficult at a time when the United States uses its economic and political weight and its entire propaganda machine to put considerable pressure on its allies. Day after day representatives of the U.S. Administration and often the President himself address appeals to Western Europe urging them to boycott this or that, to put checks on trade with the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe, to isolate Iran, to show strength in this

or that direction, etc. Such a course of action means much danger for Western Europe.

The situation which accords with the interests of Europe, including Western Europe, is when West and East can understand each other, when they can carry on a dialogue, defining shared and differing interests, even taking note of confrontations, in certain matters, then concluding agreements on this basis of continuing to strengthen the security of Europe. This process flowed in Europe as an increasingly vital reality in the first half of the seventies. Any departure from it, any effort and tendency to the contrary, is opposed to the interests of the nations of Europe and of the whole world.

Understanding must be shown for the position of Western Europe. It is undesirable that Eastern and Western Europe be confronted irreparably since this in itself carries the danger of annihilation. In defining such political efforts one has to take into consideration the factors which shape the policy of Western Europe. On the one hand, the countries of Western Europe depend on developing active economic relations with other parts of the world; their geographical location and their population density on the other hand make it inconceivable that they might survive a nuclear war. Nevertheless it is true that for several decades public opinion in Western Europe has been fed with alarming tales of the Soviet peril, tales of Soviet tanks threatening the existence of Western Europe. They were made to believe that Western Europe can be protected only by a United States nuclear umbrella. As one of the consequences it proved possible to obtain the agreement of public opinion in Western Europe to make certain sacrifices in the interests of better protection. This means, in the first place, the siting of Cruise missiles. It is worthy of note also that a certain rightward shift in part of the Western European public opinion has taken place in recent years. This is in some measure due to the fact that the powerful propaganda campaign launched against the socialist countries made its effect felt among the electorate, that the petty bourgeoisie could be frightened with phrases about the Soviet threat and that of a gaining of ground by the Communist parties.

Other factors, however, act against the currents inducing such a negative mood. There exist in Europe considerable, genuine political forces which are able to understand and influence the reality of the world situation. Their international political thinking is higher and more developed than that of social forces of the United States, since they have been part of international life for a longer period and are hence more experienced. Such are social democrats, liberals, and certain church circles. This, however, does not mean that they are immune to influence by reactionaries, but only that they

have greater political experience and a broader outlook and that they therefore behave more responsibly in international affairs. Political opinion in Western Europe is determined also by the fact that the masses are highly organized, that they can call on considerable experience, and that the left wing in their ranks is stronger. This is why the fight for peace is more effective, and this in turn is—even after the momentary aggravation of tension—perceptibly working for greater realism and common sense in the long run. And it is also to be welcomed that the best results of détente have been achieved in Europe, where détente enjoys the strongest support as well. Public opinion in Western Europe cannot be sold the idea that détente is the source of all evil.

As a result the political life of Western Europe assumes two faces. Loyalty to their alliance is an influence, and the facts of life are another. As a result the countries of Western Europe follow, to a certain extent, the tough policy of the United States, and at the same time they support détente and wish to strengthen it. They join boycotts to the prejudice of détente, but they take steps which defend the interests of détente as well.

This singular situation and responsibility is behind the initiative taken by the European Communist and Workers' Parties in the interests of new negotiations on questions of détente, disarmament, and security in support of the fight for a peaceful and calm Europe. This, however, failed to receive unequivocal support, since several Communist Parties, those of Yugoslavia, Rumania, Italy, and Spain among them, did not attend the April 1980 Paris meeting.

Continuing the policy of détente

The majority of European Communist and Workers' Parties, twenty-two altogether, accepted the invitation and took part in the Paris talks. Important parties stayed away however whose stated positions and arguments concerning matters of substance, form, and method must be taken seriously.

When the Hungarian party accepted the invitation to go to Paris, it started from the fact that on the basis of the document drawn up in Berlin, every party had the right to make new proposals. The French Communist Party and the Polish United Workers' Party proposed joint discussion of peace and disarmament in Europe. No party can be denied, on the basis of the consensus principle, the right to move such independent initiatives. At the same time, however, every party concerned has the right and duty to decide by itself whether or not to join in such talks or whether to propose

a different method held to be more appropriate, etc. But no one has the right, either alone or as part of a minority, to influence the joint activity of other parties, e.g. to put obstacles in the way of activities aimed at joint action. One might as well say that the postulate must not be reversed either: the majority cannot be forced to subject itself to a minority decision. A small number of parties cannot prevent the majority of the parties from striving for action, or from manifesting their common responsibility.

Participants in the Paris talks formulated their common responsibility for the future of Europe. They expressed their will to act and their conviction that it is a fundamental right of working people in Europe to establish peace and security. Since peace is the broadest platform of any sort of cooperation, and the Paris meeting took a stand in favour of this proposition, it served precisely the joint action of different political forces.

In the appeal issued by the Paris meeting on the 35th anniversary of the victory over Hitlerism the participants point to the lesson of history: "Peace is our common cause, and our common action will secure its triumph." It is in the interest of the nations to solve existing problems by way of negotiations and to regulate international relations by agreements. The forces which demand peace—the appeal stresses—have to fight for the ratification of the SALT-2 agreement, for the success of the Vienna talks, for the successful preparation of the Madrid meeting on European security and cooperation, for the convening in Warsaw of a conference on disarmament and military détente in Europe. Communists do not regard the fight for peace as their monopoly. Therefore they proclaimed that they wish to seek the realization of an open initiative which leads to the establishment of the widest possible contacts and to the broadest possible dialogue. They are ready to hold, in appropriate forms, consultations and exchanges of opinion with all those forces in Europe which are resolved to act in the spirit of Helsinki in the interest of continuing the policy of détente, searching for ways to reduce armaments in Europe.

RUNWAY

Excerpts from a novel

by

JUDIT TÓTH

Runway *is the story of a love-affair between a Hungarian girl who in the sixties spends a few months in Paris on a university scholarship, and a French doctor, a widower and one-time member of the resistance. The two first met in Budapest when the doctor attended a medical conference in that city and Franciska, reading French at university, was assigned to be his interpreter. The girl, vulnerable and reticent enough by nature, is almost overcome by homesickness for her native country which she finds is virtually unknown by the people she has to meet there. She feels forlorn and displaced with her memories of a childhood of war, orphanhood, deprivation, and humiliation, her mother killed as a Jew and her father executed as a deserter, moreover her instincts and reflexes are conditioned to hide and protect rather than expose and inflate her humanity. Dr. Bessodes, the French widower, is burdened by painful memories of a different and less historically conditioned past: the loss of his wife and child. The story starts out from its conclusion and then works its way simultaneously through past and present in an intricate series of flashbacks and scenes in the present to the point where they become mutually reconciled to their pasts and familiar with each other's historically conditioned idiosyncrasies, Franciska returns to Hungary to make her final decision about marriage and to see if her love for Julien will be strong enough to support her in an uprooted future.*

Judit Tóth, the author, is married to a Frenchman and lives in Paris but continues to write in Hungarian and publish in her native country. After three volumes of poems, Runway *is her first book of fiction. It was published by Szépirodalmi, Budapest in 1980 and reviewed in NHQ 79. —* ED.

Paris was still chilly, unlikely, and unyielding weeks later. Like everybody else, she knew from photos and picture-books the towers, squares, and façades that made up the cityscape. But there was not a single brick or cobble-stone which she found personally accessible.

The proportionately spaced rows of windows of the French houses looked icily down at her from their lofty heights. She felt as if the chestnut trees along the boulevards, the glass-paned cages of the cafés, and the ornamentally scrolled railings of the Metro continually stood in her way.

She was strolling round amidst backdrops; the over-used sets of this stage city baulked at her.

Some of the sights were plainly deceptive, empty attractions. Like, for instance, the book-vendors' wooden boxes on the Embankment, which stood locked through the larger part of the day and when finally opened, belched forth a jumble of half-torn, dog-eared trash occasionally preserved in cellophane to keep browsers at bay. Or serially manufactured prints of the city's boat-shaped or genital-shaped island, the towers, and the bridges. All these flaunted on poor-quality paper thumbtacked to the stalls, flapping in the November wind.

The filthy medieval streets with their rows of houses bending towards each other, in their dark corners pavement stalls selling barbecued meat, the people selling Turkish delight or occult books, the movies with their ghost films were all props. But towering above them all, the geometrical loftiness of the rain-washed Gothic was just as theatrical. (They were lucky, they never had to worry about the Mongols.) And the grandiose self-assurance of the new Paris was a stage prop too.

None of this had anything to do with her.

Fountains and iron railings. Parks and ornamental ponds. Tiny toy sailing-boats floated on the water by well-proportioned and conventional little citizens. And benches. Alleys of trees and groups of statues. Vagrants of the great outdoors basking in the warm air exhaled by the Metro through the railing over the air-shafts. (Some people would think they were merely flaunting their liberalism.) Mansions. Public squares of boundless symmetry. Obviously additional monuments had been erected to designate their geometrical centre.

Franciska does not talk. Indeed, who is there to talk to? Her first meeting with Doctor Bessodes turned out differently from what she had expected. The foreign doctor she had guided with some irritation around Budapest, seems to have disappeared, perhaps he got left behind in the Hungarian capital. But this she realized gradually and later. That first lunch, their conversation about wines, vanished from her mind as soon as she left the restaurant.

At first she knows practically no one. The night porter of the hotel, a short, old Negro, peevishly repeats her question every morning: "Any letter for me?" "No letter for me?" The whites of his eyes are red-veined, he continuously blinks and chews at something like a rabbit. At night he stretches out on the narrow sofa behind the desk, he probably even manages to get some sleep. But when the phone rings he has to get up. At night even upstairs in the rooms one can hear him hoarsely droning into the re-

ceiver, "Hello, this is Hotel Dagomir... Hello, Hotel Dagomir..."

Franciska knows the dustmen as well, two men dressed in quilted jackets and a boy with curly hair. They roll the big bins up to their dust-cart and empty them into the hold; sometimes they wave to her when she leaves through the hotel gate carrying her books.

She opens the blue envelopes in the street. As she reads, walking, now and then someone pushes by, knocking against her. She hardly looks up. From Gwendolyn's letter she learns that back home the university refectory is being renovated.

"Imagine, Trot, we have to eat in the corridor while they are working. The benches have been moved, but there is, of course, no room for the tables. Everyone eats from plates held on their laps. Can you picture it?"

Grandmother Angela wrote that they were suffering an unpleasant north wind and it was so dark that they had on the lights all day long.

There was no letter from Adam. She, Franciska, had held herself to their agreement. She did not write to him once. But she had never thought that Adam would not write either.

*

The language classes for foreigners were held in a grey four-storey building. Tall, narrow windows broke up the bleak evenness of the three wings from the outside. In front, a narrow strip of a garden, chilly lawn, and clipped hedgerows.

As in all schools noise and greyness prevailed in the building. Grey marble stairs, grey-painted doors, and grey-and-white glazed tiles on the corridors. The polished floor in the class-room emanated the warmer, waxy odour of old dining halls.

The place was frequented by foreigners, well-nourished boys and girls, noisy and usually provocatively and ostentatiously dressed. Franciska squatted on the edge of the bench in the farthest row, silently observing her class-mates. Every one of them was attractive, fit, and robust-looking. They knew scarcely any French, but still thrashed about, crawled, and floated in the strange language with unswerving self-confidence; they rattled off shaky sentences, often erupted in loud laughter; the cold, carbolic-smelling good cheer of an alien world sent off streaks of gay bubbles around them like the spray rising from a swimming-pool.

Madame Lombard, their instructor, treated them with respect. She was a pink-faced old woman, with quick movements and a sharp voice.

Her pitcher-shaped body looked smooth and solid. As she walked up and down the rows of benches her flesh appeared tightly packed: she must have worn a rubber corset under her grey silk dress.

"Hungary? Lake Baikal. Les Carpathes..."

Franciska found herself waiting for her to mention Erzsébet Báthori or even Dracula.

Madame Lombard flashed her eyes at Franciska's monkey-like face, momentarily bored into the girl's black eyes, and her glance came to rest on the collared blue dress.

"So you are a scholarship student. Yes, I see. Please note that France offers substantial aid to students from under-developed countries. 'Under-developed: *sous-développé.*'

"You will have to do more than master the rules of French grammar. *Meester* Harper, will you please kindly refrain from smoking. Clarity is the essence of the French spirit." Mme Lombard pulled at the silk of her dress under her arm where it had got pinched between flesh and corset. "The Natural logic. Rational thinking..."

Franciska was sitting in numb attention. She had mastered the rules of French grammar some time ago, but it was not doing her much good at present. She spoke in a whisper as though one had lost her voice, and the people with whom she should have been able to communicate, the waiter, the news vendor, the grocer, impatiently refused to understand her strange questions. "What do you want? Apples? No? Bananas? Come back when you can remember."

She went diligently to the University, too. For a few weeks she attended lectures on comparative literature held by an old academic with a brush haircut. The old man kept jumping up and down, and spoke at lightning speed. He played incomprehensible games with quotations in Latin, French, German, and Portuguese. Franciska, of course, did not understand the quotations, but from the ponderous explanations she would finally pick —like a rabbit out of a hat—the final conclusion. Every work of world literature, in fact every great thought, had come into being under French influence. Sometimes, momentarily, it seemed that the opposite was true too. But the capering old midget somersaulted across a few centuries. spattered saliva, gabbled and waved his hands around, until finally his umbrella divined the French source on every continent.

There were instructors of a different kind too. There was Yvonne Krips, of whom one could not tell at first glance whether she was male or female. Her seminar was called "Woman's Writing—Woman's Body." She wore a black leotard and her hair cut short as though she were in a penitentiary.

Her white face and blue eye-shadow gave her the appearance of a pantomime actress. She addressed the students *tu* (there were more boys than girls), and urged them to get to know their bodies. Everybody was a writer. Everybody wrote with his or her body. With the belly, the ears, and with one's sex. Form was nothing more than a biological rhythm.

Franciska read the famous novels of the times with great application. (Pascal Dupont: *Mushrooms;* Sophia Morel: *Don't Lean out of the Window;* Hervé Brost: *Zwackermann's Dinner.*) They were full of excellent detail. Details of the details of detail. Groups of cells on a slide. She did not, of course, understand the texts clearly. These books were very boring. She made herself read and reread them again and again. Something was wrong. Personal pronouns, except that you never knew who was who, and why he or she was there, or where they were and what for. Someone would be peeking through a window for thirty pages, and then on page 31 the window would turn out to be a wardrobe door. Such things do happen, but they happen rather infrequently. But if the personal pronoun, third person singular, has spoken for fifty pages about wall-carpets, about the way to fry flat-fish, about a secret crime, about railway time-tables or a Cambodian statue of Buddha and the reader still has not the faintest idea who is being addressed, whether the subject has spoken to that person or thing in speech or thought, whether the person addressed is there at all—very probably there is no one there, but if there is no one there, if he or she does not exist, then why pretend that anyone is there, that he does exist and is speaking to someone who is likewise nowhere... And yet these were good writers, she was certain of that. The deadly dull books of good writers. But it was not this that mattered, but the fact that they were acting as if—for instance, as if they were keeping quiet about something important. But in the place where the important things should have been there was nothing, no window or wardrobe door. The personal pronouns had no experience to look back on, at best they were only "parts of speech," syntactic characters. These *elles* and *luis* were no less nerve-racking than the heroes who struggled with such determination, or the fat saboteurs who had undermined the future in Eastern European literature over the past decade.

This is beyond me, thought Franciska in the corridor of the St. Geneviève Library while she was stripping a banana that she had acquired with some difficulty.

No use. Not even the banana could cheer her up.

*

Franciska sat on the bed in the hotel room which resembled the bedroom of a provincial town councillor. The crimson bedspread and the headboard, which had the appearance of a gravestone, were impossible to get used to even as the weeks passed. It was cold. The light with its bell-shaped shade was much too high; one could hardly see by it. One morning she removed the bulb—it was a 25-watt one, and sooty black at that. Well, I'll teach you a lesson, she thought.

In a small shop in the next street she bought a clip-on metal lamp and a 60-watt bulb to fit it. By the wash-basin she discovered a wall-socket. But it was too far from her bed. She went back to the shop. She tried to act out and explain what she wanted, for she did not know the word for "extension cord." She made snake-like gestures with her hand. "*Une rallonge.* But, of course, we have it." said the bald shopkeeper. He emptied a box of cords in front of her. They came in transparent little packets, all labelled, in four different lengths and three colours.

In the cold and dusty room at the Dagomir at least the light was now bright in the evening. The lamp on the bedside table (yes, there was actually a marble-topped night-table, with a small lower compartment for shoes, or perhaps in days gone by for the chamberpot), could be directed straight on to her pillow. And with the seven-metre extension cord she could put it wherever she wanted it—near the table, by the wash-basin, anywhere. The bright light of a small lamp makes even the bleakest room cozy.

(Later, she never left for any of their holidays, short or long, without a batch of clip-on lamps, extension cords, two or three bulbs, and a connecting plug. "You're mad," Julien would say as he struggled with the heavy luggage. "Three suitcases for three weeks." But if there was a reading lamp at all in the hotels in French seaside resorts, small towns, or villages, in addition to the ceiling light, it was always fitted too high, and the bulb was never stronger than 25 watts. Julien was never petty. Although he always swore at Franciska and the heavy suitcases as they walked along the long railway platforms, after she had unpacked, pulled the cords across the floor and flooded their room with several strong lights, he would give her a broad grin, sometimes accompanied by a guffaw. He might even murmur: "Well, I must say it does make a difference. You were right.")

Franciska hated ceiling lights. In the dining room at her grandparents' there was a three-armed bronze chandelier with Mucius Scaevola in the centre holding out his hand into a bronze fireplace. But most of the bulbs were loose; they lived in dim half-light, though in those days—she was then between eight and fourteen—she had other problems and hardly noticed.

At the age of 14, when her grandparents moved to the country, Franciska was sent to stay with Eliz and Robert.

The couple lived in a large flat. Eliz taught at the National Conservatory and Robert was a lawyer. They led a quiet life which was rarely disturbed, and then only by occasional visits from pupils, relatives, godsons, and bridge partners who were Robert's colleagues. Eliz had taught Franciska at the conservatory for four or five years. She had not been a talented pupil, but somehow Eliz had grown fond of her. Later Franciska often visited them under various pretexts. Robert would smoke his pipe and read the Official Gazette or the black volumes of the Civil Code at the table. He rarely paid them any attention. Franciska would chat away and complain. At her grandmother Leopoline's she had to clean the oven every day and she hated the soot. The kids teased her at school because of her clothes which had originally been meant for war orphans. Leopoldine had spared herself no effort in extracting them from all the Christian and non-Christian charitable and relief organizations in existence. Then one afternoon she told Eliz that her grandparents had sold their flat and were moving to some village in the country.

Robert looked up from his book.

"And what about you?" he asked unexpectedly.

"I am not going," answered the girl. "I do not intend to," she added awkwardly.

Robert and Eliz exchanged glances. Robert shook out the ash from his pipe. Eliz put her hand on her husband's arm.

"Well, you'll have to think about it," Robert said. "They are your grandparents after all, aren't they? You owe them gratitude and they are devoted to you."

It seemed to the young girl that Eliz had gone pale and then flushed.

"And we also have to consider," Robert fumbled among his books. "The paper has disappeared again!"

"There it is on the piano," Eliz said. "What did you say, darling, what should we consider?"

"Franciska certainly cannot continue her studies in the country. But then, you know, we are not competent to... After all..."

Franciska was plaiting the tassels of the table-cloth. Her thin little face was sullen and resolute.

"I am not going. What do you think I should do?"

"Look, this is a delicate problem. I don't know what my wife thinks. I for myself..."

Eliz started. She began to put things away, to tidy up the room.

"The couch..." Robert motioned in the direction of the corner of the dining-room. "If you think it will do. Of course, Eliz darling, not unless you agree... We'll have to think about... it carefully. Where is the paper?"

Eliz touched the young girl's neck.

"You are staying here. Little monkey. We will take you in hand. Look, here's the paper, Robert."

"That's yesterday's. Can't you see that it says Wednesday, 24th February?"

"I'll talk to your grandparents."

Franciska kept opening and closing her mouth like a fish. Finally she managed to breathe.

"Yes. Except about the rent. I get 300 forints a month in war orphan relief. But I don't think that my grandfather, that he..."

"Are you off your head? We don't take lodgers, you know."

The girl suddenly found her voice. Emotion made her face look plain.

"No, that's impossible. I shall work."

Robert looked up.

"Three hundred forints? That's not much. May I suggest..."

"Today's paper. It was under the music. What do you suggest?"

"She can keep half for pocket-money and give you the other half. This is after all a gesture; let's call it a contribution. *Clara pacta boni amici.*"

In the dining room at Eliz's a strong light hung encased in a translucent ribbed glass bell, in a circle of porcelain candles. For years the three of them would sit around the big oblong dining table, in the evenings—with their books and supper on it—in a strong opaque light as though they were on a stage.

Franciska already owned a small lamp, but she was supposed to switch it on only when she was alone in the room. She carried that lamp back and forth between the couch and her old Telefunken radio and books piled up on the dining table.

But here in Paris in Widow Krammer's room (as she decided the councillor's widow would be called), even when she was writing letters the light shone only on the paper, leaving everything else in darkness—especially the wild-roses of the wallpaper.

Dear Granny Angela, It is cold here, too, but the city is really beautiful. Yes, of course, I did go to see the fountain where your picture was taken. Yes, you are quite right one can learn a foreign language only if...

If, for instance, one can say every morning to the porter, the garbage man, the language teacher: fine, thank you, *ça va bien merci.* That she was

already able to say without the slightest embarrassment as if she had first seen the light of day in this sexagonal country.

At that time she had been there for two weeks. True, she had not seen the light of day much. It was November, and there was rarely any sunshine, not even for brief spells at midday. And in the morning when she opened the crimson linen curtains it was still dark even at around half past eight. Thick smog crept over the windowless wall of the church on the opposite side of the street. Down below the lights from the cars and the tiny shops, from which she was separated by a height of four storeys, barely glimmered. At least the clip-on lamp looked bright in the room. (She had selected a red one, with red cord.) Her stock of energy to start the day with was fast dwindling.

She made her bed, tidied up and got dressed. She ought to be studying. That can wait, she decided. She was sitting on the edge of the bed and reading the previous evening's paper when the phone on the wall started to ring.

"Good morning. Did I wake you?" Dr. Bessodes's voice sounded mocking.

"Oh no." The girl threw the paper on the floor and was just getting ready to blurt out a 'fine, thank you'.

"If you are free at lunchtime we could eat together," he said. "Hello. Are you there?"

"I am here."

Whether she felt like it? Franciska did not know. They had met just three days ago. As a matter of fact she was a little scared. And she thought that maybe she ought to sound a bit less eager.

"Yes, I am free," she said, after a brief pause, in that strange ringing voice in which she was apparently beginning to imitate the speech of the natives.

Eliz would have said... Eliz would have looked at Franciska with her short-sighted grey eyes and said in that solemn mothering and schoolmistressy tone of hers: "But who is this doctor? How can you accept lunch invitation from him?"

As a matter of fact, she was *not* free. She ought to spend the time studying. There was the paper, for instance, that she had to read for Ribaud's seminar on stylistics. Seventy pages. On complex metaphors. And her eyes were still glued to yesterday's paper. Marie-Claude Dubois's body had been identified after two days. A broad-featured girl was looking at her from the blown-up newsprint picture. Victims look alike. But then that's not time either. The accused look alike too, and so do ambassadors. For

one sees only the paper face, the story projected by the imagination. But our images of the dead are always dim and insubstantial. Whatever has really happened is unreconstructable. Choking, plunging, darkness—even our nightmares are conventional.

There were simple obstacles to her saying something else, figuring out something clever (improvisation, a show of reluctance). The phone. The foreign language. The self-assured bass of the doctor who was obviously not inclined to wait until something brilliant occurred to her. Of course, an unexpected telephone call like this was bound to corner anyone. More experienced and alert people answering the phone knew the proper formula for every situation. *Je vous rappellerai*—I'll call you back. There was no chance of that then. Not because it did not occur to her. She did not even know the expression in French.

She opened the book. Daylight was at last beginning to penetrate the room. The complex simile filled her with suspicion. Scanning the printed pages she was reminded of the Directions for using Robert's simple little camera. There it was not difficult to find what was what. (d=shutter scale, k=release knob, z=rewinding spool.) But here m^1, m^2, and m^3, Q, A, and F in their brackets and parentheses referred to poetic images, to secret associations, fractions of these relationships. However, long series, for instance,

$$Qm\left[A^3 \left\{\frac{b}{b^2} = \frac{b}{b^4}\right]F \rightarrow Q\,\frac{m^1}{m^2}\left[\frac{A^1}{A^2(\varnothing)}\right]UA^4$$

failed to annoy her with their mathematical complexity, for despite the strict logic of the essay, she was unable to relate the letters and equations to the appropriate poetic images—just as, however hard she tried, she would never be able to unload a wagon of coal. It was not so much the algebraic signs as the words she found baffling. When certain words (*mother* over *Ego*) were just beginning to fit into a pattern in the jumble of numerators and denominators, exponents and equal signs (*doom* over *sunshine*=*Christ* over *magistrate*=Death) she felt she had had enough.

Franciska put her elbows on the table and supported her chin in her palms. She knew it wouldn't get her anywhere. But still, Ribaud would listen to her one day. Until then she had only seen him in the corridor and then at a considerable distance. The girl's eyes wandered from the book to the evening paper lying on the rug. The victim—Marie Dubois—was 23, an assistant nurse at the hospital in Sceaux.

The roar of engines and the hissing and slurring of car tyres caught her attention. She looked at the window. It was, of course, raining again. It

would. She pushed away the books. From under a notebook she fished out the letter she had started writing to Gwendolyn three days previously.

"Nothing new. Atlantic climate. Language course. I've written about it already. An ancient woman, the widow of a marquis. Sample sentences. Bonaparte's lucky star or Louis Philip's redingote. I, of course, never open my mouth. I've tried, but it doesn't work. The others don't seem to notice. One of the boys (called Hopkins) must be at least six-feet-four, he must be a born basketball player. The girls (fur coats, bracelets, and the most gorgeous dresses) don't look like anything we have seen outside of pictures. Photogenic smiles, boredom, indifference, or seeking some love interest. You asked me to write in detail. Well, here you are. Alicia is giggling with Gonzalez; Ingrid Petterson (or Bernström) is beautiful but deaf in one ear (she wears a clever little gadget behind it). Klaus and Herbert keeping busy doing a crossword puzzle. Anything else you want to know? The University? This morning I spent at least two hours poring over a paper on stylistics by J. F. Ribaud. (Symbols. Algebra. Tables.) Do you know, Gwen, I think what they do here with texts would pass anywhere else for plain rape. Any text (prose or poetry, whatever) they tackle and break down into its constituent parts until it turns blue in the face and can never be revived again. All that is left of it after analysis is a bunch of signs like Q, P, T, m^1, m^2—dismembered fingers and hair torn out. What else? Well, there is a hundred-year-old prof. He says that the very first apeman was French. There is also a clown-like woman—Yvonne Krips by name (I've read her novel *Although*.) She tells us that style is regulated by your sexual cycles, kidneys, and digestion, etc. One could, of course, say in response that there were others who thought that one should assess the worth of a writer on the basis of whether his father tended sheep or worked at a desk. —Tell me what am I supposed to do?

"I'd love to sit with you in the corridor-turned-into-dining-hall and hold the soup-bowl in my lap."

As she was addressing and closing the envelope, or possibly earlier, when she was reading Ribaud or thinking of Mme Lombard's language classes, there was a sense of unidentified pleasure nuzzling at her.

Something like when you are waking up and still half asleep and you have a feeling that something nice is going to happen. But what? You knew before you went to sleep.

She put on the blue dress with the collar. She glanced at the telephone. Then she looked into the mirror on the wardrobe door.

Her face was pale, and sadness and expectation had made her eyes darker and sterner than usual.

It was nice travelling by the Metro. In these gas-smelling tunnels and crowded cars she became just as much of a non-entity as anyone else. One coat more or less was not noticed here. Becoming an anonymous nondescript non-entity was here everyone's common lot, something regular; nobody belonged here to anybody.

Destination. Change. Exit.

They could have been the lights of a sign reading 'addressing fellow-passengers is strictly prohibited'.

People loaded down with parcels, people reading papers, policemen, schoolchildren. A pale girl holding an infant in her lap, the baby no more than a few days old. It struggles and wakes up. The diameter of its head in the padded hood can't be more than three inches. Its piercing wails do not prompt anyone to look up from their papers, knitting, or arguing. Not even the mother's facial expression alters.

Outside on the tiled wall of the stations poster heads blown up to gigantic sizes. The Cheese Eater. The Bottle Opener. Lace cups on the boyish breasts of a three-metre-tall naked Diana—the Bra for Killer-Virgins.

The passenger on the Metro bench travels in one of the longest anonymous systems of tunnels in Europe. He or she may spend the entire day down below, on a single ticket, travelling to and fro and from one terminal to another. The anonymity is cemented by the superhuman names: Austerlitz, Pasteur, Michel-Ange, Babylon, Elysium. How many attractions her predecessors must have found here. Why not she? This was a question she certainly could not have answered on that November day as she travelled towards Alésia Square, leaning her pale face against the window pane as the steam from her own breath gradually obscured from her view the inhuman posters and the legendary names.

*

At first they met on Wednesdays and Fridays. Sometimes Sunday. Usually they had lunch together.

The doctor was calm and friendly.

"You don't like it here, do you?" he asked.

"It's cold." She spoke of pullovers and track suits.

"Don't wear pullovers on top of each other. They will only put you in a bad mood."

"At night or in the evenings... I would sometimes really like to put my mittens on."

"Don't."

He told her that he grew up in a small town in the mountains of the South-west. He did not find his flat when he first came to Paris. So he left boarding college and moved in with a girl. That was before the war. Franciska had not yet been born. The city was no friendlier then either. People don't like to open their mouths around here.

Wondering and almost hostile, she looked back at him.

"But they do. 'How are you?—Fine, thank you.'"

"Yes, of course. In the street. You know I work chiefly with mothers. Mothers talk a lot when their children are ill. Or else they are completely silent. The city? I moved from the centre as soon as I could. With all these cars it gets more and more appalling."

"And the suburbs?"

They were drinking some kind of bitter vermouth with lemon and orange slices floating in it.

"They are ugly, but more human. My wife did not like it there. No wonder she became ill."

(The suburbs are more human. But the old dark doors stay locked for ages. People seem to watch each other only through the gaps between closed shutters or from behind dusty curtains. It took Franciska, for instance, ten years to make the aquaintance of their neighbour. Once late at night the rain poured through their ceiling. She had to ask for a ladder; Julien was out. After that Monsieur Beaumont, a council employee, raised his cap and slightly inclined his lanky upper body whenever they happened to meet in the street. They never spoke to each other again, but that contact —a ladder and a pail of sooty rain-water—survived from their being neighbours.)

Oysters were served in a bowl supported by a metal frame.

Whether they tasted good? They tasted of nothing; they were cold and sea-flavoured. But the shells were pretty. Some of them as large as an ashtray.

Franciska described her hotel room to Julien. She tried to tell him about the bed, its headboard, the wash-basin screened off by a flower-printed curtain and standing on a dais-like affair in the corner. Like a circus wagon. It might even have wheels. Two floors farther down there was a bathroom, but the key had been lost for ages. There was an iron tub standing in it, and a big cauldron.

"They cook herbs, bats, and snakes there," the doctor said. "These hoteliers are very old, you know. Some of them are six hundred years old. They still know the ancient recipes: for gout, for successful seduction, and for abortion. And what is your language-school like?"

"I don't really know. Like a pleasure-boat or a masqued ball. You see silver-stockinged girls sitting around in feather-trimmed dresses."

"Yes, of course," Julien continued. "And the old language instructor is probably completely bald under her purple wig."

"She teaches a subject called Civilization," the girl said vaguely and started to wave her spoon slowly as she used to do as a little girl and wanted to play for time to avoid having to swallow the soup left in her bowl.

The doctor put his hand firmly on the spoon and looked into Franciska's bemused face:

"And when you happened to mention your native country, they had, of course, no idea...

"One of the boys asked me if we had any magic rituals."

"You should have made up some for him."

Franciska lifted her spoon again and glanced at Dr. Bessodes inimically.

"It is really terrible," she said.

"What is terrible?" the doctor raised his voice.

"That they look at me so strangely. Because I am not their..."

"Do you want them to do anything for you?"

"Why, of course, not." The girl laid down her spoon.

"Then what are you afraid of?"

"I only..."

The doctor made a motion toward the waiter flourishing an invisible pencil in the air as if he were writing. This was something Franciska was often to see him do; it meant that he wanted to pay. The waiters would nod and come from the remotest corners of the restaurants more readily in response to this sign language than they would at the shouts from neighbouring tables or at the calling of impatiently clinked glasses.

"What do you want?" he asked as he was counting out the money. Franciska cast down her eyes.

"Is it their sympathy? Would you like that old idiot to like you, the one who heard fifty years ago in primary school about the Huns from whom Saint Geneviève saved Lutetia?"

The waiter folded the bill. Franciska did not look at the notes.

"But the old lady has class," she said stubbornly.

"Yes, of course. It's surface polish. Do you know where she picked it up? At spas for rheumatics. Or in the city park. And anyway."

"But that no one says a word. That in Europe..."

"Who do you expect to say anything? The skiing champions from the North? Or the cow-girls from the other side of the Atlantic?"

"Still. General awareness."

"Who? What awareness?" Julien was talking again in his usual quiet manner. He fidgeted a little as he stuffed his wallet into his trouser pocket. "One would not wear one's injuries on the outside. An adult should not wound the same place."

Oh yes. He also said something to the effect that one does not respond to the world only through one's senses.

"But also with one's infinite intelligence," she said.

"Well, certainly with his brains. That too."

"And?"

"And?" The doctor looked carefully at Franciska. "Just try it for heaven's sake. Don't waste your time on these . . ."

Translated by Éva Rácz and Christine Outram

THE TRAINING OF SPECIALISTS AND THE EDUCATION OF INTELLECTUALS

by

TIBOR HUSZÁR

The first universities established in the Middle Ages faithfully mirrored feudal society. Theology was at the top of the hierarchy of studies. The university was an autonomous organization of teachers and students, with the Church having some sort of supervisory role.

Bourgeois society reformed the academic world under the aegis of the enlightenment. The enlightened monarchs changed the nature of teaching, as well as the legal status of the universities. The primary objective was the training of officials, providing them with the necessary legal and administrative knowledge to run a centralized state. The faculty of law and political sciences moved to the top in continental universities, and special colleges were founded where the newly needed skills of mining, forestry, and civil engineering were taught at a somewhat more theoretical level than under the older system of articles or apprenticeship.

The image of nature transmitted by the universities gradually changed. The conceptual substance of the term university was also changed. It no longer meant the university of teachers and students *(universitas magistrorum et scholarium)*, but the university of letters *(universitas litterarum)*.

Germany showed certain features which differed from places further west. Economic and political progress was replaced here by intellectual fermentation and philosophic construction. The image of the German universities was determined by the realities, the lack of power of the bourgeois institutions, national romanticism, and the philosophic school of idealism. The German universities of the nineteenth century, or to be more exact, those of the beginning of this one, served also as a model for Eastern Europe including Hungary.

In Britain and in the United States the dynamically developing capitalist economy represented a challenge for the universities too. In those countries practical disciplines made progress as early as the second half of the nineteenth century, although largely outside the universities. However, at the universities as well, positivism became stronger, and under its influence the aim of teaching, the organizational structure of the faculties and their hierarchic order became gradually modified. Vigorous specialization was a characteristic phenomenon. All this was inseparable from the dynamism of the social and scientific division of labour, and the positivist view of science, which assumes that the various disciplines are autonomous. There is no science, only sciences. The universal connecting link is an assumption which cannot be proven by reason.

All this explains why, by the turn of the century, the emptying of the concept of the

universitas litterarum became increasingly evident. The connections among the faculties and disciplines became increasingly formal. The university became no more than a framework of specialized schools, a few ancient universities that acted as finishing schools for the élite were the only exception.

The technological and scientific revolution presented a new challenge to the whole system of tertiary education. Within a couple of decades the number of students quadrupled in the advanced capitalist countries and came to cover 20 per cent of the relevant age-group in time. It became part of worldly wisdom that education in general and the tertiary training of specialists in particular were an important factor of economic growth. The universities as well as the technical colleges turned into gigantic factories serving the needs of industry and commerce, and of the bureaucracy. Scientists desiring to satisfy such demand specialized, for all they were worth. The tension between research and teaching grew. The capital intensity of research and the increasing importance of team-work added their effect. University departments have been replaced by large institutions disposing over substantial budgets. To quote Ralf Dahrendorf: "The representative workshops of the search for truth have become industrially structured research laboratories."

The recognition that the human resource is an indispensable factor of economic growth has modified the social role of tertiary education, as well as the whole system of government support and expectations. The liberal state—in harmony with *laissez faire* economics—recognized that what went on inside universities was none of its business. Monopoly capitalism, the society of huge organizations—not least as an answer to the challenge of socialist ideas—established a structure for the direct and indirect influencing of universities. Around 1960, the methodical examination of the interaction between tertiary education and the planning of the human resource was built into the system as a new element, though not at the same rate and concentration in each developed capitalist country. The economic boom at the time considerably furthered this process.

The socialist countries of Eastern Europe right from the start looked on all stages of the educational and training process as decisive conditions in the rapid growth of the forces of production. Industrialization and the cultural revolution were linked and the dynamic development of the tertiary training of specialists became an aspect of the planning of the human resource. Institutions of tertiary education played a distinguished role in the creation of a stratum of professional men and women showing a new social composition and imbued with a new ideology.

Bearing in mind the country's resources the dynamism of post-liberation growth was tremendous. Compared to 1937/38 the number of full-time students has grown five-fold, the total number of students more than eight and a half-fold, and the number of graduates approximately ten-fold. Structural modernization took place at the same time. The rate of growth can nevertheless not be considered satisfactory. Thus, in 1975, the number of students per 10,000 inhabitants was 102 in Hungary, 174 in the GDR, 169 in Poland, and 135 in Austria.

Before the liberation the subjects studied reflected the structural characteristics of Hungarian society. In the 1937/38 academic year every third Hungarian student studied law. In the 1978/79 academic year just about one student in two attended technical, agricultural, or business administration institutions of tertiary education. Again comparing the present professional structure with countries of a similar level of development, the changes cannot be considered satisfactory. Before 1945, the number of students from working-class or poor peasant families was negligible. The proportions changed radically at the end of the forties. In the past decade, in spite of smaller fluctuations, the ratio of children of working-class

families became stabilized around 45 per cent. However, the inherited cultural disadvantages still restrict mobility.

The pace of the changes was not steady. Years of dynamic growth were followed by considerable, though passing, stagnation. Senseless changes of curricula, organization, and location were frequent. These were inseparable from the trends which determined socio-economic developments of the times, not to mention measures that affected the whole educational system.

This is, of course, a mere outline; the processes are not unidirectional, and peculiarities changing from country to country modify the situation at many points. However, none of this changes the decisive fact that the system and functions of the tertiary education were modified in harmony with changes in the social system; and that both in the developed capitalist and in socialist countries, the training of highly qualified specialists is considered an important condition of economic growth and thus the primary function of tertiary education.

Problems of training, the presumed and actual functions of tertiary education. What is professionalism?

The presumed and actual functions of tertiary education do not coincide even in the most ideal conditions. As Jan Szczepanski showed, "the tensions and contradictions attending the realization of the functions of the training of specialists may be treated as natural phenomena. A boomerang effect is consequently felt if planning and in general any conceptual idea concerning institutions of tertiary education sets out from the presumed ideal conditions of work of universities and does not reckon with real conditions, or such facts as cannot be quantified, which give a different meaning to the declared values and goals."

Effects and tensions modifying the forecast are implicit in the very nature of the process. There are, however, foci of tension which are caused and explained primarily by the rigidity of planning, by ill-considered decisions taken by the educational administration, and by unsolved basic questions.

The totality of tensions is of a provisional nature and the consequence of the present economic recession. Difficulties connected with the employment of graduates have become intensified in the last five years. Guy Neave, e.g., has reached the conclusion, on the basis of a comparative study of five developed capitalist countries—Belgium, Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, Britain, and Finland—that the crisis in those countries is general: It is a crisis of growth, of aims, of student behaviour. A sea of troubles attends the universities.

Neave makes structural claims and offers important suggestions. His methodological starting-point is that in complex organizations, including tertiary education, it is rare that changes should affect one area only. On the contrary, the more complex the body is, the more likely it becomes that the events will elicit a multiple reaction affecting both outside and inner aspects.

The interaction between the economy, the state, and tertiary education is not one-directional. The reactions of the tertiary education system are only partly explained by external causes; such crises are either strengthened or blunted by the state of the universities themselves. One of the effects of the economic crisis has been that it has laid bare certain deeply hidden tensions, the roots of which are in the preceding decade.

As Guy Neave explains, the indicated symptoms of crisis were postulated also as a crisis of planning. When, as a reaction to the recession, the growth in student numbers slowed

it also became apparent how fragile the assumptions concerning tertiary education were. It turned out that we lack knowledge of the social, psychological, and economic factors which determine the transition from education to work. With hindsight it can be claimed that education-centredness itself contributed, at least in part, to the lack of political and economic knowledge. This included the belief that if the level of demand was established on the basis of demographic forecasts, tertiary education itself would operate as a regulating mechanism and produce, in adequate numbers, the specialists needed for continuous economic growth. The recession proved that this hope was unfounded, and unemployement among graduates also meant a crisis for tertiary educational planning. Given knowledge of the new facts—according to the author quoted—it is even less clear how the educational system influences individual desires and the process of professionalization.

In the present conditions of the West and North European countries, professionalization—in Neave's view—reflects three parallel processes: the crisis of educational planning, the change which has occurred in the administrative relationship between governments and tertiary education, as well as the relationship between tertiary education and the state bureaucracy. The concept is called upon to justify the endeavours of those who wish to create a better harmony between a regular tertiary education output and the obvious requirements of the economy, simultaneously reducing the extent of obligations accepted by the state, that is the declared or implied guarantee of a livelihood to graduates of élite-training institutions.

In Neave's view, all this exemplifies the gaining ground of technocratic values. On the macro-economic level it helps to discourage hopes concerning the public sector and, looked at from the individual angle, it strengthens the hope that there is a choice of careers. The techniques of communication are meant to assure that students be sensitive to existing occupational demands.

Thus professionalization reflects a peculiar ideology that wishes to reduce the gap between the needs of the economy and the wishes of students, subordinating university education entirely to instrumental aspects. In other words: the tertiary educational system must, in response to the labour market, function as a positive instrument of economic growth. For the individual tertiary education is an employment agency, which directs students to those professions that are linked closely to the changing needs of commerce, industry, and the tertiary sector.

The critique of the technocratic view is pertinent on several points and corresponds with our own view. The education of specialists—or if you like, professionalization—is not in the conditions of the technological-scientific revolution the exclusive criterion of tertiary education. Neave rightly argues that the educational system has internal aspects of value which cannot be disregarded, and which must not be subordinated without reservations to the outside, instrumental aspects of value of the market, or of the capitalist economy as such. However, there is also much that is utopian and inspired by the New Left. His critique of the technocratic ideology makes sense, but the concept of professionalization cannot be restricted to the ideological elements mentioned. The technological and scientific revolution has had inevitable consequences; the characteristically twentieth-century dilemmas in the training of specialists, the genuine requirements and contradictions produced by new conditions cannot be explained by the attitudes of the ideologues of professionalism only.

In Hungary, and in the other socialist countries, the strategy of tertiary education is determined by other values and goals. But the relationship between the state, the economy, and tertiary education can be described in Hungary as well as a many-sided system. It is certain that, consequently, the contradictions of the Hungarian system of tertiary education

can also be only partly explained by outside causes. The effects derived from the developmental disturbances of the economy can be strengthened or blunted by the inner contradictions of the system of tertiary education in Hungarian conditions as well. In other words: the tensions of national economic planning, and of the planning of the labour force as part of it, which were experienced to a lesser extent earlier, the complications around admissions and around employment, the fluctuation between the overproduction and shortage of specialists in certain fields, the difficulty certain groups of students have in obtaining information to guide them in formulating their life-strategies—I shall return to this subject in detail later—cannot be considered simply the consequences of economic difficulties. On the other hand, even if for fundamentally different reasons, the one-sided technocratic interpretation of professionalism is present in Hungary. Since different ways of arguing lead to extremes it is especially important to interpret the function of the training of specialists more precisely, making evident the possible congruence and divergence in the training of specialists and the education of intellectuals. In this connection the points of contact between planning the supply of specialists and planning the educational system should be more clearly outlined.

From the planning of the supply of specialists to the planning of the educational system

A comprehensive analysis of the contradictions of the system of tertiary education was initiated by the government early in the seventies. Important measures were outlined, and research and analysis more resolutely faced the sources of tension. Raising this issue therefore has its precedents. It is thanks to these activities that it is becoming clearer that the reform of tertiary education can be successful only in harmony with a reform of the educational system as a whole. It was said in the course of the debates that the planners and the researchers should examine the institutions of tertiary education as a system—to be more precise, as a sub-system of education as such—the functioning of which is influenced by both external and internal conditions. This means theoretical recognizance of the fact that, although the educational system is intersected at certain points by manpower management, at the same time tertiary education, which functions as a sub-system of this system, also functions as a whole showing the inner laws of training and education, within which the value aspects of science are also present, and which is simultaneously the medium of political processes, of the ambitions and institutions of the students, etc.

The autonomy of the system of tertiary education is, of course, relative. I therefore do not agree with those who, faced with the one-sidedness of professionalization, wish to make absolute this autonomy drawing a dividing line between the requirements of the economy, placed in space-time, and the values of tertiary education—and the school system as such—allegedly exempt from such categories. The autonomy of the system of public education is limited by hard social facts.

It would, therefore, be most erroneous if—in terms of the differences between intended and unintended consequences—one should wish to draw a dividing line between the long-term development of tertiary education and that of manpower planning.

In Hungary not less but more planning is needed, educational planning which takes better account of the nature of tertiary education and education in general. However, educational planning can obviously not set out from the principle of the autogenesis of the educational system. On the contrary, the planning of education can only be developed over 15–20 years, as a constituent element of the long-term national economic and social plan.

Knowing of the recent efforts made by socio-economic planners one may reckon with progress in these areas. Let me mention a few facts only. One may expect with some reason that in the future qualitative indices will play a vigorous role in the forecasting of the labour demand. Planners will devote more attention to factors determining professional mobility, analysing their expected influence on changes in the social structure, examining the dynamic interconnection between social inequalities and educational levels, the absorption effects of household farms, the position of the free professions, the role of extra-curricular education, the stratifying influence of the settlement pattern, the expected circumstances of selective economic development, etc.

It may be assumed that such an examination will make planning more flexible: the wealth of the spontaneous processes, the difficulties concerning the measurement and forecasting of the social changes are certain to develop a new kind of sensitivity. One hopes that it will become clearer what can and must be forecast precisely, and what cannot be forecast in theory or practice.

Obviously, educational planners either cannot be made responsible for something manpower planning or planning as such cannot do. Aware of an educational policy which formulates the goals of education in harmony with general political objectives and the particularities of the educational system, the educational planner can forecast more exactly the developmental trends of tertiary education determined by outside and inner circumstances, and the long-term prospects of university or non-university post-graduate institutes.

The substance of educational process cannot be kept in suspense in the process of educational planning. The decisive value aspect of educational planning is not the equilibrium of manpower policy—although this is also taken into account—but—in harmony with long-term social objectives—versatile, harmonious personalities. Universities and colleges do not simply train a labour force; their aim is the education of intellectuals with rounded minds and personalities, politically and morally committed, and rooted in culture in general and the arts in particular. Consequently, universities cannot be limited to the tertiary training of specialists: in an advanced socialist society, that wants to remain faithful to its ideals, intellectual roles cannot be abstracted from the needs, attitudes, skills, and knowledge required by a given profession.

Planning specialist requirements cannot be based exclusively or primarily on an analysis of the economy, the division of labour, or the vested interests of professions.

A broader interpretation of the term economy is inevitable. Factories or producers' cooperatives are not merely units of production but points of concentration of human and social relations, and production is not merely a technological process. Consequently, the skills of an engineer or of an agronomist cannot be limited to a knowledge of technical standards of measurement, or to soil- and biochemistry. Nobody denies the importance of the social sciences or of theories of management, but at present the specialized university departments, i.e. those with actual professional authority, do not concern themselves with the so-called human factors.

An analysis of social conditions is important from the aspect of changes in other professions as well. We do not know enough about the constant and changing elements of medical knowledge, the separation and interdependence of specialized medical work. But a layman can recognize that there is a divergence between the principles of a socialist health system and the ideas of roles shaped in the practice of medical training. Public hygiene is obviously not only the business of those who work for the relevant clinics, authorities, hospitals, or university departments. A consultant physician, a psychiatrist, or general practitioner are not real doctors if they aim to understand and "treat" patients purely in terms of anatomy,

physiology, and individual psychology. This is generally accepted on principle in practice, however, in spite of the declared intentions the system of specialized training gives rise to different emphases.

In the past decades millions moved from villages to cities, in villages the old traditional communities fell apart, the structure of families changed and so did the nature of kinship relations. Socialism is a society based on the principle of community; but in a paradoxical way these changes have weakened earlier social links. The construction of new communities, the influencing of the way of living and of changes in the way of living demand a new type of official. Social workers are needed to deal with deviant behaviour (juvenile delinquency, neurosis, alcoholism), the rehabilitation of ex-prisoners, and the care of the aged. For the moment, the health service is compelled to cope with unsolved social tensions, and problems appear mostly as symptoms to be treated by doctors.

The consequences of the technological and scientific revolution must also be interpreted in a more differentiated way by the educational disciplines.

The history of the intellectual professions and roles shows that intellectual functions change. In harmony with social needs and in connection with social policy and culture new intellectual functions may develop. Let me emphasize that the appearance of these new functions is often less open in the extra-economic sphere. A single example will point to insufficiently charted seas. In Gypsy communities it is those in charge who work successfully who know the way of living and values of the Gypsies from the inside. Culture officials working amongst Gypsies, but in a wider sense all community-building culture officials, should know something about ethnography, cultural and social history, sociology and psychology, as well as possessing skills required in practical field-work. In addition to the above-mentioned disciplines it may be assumed that specialists in these areas must also have a basic knowledge of economics, law, and social hygiene. In Hungary, the conditions for such a type of combined education are absent in the universities. Given the present structure of universities and colleges the possibility of movement between universities and faculties is also limited.

These examples are of a random sort. They merely serve to emphasize that, although at the present developmental stage of Hungarian society, the training of highly qualified specialists is the determinant function of the university and college system, this seemingly unequivocal setting of the task covers complex and contradictory imports. Dynamically changing conditions incessantly challenge educational disciplines and the substance and nature of the knowledge required, modifying the concrete conditions for the realization of the central function.

The employment of graduates and the use of specialized knowledge

The process of becoming a specialist is influenced by numerous factors in the course of university training. The assumed and the actual functions of the institutions of tertiary education do not coincide in this respect. A university or college is not simply an educational institution but the meeting-point of various human, that is student, needs, life-strategies, and ambitions. The efficient training of specialists may be assisted or obstructed by the economic and—open or hidden—sectoral and regional vested interests—crossing or supporting each other—and the universities and colleges too, and within them faculties and departments have their own systems of values, and mechanisms through which they assert their interests.

At present we are not aware in depth of the functioning vested interests and value systems,

knowing little of the changing ambitions and actual lives of persons before, during, and after training. Nevertheless, available surveys allow one to pinpoint some sources of tension, and it can be documented in what direction the above-mentioned sociological realities modify central ideas. Take the employment of graduates, using a few of the conclusions of congruence surveys. These analyse the ensemble of systems connected with the correspondence or lack of correspondence of the employment and educational structures. A study of the figures over the past fifteen years has shown that the nature of job and the training given fully cover each other in the case of approximately 87 per cent of university graduates. Congruence is above the average in the case of doctors and pharmacists, as well as teachers (99.5 and 90.8 per cent respectively), that for lawyers is low: 63 per cent worked in jobs which entirely corresponded to their degrees.

Looking at things from the aspect of the job, that is whether a given job was filled by an adequately trained person, further differences were discovered. So, for instance, among upper and medium executives only 60.5 and 61.8 per cent respectively were adequately trained for the job. A similar, though lesser, incongruence is present in the case of senior technical staff (73.8 per cent and 77.6 per cent respectively in the upper and the medium echelons). Finally, if figures for the employment of graduates are broken down according to sectors of the economy, the share of those in jobs fully corresponding to their training is relatively high (93.6 and 92.3 per cent) in health and cultural services, as well as in agriculture, forestry, and hydrotechnology; in the building industry, in wholesale and retail trade, as well in tertiary services the ratio is much lower (76.7, 66.8, and 50.1 per cent).

I do not contest the practical value of the investigations, but it should be said that these surveys do not as such offer sufficient information on the social processes as a result of which the employment of graduates in jobs differing from their training still continues. The methodological difficulties were mentioned by the sociologists themselves. It is not beyond dispute what kind of jobs the graduate can be considered to be specifically trained for. This dilemma is resolved only in part by the varieties of basic qualification, a differentiation between fully corresponding, partly corresponding, and not in the least corresponding fundamental types. In the conditions of current scientific and technological change the structure of jobs and the substance and the scope of knowledge are modified more frequently, and that adds to the difficulties.

Absolute importance cannot therefore be attributed to the figures, and one cannot unequivocally describe incongruence as negative. A change of occupation in the direction of the convertibility of training is a natural concomitant of technological change.

However carefully we deal with the results of the survey, the figures nevertheless suggest certain serious conclusions. To stay with graduate engineers: in Hungary, in 1949, 12,000, in 1963, 43,000 and in 1971 approximately 96,000 of those in employment held an engineering diploma, or equivalent qualifications. 25–30 per cent of these were in agriculture. The number of persons holding down an engineering job was estimated by the Central Statistical Office at 102,000 in 1970 (including agricultural engineers), 50,000 of them was in possession of a diploma issued by an institution ranked as of tertiary status. András Révész, a recognized authority, drew two conclusions: "First: at least 102,000 — 58,000 = 44,000 jobs said to require engineering qualifications, that is 42.5 per cent of such jobs, were filled by persons with only secondary or even lower qualifications. At the same time, at least 96,000 — 58,000 = 38,000 persons with engineering diploma, around 40 per cent of all those so qualified, worked in jobs which did not require their qualifications." Even if one takes the reliability of the job descriptions with a grain of salt, and one assumes, with András Révész, that the above figures exaggerate the number and percentage of persons

without an engineering diploma who do jobs requiring such qualifications, and also consider mobility and substitutability to be justified in a great number of cases, the degree of incongruence between jobs and qualifications nevertheless offers food for thought.

The figures of the congruence surveys confirm, in spite of the limitations of their validity, the view of those who argue that the efficiency of the social reproduction of the labour force is reduced by the adjustment of the educational structure to the processes of the division of labour. A diploma is not the final point in the training of qualified personnel. Planning of labour needs can only be efficient if educational and employing institutions dismantle the rigid dividing walls which exist between study and work. In this case the incongruence does not become a misfortune but a natural concomitant of rapid technological and social changes, and a mechanism and interest system can be developed under the influence of which a change in the professional structure may occur at an optimal rate and with the participation of the graduate labour force.

Professional functions and the way they changed

In the decades following on liberation the professional structure underwent changes, the social status and content of intellectual functions changed. The main features of structural changes are known although their consequences have not yet been studied in sufficient depth. First of all, the social composition of the professions has changed as has the hierarchical structure. Privileges of a feudal sort have also come to an end. The professional structure has become modernized; the earlier dominance of the law and the church is over.

The functions of professionals have also changed. In the decades preceding liberation, the professions—due to the structural characteristics of Horthy-Hungary—were isolated in a peculiar manner. In the activity of state officials the exercise of power received particular emphasis; members of the free professions functioned also as entrepreneurs; progressive men of letters, artists, social scientists, and all those who liberated themselves of the dictates of officialdom or of the market, functioned as the critics of society. The most class-conscious of the critics joined the working-class movement and operated as their ideologues. Due to this specific polarization, a critique of society, with an improving intention, became fixed in the public mind as ideological men of letters sort of work. Special training was linked with the exercise of power, and economic rationality was considered characteristic of middle-class attitudes. Such peculiarities also explain a messianic role as part of the critique of society: officaldom was associated with disciplined professional work and business and engineering ranked low in the estimate of intellectuals rooted in literature and the classics.

The change in the composition of the professions, the six-fold growth in the number of engineering diploma holders, as well as the quadrupling of the number of economists working in agriculture, are not simply indicators of quantitative change. Well-educated messianic or prophetic intellectuals, as well as bush-lawyers cleverly making use of a superficial acquaintance with the law, a quick tongue, and the bearing of gentlemen, have become anachronistic; scientific progress and the social division of labour tend to discriminate among intellectual activities. Intellectuals have been largely professionalized in Hungary as well.

The characteristics of the professional function do not remain unchanged under the conditions of socialist society either. The concrete nature of these changes differs in the various professions, but every one has new functional characteristics due to the structural social changes. Attention to the differences is necessary, it is decisive however that a doctor

is considered a professional man of full value within the health organization, an engineer or economist within the industrial organization, and an agronomist in a producers' cooperative only if they are familiar with the structure of the organization they are working in, if they are broadly educated, familiar with the arts and literature, and the social sciences, and if they are able to sense and to interpret the social and human aspects of their work.

A detailed study of intellectual functions is inseparable from a discussion of present political practice as determined by history, the characteristics of the power and technical division of labour, and the relationship between the working class and intellectuals. This is not the place to examine such questions in depth. Due to the nature of this paper, I only wish to document anew a recognition which is considered a truism but is not studied at sufficient depth, i.e. that the educational function of the universities and colleges cannot be restricted to the training of members of the professions, tertiary education being the scene where the new intellectual is shaped and socialized. Let me here outline the functions of intellectuals—of a socialist intelligentsia—in an abstract generalized form, from the aspect of a more efficient realization of this educational objective.

Doing one's share in public life, a critical way of seeing things, and a demand for self-knowledge are not confined to professional people. Such things should, in a socialist democracy, be typical of the whole of society. The right and duties of intellectuals possessing tertiary professional training backed by being steeped in Marxist social science are linked to their learning and intellectual armoury. The preparation of social reforms, resolutions, and government decisions have repeatedly shown what reserves Hungarian society can boast of. The economic reform is only one example of many. It should be added that this practice is not yet general, being in some areas restricted to formal questions or such of third-rate importance.

The political functions of the socialist intelligentsia (which include the presentation and mediation of interests) do not manifest themselves identically on national and sectoral and local questions. The nature of the formulated questions, their political and ideological density also influences the way in which proposals are communicated. But it is an objective necessity on all levels to make the presence of the intellectuals, of intellectual organizations, of scientific associations, of academic institutions, of literary and artistic societies and publications more vigorous in the evaluation of hidden processes at work at great depths, in the interpretation of social contradictions, in bringing interests to the conscious level, and in turning systems of social planning into something constructive.

In Hungarian society the culture-mediating functions of the intelligentsia have been modified, but their importance has not diminished with the changes, on the contrary. In developed industrial countries the mass media have institutionalized a novel system of circulating knowledge and cultural values, the editions of books have grown, journals have a larger readership, etc. Needs have to change in harmony with these changed conditions. In Hungarian society the importance of political, cultural, and professional knowledge becomes multiplied, political education is supplemented by legal knowledge, scientific and economic information become elements of general knowledge.

Certain intellectual functions become modified in connection with their areas of activity and local characteristics. In governmental offices and diverse associations organization and the exploration and bringing to the surface of interests have an entirely different function than in laboratories or clinics, the culture-mediating role has differing concreteness in the capital city than in villages or market towns. This is no less true for intellectual functions such as the exploration and systematization of new knowledge, the methodical transmission of knowledge, and the application of knowledge.

What is more, the ranking of intellectual roles depends on the quality of knowledge. As Gramsci said, it is true that social hegemony and the organizational function of the state both elicit a certain division of labour and thus a number of job descriptions, some of which no longer include any element of supervision or organization. In the organizational apparatus there are a number of manual and instrumental occupations (clerical assistant, and not independent official or functionary, etc.), it is nevertheless necessary to make this differentiation and some others too. It is necessary to differentiate within intellectual activity between various levels; in the last resort these stand for genuine qualitative differences. Important scientists, philosophers, artists etc. are at the highest level and at the lowest the most simple administrators and diffusers of the already existing accumulated intellectual treasure.

I only refer to these multi-directional roles to be able to formulate more convincingly that the technocratic interpretation of the concept of the intellectual as professional contradicts the objective needs of Hungarian society. Tertiary education cannot be a factory turning out professional men and women. The goal is the education of responsible intellectuals.

The socialization of intellectuals and their preparation for intellectual roles

Of course, the university system anticipates only in part the conditions of the fulfilment of intellectual functions demanding ideological commitment, wide knowledge, ability, and experience. Tertiary education is only one factor, and not even the decisive factor, in the system of influences which finally decides whether a graduate professional man or woman is able to act as a socialist intellectual accepting a variety of commitments. In other words, if in everyday practice there is neither a demand, nor an opportunity for practising these intellectual functions—or if in certain cases conditions do not exist even for the utilization of professional knowledge—intellectual socialization of university students cannot be of adequate efficiency. In other words, specialization in university studies can only be efficient if it relies on political and intellectual practice which ensures the social conditions for these functions.

University and college students experience the fate of young diploma holders as their own. Future prospects are important factors in the growth of personality. That is why information gathered on employment opportunities has a guiding role amongst students. News connected with the social conditions of particular professions reaches students through many channels, and as preliminary images of their career it influences their ideology, moral, and future role acceptance already during their student years. This is why fitting young diploma holders into society is of educational importance and part of university policy. Emphasis, naturally, differs according to the profession concerned, as well as the location of the job to be done. A common element is the need for an incentives system which stimulates the employment of younger diploma holders in jobs corresponding to their training, initiating them in the processes of the preparation and control of decisions, and other management tasks.

The atmosphere of universities and colleges and the evaluation of the social status of students is of no less importance. University students occupy a peculiar position in society. They are intellectually mature, and a great many of them are already married, yet they have no income of their own. While studying, close contact is maintained only with certain institutions, and the educational situation is the one they most frequently find themselves in.

The educational situation, especially in student hostels, favours communal gatherings. That is why university and college students form a particular sub-culture and why the fre-

quency and intensity of contacts within the age-group far surpasses the inter-generation contacts. It is therefore natural that coeval groups have a large part to play in the shaping of the social values, professional preliminary images, patterns of behaviour, and ideology. At the same time university and college students are not a uniform social group; they tend to reflect the characteristics of the social structure as such. The family in the first place mediates the role patterns of the section of society concerned, their consumer and behaviour habits, their relationship to basic norms.

The educational process is undoubtedly the decisive factor in preparing for an intellectual role. In this respect two elements are involved which assume each other but are nevertheless not identical. One can be seized, measured, and observed exactly: the definite range of knowledge, abilities, and skills. The other—and let me first discuss this—is less concrete and visible, more difficult to grasp. What I have in mind is a way of thinking shaped by teachers, by the subjects studied as such, and the whole institution, and that is intellectual sensibility. The *universitas litterarum* cannot be reconstructed out of its ruins, a university is not identical with universality. But in our age the interdependence of disciplines, and particular sciences and fields of study, is—if possible—even more in evidence. The information accumulated by the sciences no longer fits into the human brain. Consequently, the ability to learn and intellectual sensibility are more important than the accumulation of facts. And this sensibility must be exercised first of all in the recognition of the interconnections. Future practitioners have no less need of this intellectual sensibility than future scholars. The desire and ability to acquire knowledge dynamically is today the absolute condition for its renewal and usefulness.

The common elements of the education of professional people (and these elements do not necessarily and primarily denote independent disciplines) at all universities and colleges, managerial skills and such as are connected with the organization of work, articulateness, familiarity with the history and social context of one's specialized field, a knowledge of two major languages, and the readiness to continue to study on one's own. The way such skills and knowledge are acquired will, of course, differ in keeping with the character of the teaching institution concerned.

Why should an archeologist or an art historian have organizing ability? The position is obviously clearer when it comes to engineers, agronomists, hospital doctors, or headmistresses. Today the importance of team-work is growing even in scholarship. We all work for organizations and are members of communities. To stay with the examples mentioned: an archeologist may be in charge of excavations, and art historians are employed by museums. If in addition to being scholars they also train as technocrats and if they recognize their role in giving access to culture to others as well, they have even more need of such knowledge and skills. The need to be articulate in one's native language in the first place does not, I believe, call for any special justification. The communication aspect of this is not as obvious in the present system of tertiary education. And yet the ability to communicate is not only the substance of life of a teacher or lecturer: the role of words is just as important in the work of a doctor. A harmonic relationship between doctor and patient cannot come about if the doctor has difficulties in communication. Engineers or economists—though in another sense of the term—have to be able to negotiate.

Nor are knowing about the history and social context of one's field to be taken as special subjects. The whole process of tuition must be planned in such a way that an aluminium engineer starting on the job should know about the history of aluminium production, and be familiar with the prospects of the Hungarian and international aluminium industry, as well as with the structure of the industry in general and of his own works in particular,

not to mention labour relations and generally knowing one's way about the community in which the factory is located and from which it draws its workforce. In other words, he should be educated not only as a professional man, but as a citizen, and as a responsible member and a possible future leader of the community. An engineer is after all responsible for the work of a certain number of people. Knowing two major languages are an integral aspect of being a professional man in our age, as is the ability to go on studying on one's own.

In my experience, the methodical transfer and development of the knowledge and abilities mentioned have been tried out only in a few institutions of tertiary education and where they have been tried, this has only been done in respect of some areas, and with inadequate efficiency.

The options open differ, of course, according to the nature of the universities and colleges. Let me emphasize a single basic principle—leaving the possible alternatives in parenthesis. I want to stress that the knowledge and abilities mentioned should be communicated or demanded primarily in the case of those disciplines that enjoy the greatest authority. In this respect it can be assumed that the main obstacles are not a lack of time but one-sidedness.

The study of Marxist ideology plays an extremely important role in the training of professional men and women. Numerous experiments were carried out in the past twenty years which wanted to adjust such studies to the particular profession trained for. Much that was sound came out of them. At the Faculty of Law of the Loránd Eötvös University the standing of Marxist ideology was raised by linking such studies to that of the philosophy of law. There is a danger, however, that the specifically philosophic, political, and economic aspects of Marxist studies will get drowned in professional questions taught at the particular university. It does not make sense to transfer high-tension ideological questions into a "neutral" scientific field. That does not offer an espace from the dilemmas related to the contradictions of contemporary Hungarian society for the students, and specific questions are not explored at sufficient depth. The danger exists that the ideological subjects are reduced to second-class professional subjects.

A modern exposition of the philosophical problems of human existence is indispensable for the socialization of the intelligentsia. Timeliness and concreteness can be assured by the objective and conceptual analysis of the economic and social processes determining the socialist and the capitalist systems. In this respect, a distinguished place must be given to a more detailed analysis of the sociological and economic conditions that serve as a framework for the operation of the given professional field. Teaching the sociology of the profession or industry concerned should help.

Numerous universities and colleges do not manage to link teaching and practice in an ongoing and organic manner. The teaching of medicine, based as it is on clinical practice, is an exception. And yet, even in medicine, they cannot really cope with the problem of allotting students duties which correspond to the level of their skills and knowledge. Substantially students are listeners.* The Hungarian education system has been substantially changed, but László Németh's words still apply to many places in Hungary: "... practice is still the best teacher; a kitchen teaches an apprentice cook more than the cook, a violin teaches a talented student more than his master. At universities there are no kitchens and no violins. Only cooks and music teachers. Lectures hide practice. University students are in fact people without an occupation who listen to reports about work they never attempt."

* The Hungarian equivalent of undergraduate, *hallgató*, in fact means listener. (Translator's note.)

Time balance studies do not, at the majority of Hungarian universities and colleges, support those who argue against more practical or field work. The more than two hundred free days offer ample scope. The present lecture and exam-centredness of university and college tuition, the one-sided interpretation of requirements and rights do not strengthen either interest in public life or work ethics.

Recent experiments show that where the possibility exists for field work concurrent with lecture-room teaching, some good can be expected in spite of difficulties of organization. Field work prompts a more critical attitude to study, acting as an important motivating factor. Having to cope independently stimulates learning on one's own and may partly counteract one of the most damaging structural deficiencies of tertiary education, that university and college citizens have to act responsibly, making independent decisions, only immediately before their finals, or even later, when starting on their first job. Comprehensive surveys by sociologists of education are not available, but experience suggests that in many areas even conditioning to the rhythm of work causes difficulties to beginners, there being no gradual transition from the intermittent nature of study to continuous work. The growth of democracy among the students, the strengthening of autonomous youth movement activities, are indispensable conditions of training for the role of professional man or woman.

The intellectual amplitude of universities is an important condition for intellectual socialization. The exaggerated segmentation of tertiary education, and insulation between the faculties and the universities, are considerable obstacles in the training of professional men and women with wide horizons who are versed in many fields of scholarship and who can approach things in an interdisciplinary manner. In those towns and cities where there are truncated institutions of tertiary education, with one or two faculties, there is little opportunity for students to enrol in other educational institutions studying subjects which are considered necessary for their future profession (or for other intellectual functions or even to satisfy their own interests). But guest enrolment is not institutionalized in those cities either which possess several faculties or several universities.

My message was well summed up by Antonio Gramsci: "The form of existence of the new intellectual can no longer consist of rhetoric, the outside and momentary stimulation of sentiments and passions, but of active participation in practical life as a creative and planning person, a permanent persuader. He is not merely on orator standing above the abstract mathematical spirit; he proceeds from the technique of work to the technique of scholarship and to the historic and humanistic approach, without which a person remains a mere specialist and does not become a leader (specialist plus politician)."

ROMAN DAWN

by

IVÁN BOLDIZSÁR

A personal account of the consecration of the Hungarian oratory in Saint Peter's crypt

(Rome, 8th of October, 1980) The Wednesday Roman dawn really started in Venice, on Tuesday. This afternoon in Venice, and a sleepless night that, far from making my lids heavy had turned me on, wide awake, had contributed to that sense of being outside myself, of floating freely that dawn in Rome, easing my steps and giving a lift up your hearts kind of boost to my thinking. In Rome I was still full of Venice, my state of grace had been bathed in the October Adriatic light and shade on the waters of the Giudecca canal, the bowing of heads in the church on San Giorgio island, at the tomb of San Gerardo, Saint Gellért, the apostle of Hungary, and the proportions of the double ambulatory of the Benedictine Monastery so perfect that they were almost unbearable. Being within its walls inspired me also in the argument at the Société Européenne de Culture committee meeting, where Miklós Hubay and I supported Mrs Károlyi's SEC prize against a footling objection.

(Prelude in Venice.) The trouble had been that, speaking in French, we had, again and again, mentioned Madame Károlyi, and they had not really known who we were talking about. Then the Károlyi's old friend, Professor Jean-Jacques Mayoux asked for the floor, said 'la Comtesse Karoli' and the penny dropped. The style and title had been the lesser trouble: the native pronouncation of the name *Károlyi* had misled them. It can happen that when a man feels most at home among fellow Europeans he is involuntarily turned into a stranger.

The name Károlyi figured once again that day, linking the old Europe and the old and new Hungary.

The Mihály Károlyi foundation, a living part of Count and Countess Károlyi's life-work extends on the slope of a hill, near Venice, in Provence, midst vineyards, cypresses and Corsican pines. A largish cottage, was occupied by Mihály Károlyi in his second exile, the more painful one, up to his death. Around it, below it, above it on the slope are a library, a lecture room, and eight cabins. These are made available by the foundation for use by young painters, writers, and every kind of artist and art-historian. For ten francs a day, less than the cost of a continental breakfast in a hotel, they can stay there, mingling with the populace in local markets and elsewhere, painting, writing, composing or making music, or merely meditating if that is their fancy. In the past ten years five hundred young artists, from every corner of Europe, have there gloried in the near-by sea and the Provençal landscape, enjoying peace and quiet, so rare these days, and the company of friends. Countess Károlyi spends six months of the year there herself. A few months ago she asked the SEC Executive' Council to take over the patronage of the Foundation, practical matters to be looked after by the Hungarian SEC centre. A Hungarian oratory in the Vatican, a Hungarian enclave in "the

fields of Provence, pregnant with song" (I could not resist intruding a line known to every Hungarian schoolboy), but *for* the whole of Europe! The name of the game is that these are not symbols, but part of the real world. (What kind of reality does usage refer to which says Europe and means the Community of the Nine?)

What I felt then, already when taking off for Rome was that the unshakeable and ineradicable joint system of semiotics of Hungarian and European history was alive in me. That wherever I travelled in Europe, I would meet the footprints of Hungarian history. That wherever I walked in Hungary I would encounter the marks of Europe. Whatever I did in Europe as a Hungarian meant acting out the European role. There were days which compressed a thousand years of history, that Tuesday in Venice, for instance, stretching from San Gerardo who was our own saint and bishop Gellért, to Mihály Károlyi, President of the first Hungarian Republic; or Wednesday in Rome which stretched from Pope Sylvester II and Saint Stephen, first King of Hungary to their present successors.

(Midnight arrival, dawn rising, in Rome) The plane touched down at eleven, it was midnight by the time I reached the hotel. A note from Amerigo Tot awaited me at the front desk: oratory consecration at seven in the morning. Everyone had to be in the Vatican by six. The television people would take me, he was not going.

That did not make sense to me, so I called him. "After all, the bronze relief on one of the walls is your own work." No, he was not going, there was something fishy at the back of the early hour. There are some about who want to play down the Hungarian oratory. They are behind the dawn service, so *tout* Rome, rising late, would not even know about it.

You must not argue with an artist if he has just put out his sensitivity antennae. I do not lend credence to the story of a plot, but I cannot convince him either. He must have suffered some injury that can only be assuaged by success. Anyway it is he who is on the inside in the Vatican. A splendid new bronze door which he had designed for Saint Peter's, it had been set aside at the last minute for the sake of a native Italian sculptor's work, and that though Pope Paul VI of whom Amerigo had frequently had audience, had liked the model. Recreating the Age of Saint Stephen oratory had been Paul VI's idea, what a pity he did not live to see it. Amerigo *né* Imre, in this late hour, putting balm on his unknown sorrow, quoted Paul VI: "Hungary had been close to my heart up to now, in future it will be close to my head." The oratory "as you'll see tomorrow at dawn" is next to the tomb of Paul VI. The head of the coffin almost touches the other side of the altar-wall.

The inner alarm-clock is more punctual than any device. I set my travelling-clock for a quarter to five and asked the sleepy doorman as well to give me a buzz. By the time the alarm sounded and the doorman had grumbled into the phone I was wide awake. Károly Szelényi fetched me at half past five: photographer of Lake Balaton, of the Kremlin and all Moscow, and of the works of art in the Hungarian oratory in one person. He had driven to Rome but he had parked his car at the other end of Rome, in the courtyard of the Hungarian Academy. Why are Roman crooks attracted by poor little Hungarian Ladas and Polski Fiats, preferring to break them open rather than a million Italian registered cars? Szelényi had been off to the via Giulia before the pinking of the sky, to fetch his car to get us all to the Vatican in time: the television crew and their cameras, Zsuzsa D. Fehér, the art-historian, editor of the television film on the art works in the oratory, and me as the fifth.

(Via della Conciliazione.) The youthful television crew cursed the dawn start in most unecclesiastical terms, but by the time we had turned into the Corso from the narrow and medieval Via Laurina and had reached the Piazza del Popolo the early morning sour mood

had passed. At a quarter to six the Romans, and their cars, were still asleep. Rome was large and wide-open in front of our eyes. The violet, grey, pink and blue sky compensated for lack of sleep. An understanding of Mantegna's skies suddenly dawned on me. Usually the jungle of cars will not let you see the true proportions and nuances of the city. Now, in the silence, virgin Rome, free of tourists, spread herself in front of us. The Castle of St. Angelo floated above the Tiber as if held aloft by the wings of the Archangel Michael. When we reached the Via della Conciliazione the dome of Saint Peter's as it were parted from the nave, the tension of lines curving into one lifted it on high. I inwardly blessed those—whatever was at the back of their minds—who had made us a gift of this early hour before the consecration.

A group of Hungarian pilgrims in the wake of a Red-White-and-Green tricolor moved up the Via della Conciliazione, as it were as a symbol of another reconciliation. What had their ancestors witnessed nine hundred years earlier, those for whose sake Sylvester II had donated an oratory to the first Hungarian king? It had been there for centuries, right up to 1776 and the building of the sacristy of the present Saint Peter's, when it was demolished. It was in memory of it that Paul VI offered up the oratory about to be consecrated in the crypt of Saint Peter's, in a place, and there's another link with Europe, known to all readers of Gide's *Caves du Vatican.*

(Underground in Saint Peter's Basilica.) We rounded the Bernini Colonnade on the left. Iron railings barred our way where the colonnade met the walls of the Basilica. Swiss Guards in striped red and blue breeches stood at the gate. This is the frontier of the Vatican State. The television lot recognise no frontiers, not even here, and we soon found ourselves in the labirynth of the Vatican inner courtyards. We went up to something that looked like the stagedoor of a provincial theatre. Hungarian priests and the papal master of ceremonies met us. His face looked familiar, where could we have met? We were led along a narrow underground corridor; one of the members of the Rome Hungarian Church College explained that we were under Saint Peter's nave, the first third which faced the square. "Pope John XXIII's tomb is there on the left, Saint Peter's a little towards the back, the one which is illuminated. And here, under red marble, lies Paul VI."

We are in an underground city, or rather an underground forest. Columns like stout oaks separate the papal tombs, and the arches above us close like the crowns of trees. We got to an obviously new railing. "The Oratorium Magnae Dominae Hungariae, the Oratory of Our Lady of Hungary, is beyond that," our guide said.

Ten past six. The underground city is empty. In front of the iron railings, on four clearings of the forest, many hundreds were waiting for the visitors. If I had not been with the television crew that is where I would be myself, but now I went in with them. The non-existent patron saint of television now rewarded me for having stood in front of the cameras, risking the patronising smiles of my fellows, when the medium was still a mewling infant, and literary gents would not appear on the small screen for all the tea in China. There is more to this gift than merely being swept inside. The crew had gone out to lay their cables and the church dignitaries had not come in yet. I suddenly realised that I was all alone in the snow-white and gold-leafed, marble-veined and bronze-warm quiet.

(Works by Imre Varga and Amerigo Tot) What I felt reminded me of the awe of my childhood. I did not look at the works of art there one by one but let the spatial composition act on me as a whole. How movingly small it is! Not much longer than the church ruin—once part of the village of Apát destroyed by the Turks—at the throat of the Tihany peninsula on Lake Balaton. Árpád age pilgrims must have felt at home in the precursor of this oratory. A round-arched ceiling with an air-vent at the centre. I stood below it and felt sure I glimpsed

the blue of the early Roman heavens somewhere very high up. There would be air enough when the oratory was crowded.

I waited curiously to see how Imre Varga and Amerigo Tot's works would affect me *in situ*, I had already seen photographs. Nevertheless the altar and the throne, beyond it, up against the wall, first caught my eye. White marble, like Constantine the Great's huge foot on the Campidoglio, at the entrance to the museum. Zsuzsa D. Fehér later told me that the altar-slab though not quite as old was nevertheless early Christian, dating from the seventh century. Ancient incisions are still discernible on the inside. The coloured mosaic inlay, and the present shape, are thirteenth-century work. They were found in the inexhaustible Vatican cellars. Whoever found them and picked them for the purpose knew his job: they fitted Imre Varga's composition as if they had been designed together. The wall beyond the post-Vatican II liturgical arrangement of the altar and the chancel steps were evidence of the artist's powerful imagination. Imre Varga's solution was dignified and yet spectacular. Looking towards the altar from the centre or back wall of the oratory one sees a large golden surface, in front of it, on the wall, a Madonna, and below a man down on one knee. This three-fold arrangement brings the oratory to life even empty. Something is happening when nothing moves. It looks larger than life, too.

I am still on my own so I do not hesitate to mount to the chancel to take a closer look. The gold wall is not painted but a huge gilded metal sheet, worked in the manner of suddle-bag decorations. The artist included the golden magic stag of the Hunor and Magor legend, evoking some of the most beautiful Hungarian archeological finds, much magnified. The Tree of Life of ancient cultures is also there. The artist wished to symbolize the continuity of the legend, the primary source and Christian iconography. The heathen beasts provide a counterpoint background for the slightly smaller than life-size bronze statue, suspended at the centre. It depicts Our Lady to whom the oratory is dedicated not as a gothic Virgin, curved like a question-mark, nor as the chaste love of renaissance painters, refined to an ideal, least of all a coquettish young woman of Fouquet's sort, baring her breast to give suck. This is a Hungarian peasant madonna, with tough features, with a baby Jesus on her arm who is a child of the Great Plain harking back to the looks of nomad ancestors. I am sure that there is no other Madonna like her in Vatican City or the length or breadth of Italy.

Saint Stephen, to the left of the altar, down on one knee, offers his crown and people to the Virgin. With deliberate anachronism the crown in his right is the whole, present, crown, and not that which he received from Pope Sylvester II. The cross on it is inclined and in this manner Imre Varga took sides, much to my liking, in favour of those who interpret the crown as embodying ancient wisdom. The nine-hundred year old embroidered patterns on the coronation robe were worked by Imre Varga in chrome-steel: the drapery falls so softly that the embroidery does not seem out of place in the least in this material as tough as nails. Studying the royal features a sense of familiarity overcomes me for the second time in a quarter of an hour: first the master of ceremonies, now the statue. The well-modelled hard and large nose first reminded me—most inappropriately—of Count Albert Apponyi, a well-known public figure in Hungary with a famous beard. I brushed the thought aside. Later, while the Pope was saying mass, the penny dropped and I realised that Imre Varga had leant the features of the Saint Ladislas' reliquiary to the statue of Saint Stephen, Saint Ladislas' uncle.

László Gerő, the architect, proved his mettle when he placed a smaller work on the back wall, facing the large surface behind the altar. Amerigo Tot's bronze relief does not fill the whole wall, nevertheless attracts the eye. You get a good view of it though it is

somewhat above eyelevel. One should really move close, making the effect more intimate. A bronze, egg-shaped surface is quartered by a cross, also of bronze, but more highly polished, and a lighter colour. The four quarterings are each a little concave, thus as it were, palming the historical scene depicted: four events that really demand monumentality, the coming into being of the oratory.

Pope Sylvester II and Saint Stephen the King are in the foreground of the first: the *fons et origo* of the present oratory. The second refers to the noon peal of bells—still rung at every church all over the world—in memory of the relief of Belgrade. Saint John Capistrano is the bell-ringer, chaplain to János Hunyadi, the commander. Callixtus III was pope at the time. The bottom two bring us up-to-date. On the left Paul VI donates the space next to his future tomb for the rebuilt oratory; on the right is recorded in bronze what is about to happen in less than an hour: Pope John Paul II consecrates the chapel on this October 8th 1980, in the presence of the Hungarian bench of bishops and assembled peregrines.

I fear that I have not served the work well. It's beauty lies not in the presentation of scenes or the evocation of history, but in the harmony of material and expression. Perspective is handled in a masterly way on a small surface, proportions are respected in a manner that arouses one's interest, and events are depicted in such a way that those who have no idea what the scenes are about and merely sense who the figures might be, still feel initiated into an aesthetic experience. I felt a sudden urge to run my hand over the sensuously smooth and shiny bronze. Fortunately I held back; the Hungarian bench of bishops: archbishops, bishops and abbots entered that very moment. What else could I do? I shook their hands, and assured them that I was not a one-man reception committee. Eight bishops took their seat in the wooden choir stalls along one wall, and six opposite them, where there was less room because of the door. That filled the oratory. The television crew returned and erected their equipment. There was no more room, and I went out.

(In the crypt, midst peregrines.) The master of ceremonies was posted next to the rails. He asked for my invitation—Cardinal Lékai had sent it—and thoroughly looked me over, weighing me up with expert eyes. He pointed to my place in the first of the blocks of chairs, the corner seat in the front row of that. His "eccolo!" conveyed that he meant it as a mark of respect. A good place all right, distinguished, the only trouble was that it was outside the oratory. Never mind, loudspeakers would allow me to follow the liturgy. Then I cheered up: I had identified his face, older still than the Saint Ladislas reliquiary. He was the image of a bust of the Emperor Claudius, that Clau-Clau-Claudius of Robert Graves. After two thousand years his genes were made flesh again. I thanked him for the seat, hoping to provoke more than one word. He answered, and he had no stammer.

There I sat, on the seat of the distinguished glad that I could be present at this event which happens to Hungarians in Europe once every thousand years, if then, and nevertheless not happy, because I did not only want to hear what would happen, but also see the Pope celebrate the consecration liturgy in the joint presence of his cardinals, the Hungarian bench of bishops, and the representatives of the Hungarian People's Republic.

Right then I saw them making their entrance, Cardinal Lékai came first, when I was still all alone in the front row, the clergy and the laity flooded in soon afterwards. Priests come from Hungary sat in separate rows of chairs, in simple black cassocks, or wearing the violet cingles of papal chamberlains. I would not be sure but there were Piarist Fathers from Budapest amongst them as old as my own sons. I recognised the Sopron parish priest. I thought of my old friend and soul-brother, József Albrecht, the Szentkirályszabadja parish priest, he was more deserving than I of a place here. What was happening here today was placing the crown on his faith and patriotism, his understanding and patience shown to both sides,

in which he surely resembled many another Hungarian priest, in urban and rural parishes alike. I was thinking of him when the present Cardinal-Archbishop, once his neighbour in the Lake Balaton region, priest of the parish next to his, entered, Vatican prelates behind him, they were speaking Italian, then the Emperor Claudius once again, backing, clearing the way —the peregrines were coming in—for Imre Miklós, the Secretary of State for Denominational Affairs, and for János Szita, the Hungarian Ambassador to the Quirinal, and their wives. The iron-railed door leading to the narrow corridor that runs parallel to the oratory opened, and was promptly closed behind them.

The whole crypt was humming with expectancy. The chairs were all occupied, and some were standing as well. Somebody said that a thousand had come. Everyone was talking to everyone else. About five hundred from Hungary, as many from other countries in Europe, and from overseas as well. A smallish group were seated apart, children among them. They would receive communion from the Pope in person, Tibor Pethő, the editor of the daily *Magyar Nemzet* said. He had been allotted the seat next to me. Pethő ought to know, he had got to the Eternal City forty-eight hours earlier. The word communion seemed out of place, the atmosphere suggested rather that the curtain would soon go up on a new play: the same excitement, mutual recognition of those present and glances at watches.

Another ten minutes. Many were flashing documents in front of the railings, but Claudius and his ecclesiastic praetorians were implacable. They were right, an oratory is an oratory, that is a place for prayer, for a few at a time. The only seats inside are the two benches the length of the walls, planks really. I would sooner sit out here, agog with transfigured sobriety, than stand inside, drowsiness would knock me off my feet there.

There was movement at the iron door, a young man came out and conveyed the Ambassador's invitation to join them inside the chapel. Did Jóska Albrecht, who knew I was there, pray for me, perhaps?

(The Pope's trilingual mass.) The bishops on the bench facing the door moved closer and made room for me. The number inside is not really three times that of the apostles, or four or five times as many—the magic stag seems to inspire me—as that of the tribal leaders of the landtaking Hungarians, and yet the oratory is filled to overflowing. The Hungarian television camera is near me, with the lady art historian next to the two young men operating it. Three photographers near by, Szelényi, of course, is one of them. None from Italian television. On the left of the altar, on a shorter bench, Vatican personages, facing them, on a shorter bench, the Secretary of State and the Ambassador, and their wives. I must have looked odd at the very end of the longer bench, the only one in a dark suit next to the eight cassocks and skull-capped heads.

A few steps lead down from the corridor running parallel to the level of the oratory. Many stood there: the master of ceremonies asked them to move aside. I glanced at my watch: seven o'clock, precisely. The bishop next to me mentions that the Pope says his daily mass at seven every morning, it was a great honour that he should do so in our oratory this day. (That much for the oversensitivity of an artist and that suspicion endemic in Eternal Rome.)

I could only observe John Paul II features briefly, from close by, as he came in. He turned left promptly and walked towards the altar. I got an all the better view of his chasuble and stole. Kalocsa roses and tulips leaves and acanthus on white damask silk. A big man, looking even taller than on television. After John XXIII peasant build and features, and Paul VI aristocratic fragility, Papa Woytila, as the Romans call him, looks like a professional man who keeps fit.

Deacons in white albs followed, they would assist at mass. I did not notice whether

Cardinal Lékai had come in at the same time, or was, perhaps, waiting at the altar. As the Pope was taking his seat, the Cardinal stepped to a white marble lectern, as old as the throne, and welcomed Saint Peter's successor in Italian, evoking the memory of Saint Stephen who had offered his country to Our Lady of Hungary, "bearing witness to our filial loyalty to the successor of Saint Peter," he mentions the other Hungarian saints, a scene from whose lives is recorded here by a marble relief each, going on to an idea that is very beautiful, and very much of the present, most timely in 1980, that this festive hour is also important because this oratory emphasized the peace of Europe. He repeated his words in Hungarian, and thus started the trilinguality of the liturgy which was beautiful even as a symbol. The Pope said mass aloud in Latin, the gospel and the epistle were read in Hungarian, and the singing, in the oratory and in the whole of the crypt, was in Hungarian as well.

When did I last hear that beautiful anthem which is in truth a roll-call of the Árpád dynasty? More than half a century ago, in the chapel of the Piarist School in Budapest. I still know the words, or thought I did, and this rare experience now brought it all back. "The rich heart of King Stephen, the hard purity of sainted Prince Imre, the bold chivalry of our King Ladislas..." I hummed at first, then I sang. The young television crew gave me odd looks. Later, in the car, I told them that a man could only renew himself drawing his strength from the experience and traditions of his childhood and youth, and that those who denied them were forced to live in a permanent inner somersault.

(Saints and other medieval Hungarians) Stephen, Imre (Emericus) and Ladislas are also present on reliefs. An hour earlier, when I had been alone, in the chapel, seeing it all as a whole, I only took a close look at the altar, what was beyond it and in front of it, and at the artistic counterpoint, the bronze relief on the west wall. But there is art on the north and south wall as well, nineteen works in relief line them, a scene each from the lives of the three best known saints of the House of Árpád, and of sixteen other men and women of sainted or blessed memory, who were Hungarians by birth, or otherwise connected with Hungary. The six Hungarian sculptors who accepted commissions—three of them *Kiss* of some sort: Sándor Kiss, András Kiss Nagy, and Gyula Kiss Kovács, and Róbert Csikszentmihályi, Pál Kő, and László Márton—undertook something very difficult. More was implied than getting back to figurative art: an event had to be depicted. The art of the day does not reject figures, but it aims to be simple, and has a horror of the anecdotal.

Sitting there, hearing mass, my eyes palpated the relief work. I had not been aware how many saints the Hungarian middle-ages had given to the world. Elizabeth of Hungary is there of course not the well-known legend where the alms-bread turns to roses, but her farewell to her crusading husband, the Landgrave of Thuringia, who was off to the Holy Land. They plighted their troth to each other in what is now the Inner City Parish Church in Budapest, next to the Elizabeth bridge.

Hungarian saints? Hungarians who had a European role, and Europeans, whom their calling took to Hungary. By way of profane meditation I looked at the catalogue of sorts that had been distributed on the way in, mentally compiling a geographical genealogy with the help of the brief account of the reliefs. They lived in Scotland and Constantinople, Kiev and Toulouse, Switzerland and Warsaw, Venice and Florence, as Hungarians in Europe and Europeans in Hungary. Bishop Gerardo who became Gellért is not even at the head of the temporal list, he had been called in by King Stephen, losing his life in the 1046 pagan revolt, that place belongs to Saint Adalbert who went to Hungary from Prague. He confirmed young Stephen, and died in 998, before Stephen ascended the throne. Blessed Eusebius reversed the direction. He was Hungarian and he founded the Order of Paulicians which was so popular in Poland, around the middle of the 13th century. Almost seven

Károly Szelényi

The Hungarian oratory in the crypt of Saint Peter's with the altar and papal throne and Imre Varga's madonna and Saint Stephen of Hungary

Károly Szelényi

AMERIGO TOT'S BRONZE RELIEF ON THE WEST WALL OF THE HUNGARIAN ORATORY AT ST. PETER'S

hundred years later, in the Paulician rockchapel on Gellért Hill, one of his successors would give me arms for the resistance movement. Béla IV had three daughters, one, Margaret, was canonised, two others, Kinga, Queen of Poland, and Yolanthe, Duchess of Pomerania, are called Blessed by the church. Isabella, the great-granddaughter of Andrew II, wife of King Dionys of Portugal is revered as a saint in that country. The Blessed Elizabeth, daughter of Andrew III, lived in Switzerland, Stephen's granddaughter became Saint Margaret of Scotland, and Ladislas' daughter Piroska empress of Byzantium, where she was known as Irene.

Will I go on? The French know the son of Charles II of Anjou, the same king, as Saint Louis of Toulouse. Hedvig, daughter of Louis the Great, King of Hungary and Poland, became Queen Jadwiga of Poland. The Hungarian Moses a monk at Kiev resisted the sexual advances of princesses, and paid for his chastity with his life. And we have a Blessed Salome too, a Polish princess who married Coloman, the son of Andrew II.

Some of the artists found a gaunt mode of expression, working with perspectives, vaultings, proportions, others immersed themselves in the story, and the Travertine marble denied them. The work that best fits the place and the occasion is by Róbert Csikszentmihályi to whom the Blessed John Domenici, whom I had never heard of before, had been allotted. Sigismund, Holy Roman Emperor and King of Hungary had asked the pope of the time to appoint John Dominici Legate to his court. He learnt to speak the language handling with such power that the Buda burghers thronged the Church of the Assumption, now popularly known as the Matthias Church, to hear him preach. The sculptor modelled the features of the burghers on those gothic sculptures which László Zolnay excavated a few years ago in Buda Castle. The marble relief is right opposite me. The more I look at it, the more John Dominici resembles the man who had just greeted the Pope.

(Peace and solidarity in a truly human Europe.) The Pope was speaking. He had first greeted the congregation in Hungarian, in the traditional Hungarian Catholic manner. Then he continued in Italian, which he speaks beautifully now. Again and again I seem to be drawn into the magnetic fields of events: I happened to be in Rome on the day of his election, and heard his first Italian word, broadcast on television. I cannot now detect any Slav overtones in his accents. Karel Woytila has written poems and plays. The text of his homily shows him to be a master of rhetoric, he would be a master amongst leader-writers as well. He said that it was not easy to express the emotions he felt at that moment, and with that he expressed them. He referred to the suggestive power of art which indicated to present and future generations the permanent call of moments in history that were alive in the national consciousness. At the end, talking about the works of the saints who contributed to European civilization and a real humanism, he mentioned the need to build a truly human Europe, a Europe of peace and solidarity. This oratory as well was for Christians and other men of good will who wished to be vigorous labourers in the vineyard of the peace of a united Europe.

After these words he consecrated the Hungarian oratory in Rome. This Pope has shown a feeling for the Hungarian past and he recognizes the Hungarian present. As a Pole he surely has as little foundness for the division of Europe as the national whose name the oratory bears.

At the end of the mass as the Pope and his entourage made their exit, the Hungarian national anthem rose from the lips of the thousand odd pilgrims. The television crew were singing as well.

INTERVIEWS

ARNOLD HAUSER ON HIS LIFE AND TIMES

(Part II)

Q. How was this departure from formalism connected to the turn your life at that time?

A. The Circle was dissolved as a result of the collapse of the Republic of Councils. And then everybody tried to save his skin being afraid to be put in an internment camp. The members of the circle became dispersed around the world, and I finally succeeded in reaching Italy, which was the greatest luck in my life. In general, it has been a basic feature of my life that, as people used to say, there is a certain law at work in what happens to one. Certain things repeat themselves. What is repeated, in my life, are the blessings in disguise: I got to Italy due to the collapse of the Republic of Councils. It was partly thanks to this that I have become what I am. It went along with a tremendous capacity and readiness for reception, but a feeling of insufficiency, the consciousness of a void and of the limits to the possibility of expression.

Q. What was then the lesson of this sojourn in Italy?

A. The Italian experience was that we spent our whole time—with my first wife, who was still alive then but died young and who also studied to become an art historian—visiting churches, museums, and exhibitions, and reading, but in fact I did not produce anything, and what I wrote did not make much sense, and I did not see much sense in it either. We decided that we had to settle somewhere in Germany, we had to study somewhere properly. My wife attended university, but I was out of work, so to speak. And in Germany I again began to attend the university in spite of being already past my university years and having obtained a doctorate, but I started to study again and learn sociology and history seriously. I got into an atmosphere which may be called a sociological atmosphere. I considered myself the disciple of the great historian Troeltsch, I moved in a sort of Max Weber atmosphere, even if I was not his immediate disciple. Slowly I discovered that reality and these social positions, of which I had heard so much, played a greater part in the work of art than internal logic, the immanent necessity, which leads from one form to the other, carries us from one style to another. Thereby I discovered that in fact the real potential of art history was where it accompanied and met sociology.

Speaking of the evolution of my work, the thing became interesting when we already had the Italian and German sojourn behind us. In Germany Nazism, the Hitler period, already cast its shadow, and my wife, who was a braver woman than men usually are, said: "Let us get away from here, I cannot stand this atmosphere." And where shall we

The first part of this interview appeared in *NHQ* 80.

go? We had tried Italy, Hungary was closed to us, let us go to Vienna. And we settled in Vienna, my wife registered at the university and I too attended the lectures. In the end I had to earn a living doing something, I could not go on begging; I took on a job with a film company where I was placed in charge of publicity, and thus I got into a close relationship with my later practical sociological orientation. When I left Austria for England in 1938, I continued to write the book which I started in Vienna, and which would have dealt with the form, aesthetics, and sociology of the film.

As far as my life is concerned—which was very bitter, very sad, very empty in all areas—I wandered about in London empty-handed, without money, aimlessly, I found a new home in the reading room of the British Museum, in the reading room where Marx had written *Das Kapital*, the knowledge of which always haunted me, without my feeling any communion, or even daring to feel any communion with him, only the consciousness that I was in a temple.

So in 1938 I decided—because I was already alone by then, my first wife having died in a flu epidemic—I was alone, which did not make my situation easier, and I tried to continue to work on the book about the film which I had started in Vienna. The first year I still worked on it, but I did not feel happy, I did not feel at home in it, and then Balázs's books on the film were already in existence, and they were excellent, and Arnheim's important book had appeared, numerous similar books already existed, but there was something I did not like, something which disturbed me: and here again the blessing in disguise came. I met Mannheim who had fled to London in 1933, when Nazism came to power in Germany, and he told me one day: "...I am now the editor of a sociological series, commissioned by an English publisher called Routledge, and I would like you to put together an anthology on the sociological role of art, as it evolved in the course of time, and you may write a lengthy, rather exhaustive introduction, which could be 100–150 pages if you like. But I will not tie your hands, the important thing is that we should get a picture of the sociological aspects that have existed for some time, mainly its continuity since the eighteenth century."

I liked this, and I again cast out my net, my empty net, and again caught a fish which I did not wish to let slip through my hands, and I discovered in agony that there was nothing to rely on, there was hardly anything, there was no serious book on the sociology of art, if we disregard Guyau's book, which had appeared approximately one hundred years earlier, *L'art au point de vue sociologique*, and of which it was said with justification that the only part which dealt with the subject was the title.

And slowly I began to struggle with this tremendous material, which was not a matter of putting together the essays, critiques, comments, studies, somehow connected with the sociology of art, and build up something out of them—an entity had to be constructed from scratch. There was no sociology of art, there were only references through which it could be constructed, what it was that determined certain trends both artistically and from the aspect of the theory of society. Hence, what was to be an anthology—the introduction to an anthology—was responsible for the birth of a work of two volumes of five hundred pages each, and of which I still think that it is the firm foundation of what I have written about the sociology of art, because it was added up out of solid facts after an agony of ten years. For ten years I did not stop for a day, I maintained myself poorly, I worked at a film company as a messenger-boy, at a pay of five pounds weekly, just enough to keep one from starving, not much more, and I still persevered, and lived ten years without a single holiday, and I began to work and live once I went home from the office at six o'clock—until after midnight.

And on Saturdays I was the first in the

library, and I was the last to leave it. Day after day and all day Sunday, when around 1940 I met my wife Nora, and I used to visit her, then in the morning I would go to Nora with my portable type-writer, and I sat down with my manuscripts, and there we were alone, I could work quietly, and she prepared lunch.

Q. So the work and the marriage got along together?

A. ...and she mended my socks and looked after my underwear, and work went on... this is how I lived for ten years.

Q. Does this mean that at the beginning of these ten years you were without a publisher, without a contract?

A. Without a contract for a long time until Mannheim offered me this work, but he could not offer a contract, that depended on conditions. Then Mannheim got the flu and died and I had no contract, no tie to the publisher. And then a common acquaintance—I met him in the reading room of the British Museum—said: "...How is your work going, are you still working on it, do you want to finish it, and what is your relationship to Routledge? Would you object to my asking Herbert Read whether he is interested?"

Q. Herbert Read...

A. He was in charge of the editorial offices, the publisher... He read the first chapter of the manuscript and liked it very much. He accepted financial responsibility, which did not mean, of course, that he could have been sued if it had been a flop, but he did say: "I take the responsibility that this will be a good book." At the beginning they said, on what grounds should we publish a book of one thousand pages by a man whose name had never been heard in England before? He may be known in Hungary, but in England they have no idea who he is. And then Herbert Read said that "I accept moral responsibility."

Q. This is interesting, because Herbert Read had an entirely different interpretation of the function of art.

A. But he had very good judgement, and was a very intelligent and well-intentioned man. If I owe it to somebody that my "venture" succeeded, it is to him.

Q. ...and approximately when was this that the contract was finally made?

A. The contract may have been signed, say, in 43 or 44. I received a letter about Herbert Read's favourable decision through the management, who upon hearing from him that I worked on an interesting book wrote that the manager wanted to speak to me personally. I went to him and he said: "We have a high opinion of this manuscript, when would you be able to finish it?" I told him that I had a job out of which I made a living, and I could not tell exactly. He said that this was very important, because the problem was in the air, and if I do not write it, somebody else would write it tomorrow. Twenty-five years have passed since, and nobody has written a competing work, this is still the only book on the subject, I am proud and happy that this is so, because it is still being read, and it still happens that every new generation of university students buys the book. The twelfth edition of the Spanish version just appeared, which means that every year every student buys the book anew, and every Spaniard has my sociology along with his Bible.

Q. And how did you begin your academic career after this?

A. It so happened that I told my boss at the film company: "I could have already published that book on which I have been

working for many years, if you permitted me to work only half a day, at any condition." The condition was that they reduced my pay, and I worked only half time in the office. I agreed. I would have agreed to anything then in order to be able to write this book. That was a very difficult period —but I agreed. And when I was ready with the manuscript, I told my boss: "Now the manuscript is ready, I only have to make the final contract with the publisher, and now I would be prepared to work full time." He said: "Yes, but now the film business is in a very critical period, and we cannot pay more than we have been paying." And then my wife, who again was a brave woman at the side of a weak man, said: "And what shall we live on?"—"We shall make a living, somehow or other." And then I tried all sorts of advertisements, wherever a readership became available, and a lecturer was needed among other places at Leeds University, the deadline for which—Freud might be able to explain it—I missed. But even though I missed it, I received a reply by return mail that it did not matter that I had missed the deadline, I should come for an interview. And in the morning of the interview I went with my book to the professor who was in charge of that department and he said that I should leave the book with him until the afternoon. The book had not yet been published, but it had been type-set. He read a few sections and told me in advance: "You will have no competition." And this is how it happened. Finally he told me: "You may feel sure that you will receive the post, for there is nobody who wrote or could have written a book like this..." And I received the readership, and lectured in Leeds for six years, and during these six years I wrote my second book, the original title of which was: The Philosophy of the History of Art.

Q. Now I would like to ask you first of all about the years at Leeds.

A. During the university years at Leeds, which were not sterile subjectively, I thought my book was more important than the teaching, which I did not do very enthusiastically, because Leeds was a country town where the students came almost entirely unprepared; I told them things like they did not deserve the electric lighting that was above them. My first book had become so long—two volumes of five hundred pages each—that it was not possible to write an introduction to it.

The introduction would have had to be more voluminous, so that I could have clarified the principles on which the sociology of art, the social history of art rested. This would have required a separate book. This became the *Philosophie der Kunstgeschichte*, which was later given the title *Methoden der modernen Kunstbetrachtung*. In this I laid the foundation for the guiding principles which have accompanied me right up to my last book, and I would like to enumerate these and characterize them in a few words.

The first problem was the aim and the limits of the sociology of art, knowing full well that the sociology of art does not exhaust about art, i.e. I was conscious that there was psychology of aesthetics, and a logic of aesthetics, and classical aesthetics, and a romantic aesthetics, and that the sociological aesthetics would also lose one day its actuality and would be replaced by something else—meaning that it has a specific aim and it has its limits. This was the first problem with which the book dealt.

The second problem was that the ideological foundations were what caused a turn in the taste of the public and what caused style to turn away from a certain direction, because ideology is a view of the world determined by our relationship to our fellow human beings, the institutions, the conventions, the traditions, in other words the entire intellectual atmosphere in which we live. This relationship determines our way of thinking. The same problem can be

solved in different ways, and this is not due to the problems but to our own situation, which is forced on us from the outside, and which changes, but changes from the outside and not from the inside. Something happens, let us say feudalism ends and is replaced by capitalism—by early capitalism, or early capitalism changes into the later industrial capitalism. This implies a change of the entire social existence, the whole social atmosphere, which includes art and provides art with new aims. In other words, the research on ideology in this sense was the second main problem.

A further important problem was the difference between the psychological and the sociological analysis of art. We obtain an entirely different picture of art if we look at it as at a psychological document, and an entirely different picture again if we analyse it as a sociological document. And the psychoanalytical picture of the arts may lead to an entirely different result if we derive the artistic trends from the subconscious than if we deduce them from the conscious.

A further problem was—and this was one of the main points of my book—the question of an anonymous history of art, the so-called "Kunstgeschichte ohne Namen," the history of art without names. The entire expression and concept was initiated by Wölfflin, who used it in the sense that the evolution of art did not depend on the individuals. The existence of a Rembrandt hardly altered the fact that already Late Renaissance art demonstrated such a Baroquish chiaroscuro character. And that it assumed the criterion of a Rembrantian tragical-dramatic action, this was not due to the individuals that it represented but to the fact that beyond the artist an internal logic of the arts asserted itself which forced all that to happen. Already Hegel discovered, of course not in this context but in the same sense, that something existed which he called "List der Vernunft," the "trick" of reason, something stronger which ruled over reason. This something newly became the centre of my book.

A further problem was the classification of the history of art not according to styles—that is not horizontally—but in another direction, according to cultural strata. In other words, to examine the history of art according to the stratification of its public, whether it speaks to an élite, and exclusively to an élite, or to a broad, popular metropolitan public, a half-educated public, or to the people, an uneducated but artistically not worthless public.

In other words, there are three strata, and if we divide the history of art in this direction, then we obtain a picture that is entirely different than if we followed it merely chronologically. This too was one of the fundamental problems.

Finally, one of the most important questions was the sixth, the question of convention, the knowledge that art was derived not only from invention but also from convention. Every artist joins in certain conventions, which he appropriates as a legacy, and which were developed already before him, which he learnt unconsciously already as a child. For instance, how his brothers and sisters, his parents, his neighbours, his friends, his environment speak, and out of this stammering a language suitable for expression gradually evolves. Later the artist too adopts certain conventions and takes over ready instruments: out of on the one hand his invention, which is his own internal impulse, and on the other what sets a limit to this, the conventions which he had adopted, and the two together form his art. Thus, for instance, it is a convention that a comedy has to end with a wedding, the convention of a certain type of comedy. That in a tragedy everybody has to die—to express myself crudely—this too is a convention. Hundreds and hundreds of such conventions rule in art, and this discovery remained one of the basic principles of my further sociological research together with those problems which I have already mentioned.

Q. Then it is far from true—to refer to the last mentioned problem—that these conventions are merely hindrances to art?

A. No. These do stimulate flight as much as they hinder it. They have two kinds of functions: there are fertile conventions and there are deadly paralysing conventions; this depends on the era in which we live and on the artist who works with them, how he uses tradition.

Thus in 1957 my activity in Leeds ended and I luckily completed the second book —almost simultaneously. Then I received an American invitation to Brandeis University—one of the élite universities in the United States—there I taught for two years as a visiting professor, and there they already had my book titled *Philosophie der Kunstgeschichte*. I engaged in a not entirely new, yet for me new venture. I discovered that the basic problem was style, which is continuously discussed when we speak of the history of art. Whether we look at it sociologically or in as abstract a way as Wölfflin did—the explanation is different, the phenomenon remains the same. Styles change, styles break, styles collapse, styles lose their actuality, a new taste develops; but what is the reason? I became conscious of something which was almost a revolutionary phenomenon in my own evolution! What becomes timely out of the past depends on the present. Only that which is part of the present and with which we struggle in the present is relevant from the past. The problems which arise in modern art as contemporary problems point the way towards phenomena of style which seemed closed, which appeared to be dead or lost, and which had to be re-discovered, "remembrance of things past" to use a quotation. Something one had to pursue, which could only be understood if one set out from the present. I discovered in my own way—not alone, because then mannerism was already more or less a fad—that mannerism was the style which stood closest to the tasks of the present.

Mannerism was the style of the period between the Renaissance and the Baroque. For a long time the history of art did not acknowledge it at all, it was considered a freak, a crisis, quite similar to our present situation. Thus the question arises whether art as such still exists, or whether it approaches its end, and whether it is only a temporary crisis which through the critical nature of the present discovers similar phenomena in the past and revives them. Mannerism has again become a live trend, and has regained its validity.

The internal contradictions, the extravagance, the indirect expressions, metaphorical speech, the domination of the intellect over emotions, the victory of an educational élite over a sentimental élite: these are the most conspicuous phenomena of the present as they were of the period of mannerism, they only had to be unearthed and rediscovered. And suddenly the gate upon which one had been knocking for so long flung open. I do not mean to say that people can walk through an open gate without any problem—for people seem to have great difficulties in entering open gates—but nevertheless the gate was open and there was an opportunity for a new interpretation. And the present as a problem arose out of the crisis situation. The whole affair hinged on two things: a new interpretation of style, a new interpretation of the changes in style, and the new view of the problems of the present. Out of this evolved the subject of one of my most voluminous works, *Mannerism*. There is a continuity in the four works I consider most important. I have written all kinds of articles, reviews, and essays, but I have written four books in which I believe to have given the most of what I am capable—which does not mean that they are the best that can be written about the subject. Everybody has his limits and the essence of an intellectual product is that one should recognize the limits of one's own activity. Within those limits one is able to create wonderful things and exploit the possibili-

ties. One should not let go of the net which one holds, and should not let the fish caught slip through one's hands; then one can at least become a diligent, conscientious worker. Nobody is born a genius, a person either becomes a genius or does not. I believe that very few people trust that they have been born a genius, but one can become an honest worker mainly by bringing continuity into one's work and creative activity. And I believe that such a continuity does exist in my work.

I worked on my book about mannerism, as I had on all my books, for a rather long time. I obtained the invitation to Brandeis University in 1957 and spent two years there. In 1959 I returned to London, and my next invitation that could have been in 64–65 was to Ohio State University. That is a gigantic university, fifteen years ago it had forty-five thousand students, and now it probably has sixty thousand, it amounts to a whole town. I became a professor there, and had a very privileged position: I had to hold *one* seminar weekly, a two-hour seminar, this was my only obligation, and as an extra task I accepted to talk to my colleagues during an evening seminar. The book of which I have spoken was in front of my eyes. A systematic sociology of art. This was the book that had to be written! Then, in 64–65 I was well past seventy and was no longer a young man. I had the feeling that it was high time to take an account of my life and see what I had done with my time. What are the many things for which I am indebted to others, what do I owe to coincidence, that I jumped into the stream and learned to swim with the current, I learned to swim while I jumped, and never knew what would come out of the "adventure." This last book was born under very difficult circumstances, amidst sickness and difficult tasks. And in the midst of doubts, because I often lost faith in it.

In the end, against all expectations, as the English say "hope against hope," the book was born and I myself was the most surprised when I had finished it. A great chip fell off my shoulder, although other difficulties arose, however, this is not strictly part of the story. But what is part of the story is the relationship of the last book, *The Sociology of Art*, to the earlier ones, and mainly how my relationship was modified to those problems which occupied my mind at least during half my life.

Q. Let us perhaps speak now about a few problems pertaining to the philosophy of art. You said that the present crisis of art was not the end of art.

A. The crisis means that people have lost their confidence in those media through which they can express themselves. Language has become a problem! Is it, for instance, possible to express linguistically that a man like Samuel Beckett, who is in the centre of attention, stammers instead of speaking, that people speak stammering, that keeping silent about something or silence has itself become a tool of artistic expression...

Q. Are you, really of the opinion that to fall silent can become an artistic medium, or is this a retreat?

A. It is. This is why it differs from a pause in music. Falling silent also exists in music, but it is part of the form. And this is a crisis phenomenon. People fall silent because they are unable to speak, because the relationship to art has become so complex that there are no words for it or only muddled ones—they either stammer or keep silent. It may be possible to say about this that there is no art, it has ceased to exist; whether we stammer or fall silent. But that art as art is still a problem means that latently—as a potential—art still exists, because otherwise nobody would care a hoot about it and then it would be simply a science. Many people say that art has been replaced by science, but this is not true, because art has not disappeared, art is in a critical condition, inasmuch as it fights for a new language.

Q. This raises a problem; it is often said nowadays that certain works are so confused structurally, are so difficult to understand, because they reflect a truth which is not obvious. Is it then true that an authentic work of art has to resemble in such a way to what is...

A. I don't believe it. Because what an artist expresses is always confused. An artistic intention sets out of a concrete confusion, an artistic stimulation which is always inarticulated obtains its articulation through creation. The artist feels everything that differs from his interior strange, as every artist starts from an internal if you wish an internal confusion; the work of art is nothing but the clearing up of that confusion.

Q. ...and he succeeds in finding the artistic...

A. Sometimes he succeeds, sometimes not. Today they do not succeed, today there are merely attempts.

Q. But is it necessary to acquiesce in this?!

A. It is not necessary to acquiesce, one has to continue to struggle for a language which would be adequate, which corresponds to this confusion. Today the instinct of expression or the intention of expression is even more complicated than the potential of expression. Consequently we still stammer. Some of Beckett's books are written almost in "Chinese," in an almost unintelligible language, but this is in fact merely the reluctance to express something simply which is not simple. There are arts which become more and more complicated but are still able to keep pace with the language. For instance Wölfflin, the great German art historian, discovered that when Baroque had become timely it in fact became more complicated, and how did he express this? Of a revolving wheel it is not possible to see... the spokes. This was a new tool of expression, which started from confusion and became clarified by this, and became a new artistic communication. We are searching for such a new artistic way of communication, but we are not yet in it, which does not mean that we have given up, or that we are condemned to silence.

Q. In contemporary painting, for instance, which is very unintelligible to many people, how is it possible to seize this meaning-giving function?

A. Well, this is a problem which I would prefer not to get into, because it would lead us too far.

Q. Would it perhaps be possible to do it by an illustration?

A. No, because the case is terribly complicated, because in painting the whole problem is whether it is possible to speak of an ideology in a picture like a still-life by Cézanne. Where is the ideology in two cabbages next to each other, or two apples? You then come to the conclusion that ideology is expressed by the moral being repeating in art that which he has created in life, whether two heads of the Virgin, two angels, or two cabbages are concerned. And it is here the problem of the order, the category which fulfils the role involved; to explain this would require much more time than we have available.

Q. But let me nevertheless ask about something conspicuous, for instance, how is it possible to speak of creating order in a surrealistic painting?

A. In a surrealistic painting creating order cannot be understood without resorting to Freudian theory, simply because it sets out from a different kind of consciousness, because it sets out from two world orders, from the fact that there is a world in which consciousness dominates, and another world in which the subconscious intellectual

activity dominates, and that the clash of these two worlds bring about a dream world in which the surrealistic painting moves. Dreams are involved all the time, which produce a fanciful picture out of individual realistic facts. The whole, the framework is fanciful, but all the elements are realistic. Consequently, the meeting of two different modes of existence is involved. This is the quintessence of Surrealism. But it is impossible for me to cover this in the course of this conversation.

Q. I should like to ask whether it is possible to speak in the contemporary cultural situation of a representative art, a branch of art which best expresses contemporary problems? Can the art of the film be considered representative?

A. (after a pause): I am thinking... Here we have returned to a thesis which has already been mentioned, namely that art addresses various strata. The essence of the general evolution has been that the standard of the public has fallen. The big-city public is a half-educated public, and the film, if we take it in general, is a "mass medium," mass communication, which addresses this half-educated public. And not the lowest uneducated peasantry, which creates folk art —and yet does create it to a certain extent— nor the élite public which considers a certain kind of film as vanguard. There are, as we know, people like Fellini, and other creative artists, for instance Ingmar Bergman, who make outstanding films—but rely on a narrow stratum. If we judge merely by quantity, then I may perhaps call the film the broadest medium, of course next to television, which is in fact a branch of the film, and the relationship of these two modes of expression, television and film, could be the subject of a separate discussion. One thing is if I sit down, and it is not I who am going to the objects, but the objects come to me, this I do not wish to cover now but in any case the mass media undoubtedly speak to the broadest masses. But if I take them as one unit, I have to differentiate between the individual forms. The film is a very problematic medium, and if we set out from how people generally speak of the film, then what we consider leading in literature—for instance the work of people who, if not quite contemporary, at least near-contemporary, like Camus or Kafka, or even Beckett—still move at an incomparably higher level than an average film, which satisfies the needs of the broad masses, and which only provides entertainment. Or to give another example, there is pop art, and the so-called pop music, which is a very complex thing, in which educated, musically educated, people participate, but which is aimed at the great masses, that is, use a number of devices which Schönberg or Berg might have used. In other words, there are mass media which are in the majority if I look at the public, but are in the minority if I look at quality.

Q. And the present cleavage between the art film and the film for the general public, the occurrence of which you, sort of predicted in your first book, how does it relate to snobbery?

A. Here too there develops an élite which tries to create a literary film, as the great Italian directors, Fellini and his associates, Bergman, and in France Alain Resnais and Godard do. The whole thing begins in fact with the *nouveau roman.* They write scripts, on the basis of which these vanguard films are made, and which are almost incomprehensible to the public of the cinema, because the interconnections are so complex that they can hardly be followed. But there, in those films, there is also a certain snobbery. This kind of snobbery plays a role in the development of every élite, and is in fact nothing but a stratification which asserts itself here, an intellectual stratification.

Q. It has been mentioned that the conventions, the traditions, are no obstacles or brakes in the development of art, but are positive elements in it.

A. Right.

Q. I should like to ask whether there is not in today's cultural atmosphere, in the atmosphere of contemporary bourgeois culture, an exaggerated opposition to tradition?

A. Both exist, and this is in fact a natural historic process. Continuity too has a stratum that is its representative and friend, but so does discontinuity. There are very progressive artists who wish to break with the past at any price, and it is a prerequisite of their endeavours that their work should not be like any work of the past. But there are others too, who believe that art is only genuine if it joins in a tradition, that is, genuine art continues something which began at one time and which is probably being continued underground latently—it has a precursor and it has conventions which go on living. In other words, the two cannot be separated, but there are periods in which the one or the other predominates.

Q. And in which period are we now?

A. I believe that we are in an anti-conventional period, in a period opposed to tradition, in which the trend to secede from the past is very strong. It may be said that we are in a period when a great many artists doubt that art can exist. A grotesque situation in which the artists themselves are most doubtful whether art has a future...

Q. There is a notion to the effect that art is hindered and tethered by social, especially political, ties. Is this true, or do such ties form part of the creation of valuable art?

A. Not inevitably, but here there are no general rules either. It cannot be said, for instance, that commitment is incompatible with the creation of valuable works. Then in an era of tyranny, as for instance the culture of ancient Egypt, it should have been impossible for great artistic works to be born. An artist moved within such narrow confines that, so to say, the various parts of the work—for instance those of a statue—were already prefabricated, the hair-do only had to be put on the head, because it was already there in the workshop. And they moved within such strict conventions: for instance, the frontality, every figure could only be viewed from a single perspective, not from the side (this too is a good example of convention). Such conventions arise from the fact that in the beginning there may have been, for instance, a certain difficulty in reproducing something in perspective. Let us say, they found a simpler solution to distortion in frontality, because they were unable to bridge the difficulty in any other way, and this became a convention. As if *aus der Not eine Tugend machen...*

Q. To make a virtue out of necessity...

A. ...out of necessity. This is the essence of how a convention becomes a creative element of culture.

Q. Professor, you are often mentioned as the member of a trinity. The two others being Lukács and Adorno. Would you consider the question, how you see your own position in relation to Adorno and Lukács?

A. I believe that I cannot be compared to either concerning language. First, not with Lukács, because I do not find it inevitable that in what you say you should put the weight on the content and express yourself sloppily as far as form is concerned, as Lukács has done in his last writings. It is not only towards this Lukácsian indifference to style that I feel no affinity, which characterizes only the late Lukács, but to the early Lukács either—because in the early Lukács there was a tendency to express himself in a refined way—but that was not real German either. Good German stylists did not entirely identify themselves either with the language in which the *Soul and the Forms* or

even the *Theorie des Romans* were written. I do not identify myself with the total neglect of the beauty of the language.

Q. And Adorno?

A. What separates me from Adorno is obvious: his affectation. His insistence on expressing himself in a different way, to grab his left ear with his right hand, this opposition to nature. People should get hold of their right ear with their right hand and of their left ear with their left hand, and not necessarily the other way round.

Q. Well now, if we look at this trinity not from the aspect of the language or of the style, but the very essence of the theoretical standpoint, and look at Lukács, Adorno, and Hauser as three theoretical peaks, how do you, Professor, see your own position?

A. I admire Adorno for his wealth of ideas, his terrific sensibility, which far surpasses that of Lukács. He is much more receptive, he has a much deeper sense of quality, he knows much better what is a good poem and what is not. It has its limits, though, because his sense for quality is restricted to two genres: music and lyric poetry. In these two genres Adorno has an outstanding and entirely unexceptionable sense for art.—Lukács has very great importance in the development of the theory of the novel and of the tragedy, but these are not formal values: they are values of content. He has in fact created a new philosophy of these two genres, and to these I have very close links, so that *The Social History of Art* could never have come about in the absence of these initiatives. But I am just as much obligated to Adorno, and I would not like to choose between the two. There are points where this question in fact arises. For instance, with the question of mannerism where I believe that Lukács was right and not Adorno, or in the matter of the interpretation of the metaphor and other similar questions. In other words, this is not a consistently one-sided but a two-sided obligation, I am extremely grateful to both, and consider myself a disciple of both.

KRISTÓF NYÍRI

WHY AMONG PHANTOMS?

Talking to László Cs. Szabó

EDITOR'S NOTE: László Cs. Szabó, 75, is a member of the generation of Hungarian writers who made their name between the wars. 1935–1944 he worked for Hungarian Radio, later taught art history at the Budapest Academy of Fine Arts. In 1949 he left the country, and settled in London where he has been living ever since. He retired from the Hungarian Section of the External Services of the BBC a few years ago. Since living abroad, he has published fifteen books, all in Hungarian, of which Vérző fantomok *(Bleeding Phantoms), collected stories, Ujváry Griff Verlag, München, 1979, 226 pp, discussed below, is the latest. An essay on Dickens, his first work published in Hungary since 1949, appeared in the Budapest monthly* Nagyvilág *in the spring of 1980. In September of the same year he paid a visit to Budapest and gave a talk on the four thousand years of Greek influence in European culture at the Academy of Fine Arts. The interview printed below was conducted in London in September 1979, right at the time when his new book came off the presses. The title as it were prompted the first question.*

QUESTION: *What did you, a writer living and writing in England for more than a quarter of a century, mean by calling this book*

Vérző fantomok *(Bleeding Phantoms)? What sort of nostalgia was at the back of it? Why does a Hungarian writer abroad live among phantoms?*

ANSWER: A writer living in voluntary or enforced exile (in reality both amount to the same thing), permanently removed from his country's life, lives among phantoms even if he does not feel homesick. He lives among the phantoms of his childhood and adolescence, of his memories of home, of his vicissitudes and venturings in foreign lands, and of his imagination steeled to stoic isolation. If we change a single word the outbreak of a much reviled Shakespearean character applies also to their case: "hath not a phantom eyes? hath not a phantom hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions?... If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die?"

One of the greatest writers of my age, Samuel Beckett known for his black humour, conjured up great numbers of such unforgettable bleeding phantoms around himself. But he too, like his compatriot and early mentor, James Joyce, lived in voluntary exile. Their number has been growing with good reason since the middle of the last century. The classic prose works of Nerval and Rimbaud, of Kafka and Italo Calvino, and the visions of Fellini have taught me much about their world, things which have been inside me too for a long time.

Q.: *To a certain degree every writer lives among phantoms; but what is the difference between your phantoms and those of the home country?*

A.: Perhaps that they bleed more easily, their intimate intensity is greater. Most likely because Hungarian writers abroad also need straps to hang on to. They cannot, after all, live in a vacuum. Just don't you believe he is rootless because he is not. Oddly enough his very phantoms may help him to strike roots in the phantoms he has seen in the course of his wanderings abroad, described in his stories and so often evoked in his essays. I also strike roots in such phantoms projected from my childhood to my old age because, let me repeat, one cannot live without roots. The mistake of those who live in their own country is the belief that one can strike roots exclusively in the soil of one's native land, and that there are no substitute roots in the world—though there are.

Q.: *And at home? Aren't there substitute roots in Hungary?*

A.: Let me seize the opportunity to add something to all I have said: literature taking shape and flourishing in one's own country also has, in general, two branches. One, the realist or naturalist branch, describes primarily characters whom the writer has recorded in his notebook, whose speech he has pencilled in Kecskemét, Miskolc, or Kanizsa. The monumental embodiment of this kind of literature that renders living characters was, of course, Zsigmond Móricz. But since Hungarian prose has finally emerged in the Western sense, there has been another type of literature in Hungary: one that created phantoms. Let me mention some neglected writers who are being rediscovered such as Dániel Papp, the two Cholnokys, Minka Czóbel, the important writers of the pre-*Nyugat* generation. And as a contrast to Zsigmond Móricz let me mention another giant, Gyula Krúdy, who, like me, lived among his self-created phantoms in the dining room of the London Hotel, in Óbuda, or the Nyírség.

Q.: *What is the difference between the host of phantoms that took shape in your life abroad and Krúdy's?*

A.: The phantoms of Hungarian writers living abroad have a greater inner intensity,

a greater will to live, since it is through them that the writer strikes roots back in his own country and childhood. But he throws out roots also in foreign soil, in foreign art, in everything that offers itself!

Q.: *A phantom is something imaginary, that does not exist in reality, although these writers' phantoms express real spiritual substances; and literature knows no truer reality than those concrete spiritual substances which stretch the borders of recognition through feeling. Is there any need for excuses because of that?*

A.: No! We fully agree on this. Why should reality be limited to the fruit-market of Kecskemét? The nightmare, the spectre are also part of reality.

Q.: *If I lived abroad my phantom No. 1 would be the phantom of being torn out of the language medium.*

A.: This is a transitory feeling. I witnessed this crisis in young people who left the country in 1956 and so to speak everyone of them got over it. That is how the literature of the middle-generation, the works of those in their forties now developed in the West. They are no longer afraid of living in the medium of a foreign language. They hang on to Hungarian just as Márai and I have. This fear—or phantom?—is more alive in those at home who jealously guard us, afraid that we abroad lose our living ties with our native language, being torn out of the circular flow that should include ourselves and the language.

Q.: *Phantom No. 2 photographs the past onto the present. It draws a double, one could say phantom, picture. The question emerges whether you see us clearly?*

A.: My guess is that we have a better picture of you at home than you have of us for the simple reason that contemporary Hungarian literature is on our desks within days of publication: dailies, weeklies, or books. I won't mention visits, only printed stuff. I think we have a clear enough picture of Hungarian literature. In spite of this we refrain from judgement, we abstain from criticizing Hungarian conditions the way they are criticized by writers at home. We don't wish to look ridiculous either to the people at home or to ourselves. We could after all slither into enormous errors.

Q.: *While speaking of phantoms don't we ourselves turn reality into phantoms? You write about what you only can write about, we write what we have to write about. Is it not as simple as that?*

A.: Almost, but not quite.

Q.: *Have you not evolved your phantom world with the intent that it, too, should broaden Hungarian literature?*

A.: If you really saw it like that you would see it soundly. May I add that I don't think it a fault if a writer living in the West renders contemporary Hungarian life with modest reserve, a life of which he is a thing apart, and prefers to seize what he sees around him. That way he also broadens Hungarian literature. My characters have not lived, died, or made love in Hungary, but they are Hungarians, not only the language but the ideas at the back of it and in final analysis the ultimate projection are always Hungarian.

Q.: *Why should we imagine that Hungarian literature consists only of what is written at home and about the world at home?*

A.: I am glad that you have asked this and precisely here in England. It is notorious that many English writers live abroad. One could not imagine a more English writer than Graham Greene, the greatest contemporary English novelist who is seventy-five this week, and who has not set his books in

England for some time now. Many of his characters are South American or from the Caribbean and he lives in the South of France. He does not even own a *pied à terre* in England but he is so essentially English and the English think him so essentially English that, in English circumstances, he is the best illustration of what you have said. Hungarian literature is also bigger than the country. There are Hungarian. writers in neighbouring countries, in Western Europe, and on other continents, in South America and in North America.

Q.: *Your writings amount to numerous volumes of essays, plus plays, and short stories. Could they not have been written at home?*

A.: Not these particular works, and that for two reasons: firstly, my horizons would have remained much narrower, and secondly, I would have had much less experience. But I have been lucky—and I really mean lucky—to have chosen London as my second home. I say home and not country, I am the kind of Transylvanian who thinks of Transylvania as his real country. Even Budapest, where I spent half a lifetime, only served as a home. London where I spent a quarter of a lifetime, is my second home. And let me tell you that this city has offered me so much with its theatres, music, and exhibitions that I could well say that I studied European, Far Eastern and African culture once again, that I attended university for a second time. This is why I could not have written my essays, radio plays, and short stories at home where all this, the fine distillates precious in themselves, could not have been condensed in my writings.

Q.: *Where is the home of your writings, in what places did they strike roots? Where did they roam about in space and time while you maintain that they remained Hungarian?*

A.: Perhaps it is in art that I am at home, with my essays, in space and time, from antiquity to the present. I do not really know how much I have written, how many volumes I could collect on this field alone. And the things I have written about Shakespeare! Greece! and the Middle East! There you are: we have reached Jerusalem, really the Hungarian nation, my Middle Eastern travel writings are really historical reflexes: I find myself in my own fate, in my Calvinist bringing up. In that present of yesterday in which I was educated in a Calvinist school as Hungarian boys were educated for centuries in Hungarian secondary schools. You may rightly ask my phantoms: where are they truly, in Jerusalem, or in that age when Hungarian history still looked for its roots in the Old Testament? Perhaps they are where the fate of the preachers and of Hungary were so much interwoven.

Q.: *Let me ask you again: is it possible to let down roots in phantoms? And to what degree? Is a Hungarian writer living outside Hungary not undertaking the impossible after all? Who has managed to do successfully?*

A.: Kelemen Mikes! For us, Hungarians abroad, he is the giant of an ancestor of whom we are inordinately proud. Just think of what material, what elements he used to create his work which will always place him among the first ten Hungarian writers even if Hungarian history lasts four or five thousand years. It almost makes one ashamed to add that he was seventeen when he left Hungary. He lived in Rodosto, an Armenian-Greek-Gypsy-Jewish-Turkish hole back of beyond, and there, among his own phantoms, he created a great Hungarian work. Do you want to deny that this work was more important than any work written in Hungary in his time, in the eighteenth century?

Q.: *But did you ever ask your phantoms of the Old Testament what could preserve today's dispersed Hungarians? Perhaps a worship of the language? They have no Law and no Prophets.*

A.: Haven't they just! Let me spell out his name: János Arany!

ANDRÁS MEZEI

SURVEYS

PÁL MAGYAR

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS WITH PHYSIOLOGY

The 28th International Congress of Physiological Sciences in Budapest

The sciences break up into new and new disciplines: the age of universal scientists is over. This was pointed out by a journalist at a press conference where it was first announced that the 28th International Congress of Physiological Sciences would be held in Budapest in 1980.

What can a science that covers a whole range of human activities—a science which already includes general and applied physiology and its marginal disciplines: biophysics, biochemistry, pathophysiology and pharmacology as well—be expected to offer to clinical medicine which is itself inclined to specialization? Can anybody survey, even superficially, the whole of physiology for the benefit of clinicians?

At time the answer given was brief. The Congress was scheduled to review the present state of physiology.

It would work in 14 sections, 129 symposia and additional 48 satellite symposia (to be held in 28 cities in Europe including Budapest and six other places in Hungary: Szeged, Debrecen, Pécs, Veszprém, Tihany and Keszthely). In lectures, discussions and personal meetings, the Congress was to draw attention to the current state of the science of physiology. The complete proceedings of the Congress will shortly appear in print, jointly published by Pergamon Press of Oxford and the Publishing House of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

A round 5,500 scientists—about 6,000 inclusive of those who addressed the satellite symposia—registered at the Congress. Seven hundred Hungarians; 30 per cent from the socialist countries, the rest from Wester l and developing countries. Most, nearly a thousand, came from the U.S. According tn the computer 8,000 physiologists from alo corners of the world were due to address the Congress in one form or another ranging all the way from invited lecturers to co-authors of submitted papers.

The Congress was formally opened by Pál Losonczi, Chairman of the Presidential Council of the Hungarian People's Republic. Dr. Emil Schultheisz, Minister of Health addressed the Congress on behalf of the government. In his speech he underlined the importance of physiology in the history of medicine. In the programme a separate symposium was devoted to that subject chaired by the minister itself. Professor János Szentágothai, the President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, a neurologist, then lectured on "Principles of Neural Organization" finding himself in the midst of a subject on which much of considerable interest was laid in the days that followed.

It is fashionable to compare the brain to a computer. The brain is not as once thought a stereotyped preprogrammed structure, the complex neural pathways could not be reduced to a series of simple stimulus-response connections. Nerve cells in the brain

use electrical signals, as a computer does, but in addition they communicate chemically with chemical substances, the neurotransmitters. In the fifties it was still believed that communication between neurones across synapses, is mediated electrically. Neurotransmission in the mammalian nervous system is now acknowledged to be achieved by chemical rather than electrical transmission. Each neurone is believed to manufacture usually one neurotransmitter. This is the biochemical finger-print of the neurone. H. E. Dale and O. Loewi, were awarded a Nobel Prize, as early as 1936, for the discovery of neurochemical transmission. (Acetylcholine, one of the most important impulse-transmitting substances, carries signals from neurone to neurone, and from neurones to muscle fibres). The world of medicine hardly took notice of this discovery, and similar mediators detected later (e.g. adrenaline, noradrenaline, dopamine, etc.) only became generally known after some time passed. At the start Sir John Eccles himself was also a believer in electric transmission until he had convinced himself of the priority of chemical communication. A man of high scientific authority had to speak up before conservative colleagues finally accepted the new discoveries. Sir John together with Sir Andrew Huxley, both attended the Congress, had been awarded a Nobel Prize for having clarified the basic ionic functions of nerve cells (neurones).

The releasing factor

More than ten years ago, in the late sixties and the early seventies, hormonelike peptides were found which play an essential role in the activity of various nerve cells. The accepted idea was that the pituitary gland (hypophysis) is the conductor of the hormonal orchestra: most hormones are discharged from its three lobes and travel through the blood stream to distant points of the organism. Yes, but what makes the hypophysis work? Where is the conductor's score hidden?

In 1963 and 1968, Professor Szentágothai and his collaborators published neuro-anatomic discoveries which postulated a connection between the hypothalamus and the hypophysis. They virtually predicted discoveries made since then. Thyroitropia Releasing Factor was first discovered by Schally's and Guillemin's group in Houston which, entering the hypophysis from the hypothalamus, releases a hormone which induces the thyroid to work. Some 12 such hormone-releasing factors are known today. The Congress was the first to hear about a discovery by Professor Andrew Schally, a Nobel-laureate, and his collaborators, of synthetic derivatives of LH-RH. Professor Schally discovered LH-RH eight years ago. The recently produced synthetic derivatives modify the action of LH-RH continuously produced in the organism and make possible the regulation of hormonal activity related to reproduction. In practice they make contraception free of side effects possible. Present contraceptive pills interfere much more drastically in the female hormone balance: they induce, as it were, an artificial pregnancy, a kind of hormonal saturation which, otherwise, comes about only during pregnancy, preventing women from becoming pregnant again within the nine months of gestation. The synthetic derivatives of LH-RH, which were produced in America and were developed by István Teplán and his team at the Biochemistry Department of the Medical University of Budapest, are apt to impede the action of LH-RH, thereby preventing conception, while other synthetic derivatives stimulate its production. In this way they will play an important role in regulating the growth of the animal population in factory farming.

An increasing number of such factors discharged from the hypothalamus and inducing hormone production in the hypophysis are becoming known, at present about twelve. A releasing factor will sooner or

later be discovered for each of the hormones, indicating the role the nervous system plays in the hormone economy. The development of synthetic varieties of LH-RH and the fact that therapeutical experiments are already in progress illustrate well what Dr Emil Schultheisz said about the close interrelation of basic research, applied research and everyday medical practice.

The brain peptides are another interesting group influencing the functioning of the central nervous system. Five years ago receptors on the cell surface sensitive to recognize morphine molecule were discovered in the brain. Morphine is the strongest painkiller, and opium, which contains it, has been known for thousands of years. It is not probable however that the organism prepared itself for reception with special effector cells. It was therefore presumed that the brain must contain, or produce, some sort of endogenous morphine or morphines which exercise their effect, even without morphine being injected from outside, upon these receptors. Indeed two such substances were found: pentapeptides, the composition of which differs only in a single amino acid (both are composed of five amino acids), and they have been found to have an influence on the receptors recognized earlier. They were named encephalins. Later it was found that the two encephalins have a mother compound, from which they derive, and this was named endorphin. Endorphin composed of more than forty amino acids plays a decisive role in the sensation of pain.

Pain, endorphin, substance P

We all know that in the dentist's waiting-room, in anticipation of painful drilling or extraction, toothaches tend to disappear. It is also known that a soldier going over the top does not at first feel a wound: for a time he does not feel pain. The explanation could possibly be that the production of endorphin in the brain increases under stress, the pain threshold rises, the sensation of pain does not get into the cerebral cortex, because endorphin inhibits impulse conduction between nerve cells transmitting pain.

The Congress discussed the route and origin of pain at a separate symposium. Miklós Réthelyi, a scientist at the Department of Anatomy of the Medical University of Budapest, talked about the anatomy of pain, and his lecture fitted in organically with three others given at the symposium which gave a picture of modern ideas concerning pain. Scientists, Dr. Réthelyi among them, have discovered that pain developing in any part of the body gets through the sensory cells into the central nervous system, travelling over the spinal cord towards the brain cortex, with a gate in between. If this is open, pain enters the cerebral cortex and we then feel it; if it is not open, we do not notice it. There are sensitive people whose gate is always wide open, while others can barely feel pain, since the gate closes easily. This has been known for some time, but the gate had only been a hypothesis. In this symposium, morphological, histological, and biochemical evidence has been presented of the gate: the endorphins hindering the transmission of pain i.e. closes the gate and the substance P is responsible for transmission i.e. opens the gate. Pain sensation in the nervous system is transmitted by the substance P, but endorphin, an endogenous opioid peptide can inhibit the substance P from being released and thus interrupts the route of pain.

The substance P was discovered by the Nobel laureate von Euler from Sweden. Now—one year short of the 10th anniversary of its discovery—there is growing evidence that substance P may be a transmitter of the sensory nerves into the spinal cord and then relayed to the brain. Endorphins, the brain's built-in opiates, may produce their analgetic action by inhibiting the release of substance P in the spinal cord, i.e. suppressing pain perception.

A Congress symposium on the possibilities of the modulation of impulse transmission which discussed a new method of regulation devised in recent years made a major contribution to the exchange of information on brain research. The symposium was chaired by Professor Szilveszter E. Vizi, and participants included Professors Stjärne from the Karolinska Institute of Stockholm, Langer from Paris, Ladinsky from Italy, Szerb from Canada and Hedquist also from Stockholm. The conventional view is that the stimulative or inhibitory impact of a nerve impulse hinges upon the affector cell (the cell sensing the impulse), depending on whether the effect of the stimulative or the inhibitory substance carrying the impulse is stronger. For example, the impulse coming from the neuron which innervates a smooth muscle gets through to the muscle depending on whether the effector cell of the muscle is able to receive, that is sense the nerveimpulse. It was Professor Szilveszter E. Vizi who, when experimenting at Oxford in 1967/1968 observed that the battle between stimulus and inhibition is decided earlier; a transmitter released at nerve terminals can be inhibited presynaptically by another transmitter modulator. This discovery, in fact, shows that there is a more economical interaction between nerves: a substance released from nerve endings is able to inhibit the release of another transmitter thereby inhibiting its action.

Inhibitory neurones, regardless of the modulator involved, can interact with other inhibitory neurones. Those utilizing different modulators may be inhibited by other inhibitory modulators (e.g. opioid peptides or other peptides). A variety of combinations of inhibitory neurones can act upon each other. The first inhibitory input can nullify the inhibitory action of the second inhibitory input can nullify the inhibitory action of the second inhibitory neurone, producing an escape from inhibition and their activity of a neurone which was previously inhibited is enhanced.

The functioning of the nervous system

This discovery points to new ideas concerning the functioning of the nervous system. It seems that the entire central nervous system is in a state of constant inhibition, and the impulse prevails only when the inhibition is removed. This would make it somewhat similar to the functioning of organ pipes: the pipe is always covered and sounds only when the lid is raised. Just the reverse of the traditional idea, it had been believed that the brain and the central nervous system, are in a state of constant excitation, and that the inhibitory effect prevails only from time to time. The situation is the same in the peripheral areas of the nervous system and in the organism as a whole. Parkinson's syndrome (tremors of the head, the hands, etc.) may well be an example. Dopamine continuously discharged from the basal ganglia hinders the release of acetylcholine, and in this case no Parkinsonian symptoms occur. But if, for some reason, the quantity of dopamine released decreases, impulse transmission by acetylcholine intensifies, and the coordination of movement is disturbed.

This was a much debated point. Those present were of the opinion that the hypothesis needed further confirmation, but that anyway it opened great prospects not only for physiology but for psychiatry and neurology. This might offer an explanation for maniac-depressive states and possibly even for schizophrenia.

Professor Hedquist mentioned that when the affected cell, which is thus acted upon by the impulse-conducting substance, signals back as if saying: "enough of stimuli, stop stimulating," and thereby hinders the release of the substance conducting the impulse to it. At the symposium this was named transsynaptic modulation, as the afore-mentioned phenomenon was called presynaptic modulation. But instead of transsynaptic we may as well say non-

synaptic and indicate thereby that it is time to break with the orthodox idea which postulates a very strict order in the nervous system. It was believed that the impulses are directly carried from one nerve ending to another, that the two synapses are extremely close to each other (at a distance of 50–100 Ångströms), making it possible for the neurotransmitter to reach an enormously high degree of concentration, since it is released in very small volumes. Non-synaptic communication presupposes a much more diffuse structure and creates greater possibilities for the junction of nerves. It is argued that the impulse-conducting substances are released from free nerve endings in the central nervous system and swim over a distance of tens of thousands of Ångströms to reach the target cell where they exert their effects.

One may well ask whether this means a refutation of the general principle according to which in the nervous system a strict order decides what, or which nerve, has a part in the innervation of what, and what it modulates or inhibits and how. No, this continues to be accepted. Save that this strict order, this discrimination, is determined not by local proximity but by whether an effector cell has a sensitive part ready to be acted upon by the given modulatory substance coming from afar. Whether it has a postbox for the messenger. Today it is believed that more than 95 per cent of aminergic nerve endings in the cerebral cortex form no close synaptic junction. This is radically different from earlier ideas and invalidates the comparison between the brain and a computer. It is characteristic of the working of a computer that impulses go through numerous elements in succession, each of which is in either a yes or a no position, and this determines the route of the impulse. It seems however that an impulse spreads in the central nervous system and acts upon the nerve endings sensitive to it at once: it does not have to go and hit them one by one.

The lecture by Academician Kostyuk, Director of the Bogomoletz Institute of Kiev, on the ionic mechanism influencing the excitability of the neurone, really brought the house down. It is accepted wisdom that the excitability of a nerve is due to the ingoing and outgoing of various ions; sodium enters a cell, followed by calcium; then potassium comes out, and finally the cell sort of pumps sodium out, actively, with the help of an enzyme. This is what underlies the excitability of a nerve, it is for discovering this that Alan Hodgkin and Sir Andrew Huxley were awarded a Nobel Prize in the sixties. So far one only knows of the ingoing of calcium, it is talked about, but none had measured it. At this Congress the Kiev scientists reported their improved and already applied new method by which they can measure the movement of calcium ions continuously, from instant to instant, in thousandths of a second. A huge orchestration of instruments backs the discovery. A method is now available which allows one to examine, for example, how certain drugs, sedatives or stimulants, act upon nerve cells. It may be expected, furthermore, that it will be possible to examine how calcium crosses the cell membrane, for here, theory has bridged, in words, serious and inexplicable problems in physics. It is certain also that calcium has a part to play in the release of the impulse-transmitting substances and hormones which equally exit from nerve endings enveloped by a cell membrane. The new method may possibly help to understand the role of calcium in cell excitability.

Circulatory disturbances and prostacyclin

The best attended (700 participants) of the 14 sections of the Congress was that which discussed problems concerning the circulatory system. The interest shown in this subject was natural, since the diseases of the circulatory system and heart, and arteriosclerosis, are basic problems. Contested points were the role of calcium in the

blood supply of the heart muscle, as well as the significance of adenosine which, as reported, plays a key role in the dilation of cardiac blood vessels. Infarction can come about even without vascular obstruction, or thrombosis. If a given area in the muscular system of the heart—for the most part in consequence of arteriosclerosis—receives less oxygen than necessary over some length of time, and the heart comes under a considerable load, then cardiac infarction may come about. Adenosine may have a part to play there, since this is what makes possible the accommodation of the heart to the increased load. It is produced precisely owing to the greater load, and under its pressure the small blood vessels of the heart dilate. It appears that the disturbance of adenosine production may lead to cardiac infarction.

Coupled with this subject is a new prostaglandin derivative, more precisely prostacyclin, which was discovered by John Vane (England) and Dr. Gryglewski (Poland) about six years ago. Like other prostaglandins, it is produced in the organism, but it exerts its effect not at the place of origin. Its factory is in the lungs where it cannot decompose although it has an important function there, too; it gets to all parts of the organism over the arterial system and the indications are that it has an extremely great role to play in hindering blood coagulation, the formation of internal clots, and its absence may be the underlying cause of arteriosclerosis. It is known that arteriosclerosis is an illness with many causes and we know precious little about the real ones. For example, debates concerning the role of cholesterol tend against earlier held hypotheses which had never been confirmed. Prostacyclin, however, seems to offer a basis to continue with the examination of the causes of arteriosclerosis.

Several of the symposia dealt with prostacyclin. They adduced new proof to the effect that it is formed in the lungs, and it was demonstrated that its absence in the lungs can cause bronchospasm and consequently asthma. At such times, a sort of prostaglandin is formed instead of prostacyclin which is already utilized in therapeutic to induce childbirth, inducing spasms. Until now we have not understood why its use sometimes causes asthmatic symptoms in otherwise healthy mothers. It seems that in some cases the cause of asthma could be that the prostacyclin produced in the lungs is insufficient, too many decomposing enzymes do away with it already there or its synthesis is inhibited by different drugs (e.g. aspirin or indomethacin). And in other cases, although enough of it gets from the lungs into the blood vessels, yet it decomposes too rapidly there, and this may explain the development of arteriosclerosis or thrombosis. The vital role of prostaglandin in preventing asthmatic attacks in the lungs was discussed by Professor Imre Hutás. He pointed out that the asthmatic attack in response to aspirin treatment is related to the reduced prostacyclin production. (According to Polish press reports a number of patients have been cured of the vascular stenosis of the leg by the local application of prostacyclin and amputations were avoided. The Poles obtain prostacyclin for their experiments from the Chinoin Pharmaceutical Works of Budapest.) Prostacyclin is of equally great significance as a substitute for heparine in artificial hearts and lungs, since it prevents the clotting of blood without destroying red blood cells.

The physiology of weightlessness

The symposium which had as its subject the physiology of gravitation, dealt with questions concerning longer periods of time spent in a state of weightlessness. Presiding at the symposium were Dr. János Hideg (Hungary) and Professor Gazenko (Soviet Union). It was at the time of the Congress that President Carter declared that the U.S. would sever, or at least reduce to a minimum, all scientific contacts with the Soviet Union.

Well, all registered participants of the scheduled symposium were present and the lectures of all were listened to and discussed. One of the subjects was the influence of weightlessness on circulation, respiration, sensation and—as a novelty—the central nervous system; the latter has so far been somewhat neglected by the experts. A separate volume will be devoted to these subjects within the Congress proceedings.

In space flight, especially in prolonged space flight, body weight is lost, a great effect being exerted by the limitation of motion, by confinement, solitude and remoteness. By means of concrete probing instruments—which were employed also in the Soviet-Hungarian space mission—the effects can now be better measured. The symposium heard accounts of the joint Soviet-U.S. experiments in space biology, the experiment called Biosatellite Cosmos 1129. Professor Gazenko and members of his working group talked about the effect exercised by weightlessness upon the central nervous system, while research concerning changes in body weight already extends today to the cells. The indications are that the most up-to-date biochemical devices used on earth also apply in states of weightlessness. Of course, this requires thoroughly trained cosmonauts who in turn—at least according to what was said—are in need of a certain amount of physiological-medical knowledge. Loss of weight was explained earlier simply by supposing that muscles were not being used, but there must be other causes, too. It may be possible to discover more by conducting, already in space and later on the ground, biochemical examinations of blood samples taken at different times. More information may also be gathered about temporary osteoporosis which is likewise a concomitant of prolonged weightlessness.

A special feature of interest at the Congress was that the Pavlov Society of the U.S held its joint meeting with the Hungarian Physiological Society on this occasion: the meeting was presided over by Professor György Ádám. The introductory lecture was delivered by the nearly 90-year-old Academician Ashratyan, who is the last pupil alive of the great Pavlov. Apart from new research results published by him and the emotions aroused by his person, it is important that the Pavlov Society of the U.S wishes to cooperate with Soviet Pavlovians and this could, in 1980, happen in Budapest.

Nutrition and digestion, that is metabolism, are still prominent among the "traditional" subjects of physiology. Standing in the focus of interest here were the polypeptides that play an important role in the digestive apparatus, as well as in the developmental mechanism of gastric and the duodenal ulcers. There was much talk about the role of cimetidin, an antiulcer drug, inhibiting the activity of the receptor instrumental in the secretion of gastric juices, a subject which, essentially, is not physiological but pharmacological, yet the participants thought it was relevant.

Environmental physiology is a new discipline. The question is the effect which different environmental factors have on the operation of the human organism. Such are work, contaminants found in the environment, food, or housing conditions. A separate symposium discussed environmental impacts (noise, smells, light) and the way they are responded to by the hormonal system and, under the combined influence of all this, by the functioning of the nervous system, the wake-and-sleep cycle. It is difficult to draw a boundary line between what is to be regarded only as impact and what is to be described as damage. The subject of another symposium was the physiology of professional and amateur sports, and the effect of muscular work upon the functioning of the central nervous system.

An entirely new topic discussed at the Congress was comparative physiology: it dealt with the phenomenon of the second domestication of animals pointing to astounding similarities with human be-

haviour in the high rise housing estates of big cities. The first domestication occurred when man domesticated pigs, horses, etc. The second domestication takes place today, when man breeds animals by factory methods. An old and well-known example is the case of the rats crowded in a small space, where this situation makes them increasingly neurotic and then aggressive, so that finally they take to cannibalism. Among domestic animals raised and kept together in large numbers, many strange behavioural phenomena also occur, and there come into prominence various neurotic symptoms as well as aggression due to overcrowding: The greater the crowds they are kept in, the more aggressive they grow. The similarity to the behaviour of people living in a concrete jungle is not surprising, and is especially marked when such people have been removed from their hitherto natural environment, such as a village, to a high rise housing estate. Comparative physiology investigates the hormonal and neurological causes of human behaviour. The subject is new but very timely, and sociologists will also have a great deal to learn from them.

A question is whether, in the not too distant future, it will be possible to measure and explain by biochemical methods man's behaviour, his frame of mind, neurosis or mental disorders and nervous diseases. At least this can be expected from the mass of new knowledge and the tremendous progress in techniques of measurement. An example of this was the lecture of Professor Sokolov, from Soviet Union, who declared that learning processes can be observed even in a single cell; systems of complicated composition have thus far been considered necessary for learning, but the new instruments and new methods already make it possible to examine the learning ability and even the associative capacity of a single cell.

The Congress gave evidence of enormous progress. It is worth mentioning Hungarians who live abroad, and who gave lectures. They included György Sömjén from Duke University (Durham, U.S.A.), who is a pioneer of research into the supporting tissue of the brain, the glia cells (neuroglia). An interesting feature of his lecture was that he demonstrated that, against earlier suppositions, the glia cells can be irritated. A most interesting lecture was given by Professor Ervin Erdős from Texas, who acquired an international reputation in various peptide researches, and presided over one of the symposia concerning his subject. An equally great authority is Professor János Szerb from Halifax, Nova Scotia, who lectured on synaptic inhibition.

No doubt physiology is now at a point where it is able to quantify much in therapeutics and also in the operation of the human organism, and to interpret a growing number of psychological phenomena and illness, determining their factors and underlying causes. That we have got so far and have such high hopes is due to two reasons. One is that the scientific-technical revolution has infiltrated into medicine in general, and physiology in particular, that increasingly complex measuring devices are employed. The other is that the receptivity of scientists has changed accordingly, their training has improved. Periodical, sometimes seemingly abrupt, development is not accidental! Team work is in the forefront. Physiologists, physicists, biologists, histologists and mathematicians combine and, each with his, or her, special knowledge, synthesize something new.

The fact that Budapest could arrange the 28th International Congress of Physiological Sciences does credit to Hungarian medicine, Hungarian medico-biological research and the whole of the Hungarian scientific community. A sign of this appreciation is also that Professor Arisztid Kovách a Hungarian who had been Secretary General of the International Union of Physiological Sciences is First Vice-President serving under Knut Schmidt-Nielsen, the new President of the Union.

HEDVIG SZABOLCSI

HUNGARIAN ART IN THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

For three months, the exhibition hall on the ground floor of the Hungarian National Gallery in Buda Castle was the scene of an unusual display entitled "Art in Hungary between 1780 and 1830." Most of the exhibits were as yet little known: they derive from museum store-rooms, church collections, county parsonages, libraries, archives, and private collections and as such present a hitherto unfamiliar aspect of things. It is not exaggerating to say that the display marks a new era in Hungarian art history.

Until now, art produced in the fifty years between 1780 and 1830 has not really been reckoned by recognized Hungarian opinion as a coherent period in art history, even though the work of some outstanding artists, and the most significant works, have featured in art literature and exhibitions. But it has always been considered as the last phase of late Baroque at the end of the eighteenth century, or as the early phase of classicism which flourished in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. It seems as if the unbroken process of art in Western and Central Europe had no equivalent in Hungary, where these fifty years represented a break between two great stylistic periods, when hardly anything of substance took place in art.

This apparent gap has been filled as a result of research carried out by a small team over a period of nearly ten years.* The exhibition endeavoured to give a true picture of what went on in Hungarian art in these fifty years.

In Hungary, as in other countries, all significant ideas underlying the art of that period can be linked with the ideas of the Enlightenment. The meaning of enlightenment is basically unambiguous, and appeared to embrace the same ideas all over Europe; once used to refer to a period of time, however, the picture is by no means as simple. The further one moves geographically to the east, the more the period of time indicated by the term—which appears to be uniform in Western Europe—changes, in close connection with the political, economic, historical, and cultural situations. It is a characteristic development, that here, as in literature and fine arts, this international flow of ideas brought about a strengthening of the national element in art, and thus contributed to the coming into being of national art.

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The presentation was based on the intellectual and conceptual features of the period, arranged according to subject. The organizers selected the genres which were even then regarded as the most characteristic of the period: landscapes, genre painting, portraits, historical, religious, mythological, and allegorical pictures, still life, literary illustrations, and stage sets. Sculpture in public squares and architecture, which was highly characteristic of Hungary in that period (as elsewhere), was represented at the exhibition by quality designs, drawings of sculptures and architectural items.

Rather than display only works and artists with a recognized place in art history, mainly within the category of Grand Art, the object was to give a broader interpretation of a period. It makes sense to keep track of the culture of the age in the wider sense of the term, including the common coin of the artistic idiom and forms

* The present article is based on the exhibition catalogue which was prepared with the participation of this team.

of manifestation which only appear indirectly, like hidden springs. Particular attention should be paid to the gradual change in exhausted conventional forms.

In these fifty years, in a society which had started on the process of turning bourgeois, the art scene was almost completely restructured. Patronage of art, until then a preserve of the Church and the aristocracy, was being taken over by the landed gentry and the middle classes; aristocratic residences and churches, town and county halls, theatres, casinos, libraries, trade and customhouses, etc., were joined and even superseded by the town-houses of the gentry and middle classes as hives of artistic activity. Large-scale building work in Pest and Buda, where the development of the city was under way, was the first indication of this change in demand.

In intellectual life the role of the new intelligentsia was becoming greater than ever before, primarily, of course, in the dissemination of the new enlightened ideas; and this intellectual impulse drew the attention of both the artist and the patron to new subjects. They also played a major role in shaping tastes and in the widespread teaching of drawing, which laid down the foundations of visual education in a country where art still had no institution or academy of its own.

Ferenc Kazinczy, the writer and poet, who was the leading figure in the reform of the Hungarian language and the revolution in tastes and style, described conditions in Hungary in his memoirs, *Pályám emlékezete* (Remembrance of My Career) (1816), during a conversation with the art dealer Artaria at his shop in Vienna: "In my country there are still no shops selling pictures, we have no academy, and our important men are interested in other things, not in painting and copper engravings... My land is a moneyless country, and a love for the arts requires money. But our time will come as it did for Vienna after Dresden, Paris, and London."

Due to the lack of training opportunities in Hungary, most of those who intended to make their career in art went to study in Vienna. Artistic developments at the beginning of the period were gradually shaped by Austrians and artists from other countries who worked in Vienna, as well as those who settled in Hungary and who first worked mostly as commissioned by the Church and aristocracy but later increasingly for the gentry and middle classes.

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Unlike Western Europe, Hungary had no major tradition of *landscape painting*. As in East Central Europe in general, attention was turning to the artist's perception of scenery and the beauties of the natural environment, under the influence of the cult of nature that arose during the Enlightenment. It followed from the lack of Hungarian antecedents that landscape painting here was based in the first half of the nineteenth century on seventeenth-century Dutch landscape painting, as had generally been the case in this typically bourgeois genre all over Europe. Many early Hungarian attempts at landscape painting were made by painters influenced by Johann Christian Brand, a highly effective figure in Viennese landscape painting, who taught at the Academy in Vienna.

This early type includes some typical portrayals of estates prompted by the feudal patronage of art which was still in existence, for example Ferenc Neuhauser's "The Mikes Residence of Marosújvár and its Surroundings" or János Rombauer's "Detail of the Hotkóc Castle Garden," which depicted in its 24 small sections parts of the Csáky park, which at the turn of the eighteenth century was transformed into a landscaped garden. Pietro Rivetti's gouaches can also be ranked into this category. Rivetti came to Hungary from Northern Italy to enter the service of the Esterházy family, and his pictures depict scenes of the park of the

Esterházy residence at Csákvár which, according to the fashion of the time, was called the *jardin anglais.*

Landscape painting began with the traditional *veduta* into which the concrete environment was gradually incorporated and later became a subject in its own right.

Some minor figures tried their hand at mimeographed drawings of Hungarian landscapes as early as the end of the eighteenth century. Unpropitious conditions led to the abandonment of these series of landscapes, which had included the attempts of the art teacher Erasmus Schrött, and of the Neuhauser brothers, finally, in 1818, Joseph Fischer, a teacher at the Viennese Academy, had a success with the publication of his album *Malerische Reise auf dem Waagfluss in Ungarn.*

As a result of the multiplicity of drawings landscape depictions became more widespread and these were colourful even in their experimental stage. General András Petrich, a military engineer, made delicate, poetic drawings which at the same time reproduced the scenery with minute precision. From 1810 on, for three decades, Petrich drew virtually all the regions of the country—according to certain sources his landscapes at one point amounted to several hundreds. (When visiting the artist, Miss Pardoe counted 460 landscapes in one of Petrich's portfolios, but only 20 of his works depicting the Hungarian scenery have survived.)

In the 1820s, landscape painting began to be regarded in a new light. Literary almanachs began to publish landscapes, and the first series of landscape paintings to be published in Hungary appeared. From then on a new type of approach to landscape art began to gain ground in ever growing circles through the dissemination and multiplication of illustrations. The process gathered momentum, and increasing public demand led to the independent landscape panel picture. Alongside idealised scenes with intensified light effects and strong romantic and emotional inspiration, following earlier European traditions and foreign masters (with Károly Kisfaludy, who was also an eminent writer and editor, as the most outstanding example), actual Hungarian landscapes were also come to be painted in oil. Towards the end of the period one of its high points was the completion of Károly Markó's *Visegrád.*

Early in the nineteenth century, landscapes were often the settin gfor genre scenes of folk life. The Enlightenment turned attention towards the people, who consequently became a subject of the fine arts. As in the rest of East Central Europe, it began in Hungary with the portrayal of various folk figures, including—deliberately—the national minorities in the country, shown in their folk costumes. But it was as difficult to publish these as had been the case with landscape prints and drawings. The first successful series of drawings to appear between 1816 and 1820 was by the military engineer József Heimbucher Bikessy. It was particularly effective because of its explanatory text by János Csaplovics, a noted pioneer of Hungarian ethnography. Its success was also made easier by virtue of the fact that it took place in Pest and Buda, the country's intellectual centre. Hartleben in Pest, for example, in 1816 began to publish in German, after the original in French, short works depicting the peoples and customs of Dalmatia and Illyria, Russia, Egypt, and Spain, illustrated by Karl Bleyer. From there soon followed the multifigure composition of the *folk genre:* Ferenc Neuhauser, a painter and art teacher from Nagyszeben, was the first to publish, in 1819, a three-part composition depicting the milling crowds of a "Transylvanian Fair." This first coloured Hungarian lithography (which was printed by the Viennese Lithographisches Institut from at least nine stone-plates), virtually summarized the achievements within the genre in Hungary, both through its portrayal of the colourful crowds of craftsmen, merchants and their customers—Hungarians, Transylvanian Saxons, Rumanians, Greeks, and Gypsies—and

in its importance as a technical innovation.

Pest and Buda were the scene of the first experiments in bourgeois genre painting. The depiction of horse races, initiated by count István Széchenyi, the protagonist of Hungarian bourgeois transformation, followed the British example and prints inspired by English engravings brought a new colour to Hungarian art. The first artists to pursue this new and rightly successful line in Hungary were Johann Erdmann Gottlieb Prestel, a graduate of the Munich Academy, and Alexander Clarot, who studied at the Viennese Academy and was also the first illustrator of the works of Mihály Vörösmarty, the imaginative, romantic national poet of the nineteenth century.

The section of the exhibition which raises perhaps the most complex problems, is that which centres on historic subjects. It is in this area that the change of outlook that took place in this period was most apparent. Many themes from the Hungarian past appearing here still follow the artistic traditions of late Baroque, and remain in the framework of church painting, on church ceilings and altars (because Baroque ceiling fresco painting remained alive for longer in Hungary than anywhere else in Europe), and of secular works commissioned by the Church. The historic subjects, depicted in increasingly modern style, are based on the ideals and attitudes of the developing national movement of the nobility, which itself had an impact as Josephinism around 1790, and all this was naturally bound up with the whole system of ideas of the Enlightenment. Outstanding among these works—all large, and often huge, panel pictures—are both in concept and their modern style the works of István Dorffmeister, a noted painter of Austrian extraction who settled in Hungary.

The change in attitudes to the past goes virtually hand in hand with the artistic portrayal of the relics of the past. Alongside the interest in events and great figures from history, attention also turned to objects connected with current events, primarily to an authentic depiction of Hungarian regalia, in particular of the crown. The crown became the focal point of artistic portrayal in 1790, when it was brought back to Hungary. During the reactionary years under Francis I that followed the bloody suppression of the "Hungarian Jacobins," the conspiracy led by Ignác Martinovics, history could only be portrayed—in an often veiled and allegorical way—in the form of illustration.

In the second quarter of the nineteenth century, after the Treaty of Vienna, the political movements led by the nobility which aimed at the bourgeois transformation of Hungary opened up new possibilities in the depiction of history. The most monumental achievement in this respect—which was also typical of the period—was the huge oil painting by the celebrated Viennese painter, Peter Krafft, "Zrínyi's Sally" (1825), which depicted an important event in the struggle against the Turks. The painting was commissioned at the initiative of Palatine Joseph and paid for out of contributions from the counties, as the first part of a projected series of three pictures for the Budapest National Museum which was founded at that time. The series, initiated in Vienna, was intended as a glorification of pan-Habsburg patriotism, which damned it from the start. Politically more direct effects were achieved in the illustrations of historic subjects in the various almanachs of the time which were by then being published regularly; these had a conscious programme and already carried the ideas of the nobility's desire for reform. At a time when the foundations of a national literature were being laid, illustrations of historic events formed the basis of a future national art.

The *portrait* was undoubtedly the most popular and most widespread art form in Hungary during this period. In this genre too Hungarian painting followed the path outlined above: it progressed from the late

Baroque gentry portrait, in which the whole figure was depicted, through more resolved and informal works in which certain aspects were omitted, to the class-conscious bourgeois portraits. The various stages of this colourful process which was, one should add, varied and of a high quality, are marked by works such as the portrait of Field Marshal Count András Hadik, the chairman of Empress Maria Theresa's War Council, by Georg Weikert from Vienna, a pupil of Martin van Meytens; the half-length portraits of nobles and bourgeoisie by János Jakab Stunder, who studied at the Copenhagen Academy and was invited to come from Vienna to Hungary by Kazinczy; the portrait of Kazinczy by Joseph Kreutzinger from Vienna, and the busts by the sculptor István Ferenczy, including one of the poet Csokonai, who even in his clothing was emphatically Hungarian and was the poet of the Hungarian Enlightenment who expressed himself in dance-like forms and was known as "the Hungarian Mozart." A different world is revealed in the growing number of portraits of the bourgeoisie in the second half of the period, particularly in the works of the popular János Donát.

Graphic art also took on great significance in portrait genre. Noted personalities of the time were popularized in portraits done in copper engravings, and the depiction of the writer, scholar, artist, soldier, and priest formed a special type portrait. Besides oil paintings, the use of the miniature and pastels also gained ground. The portraits give a colourful picture of Hungarian society of the period, a fact borne in mind in the selection of the exhibits.

Of the rich material on display at the exhibition mention should be made of the wide range of architecture shown in high-quality drawings, including Ferenc Engel's design of the Keszthely mausoleum for Count György Festetics, which shows the distant influence of French revolutionary architecture. The architectural drawings, designs, and models illustrate how much architecture of the period changed both in the level of instruction in general architectural design and drawing, and in the types of buildings which were either achieved in practice or remained at the stage of design. Control of architecture is apparent not only from the designs for individual buildings, but also from blueprints for overall town planning.

In the section on *mythological and allegorical paintings*, the exhibition closed with a large, lively, neo-Classical picture by the Viennese Johann Ender. Entitled "After the Rain the Sun," it is actually an allegorical depiction of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. As shown in its dedication, the picture, painted in 1834, was commissioned by Count István Széchenyi, who initiated the founding in 1825 of the Academy to which he presented the canvas. Count Széchenyi came to know Ender well on his travels, in 1818. The young female figure in the picture is Hebe, who is giving an eagle drink from a cup—in other words, she hands the nectar of enlightenment, of science, to the Hungarian nation. The motifs and scenes on the shield in her left hand are an allegorical reference to Hungary's reviving scientific life and cultural appreciation. Research has linked the figure of Hebe with John Hoppner's painting which portrayed Lady Stafford as Hebe.

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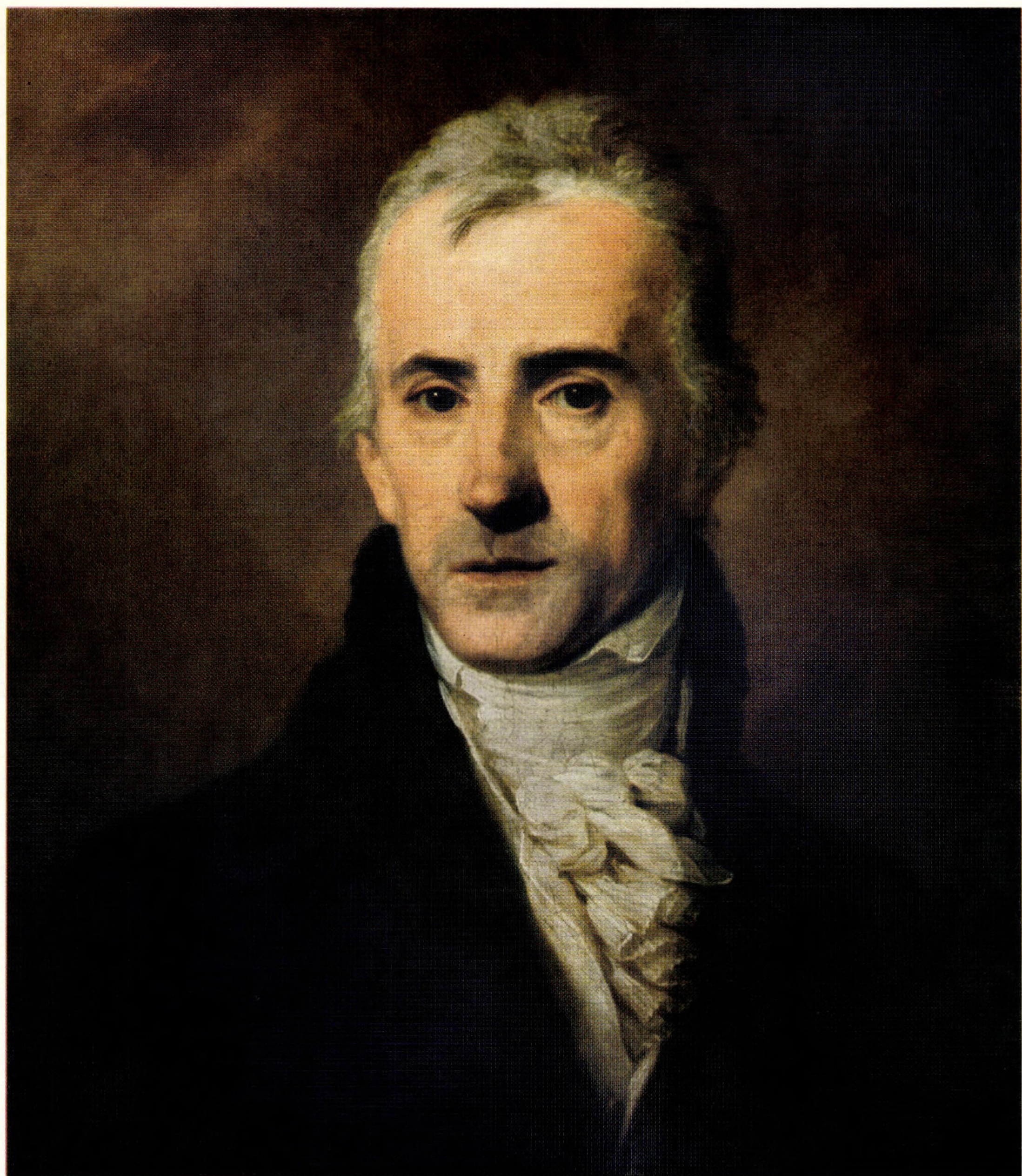
Art goes on even in difficult periods of decline and transition; it tries to cut a path for itself, in spite of the hold-ups and detours it may experience. As far as the space allowed for an exhibition permits, the thematic sections of this exhibition, taken as a whole, illustrated fifty years of artistic development in Hungary, which from its unbalanced beginnings led to the first period of high-quality national art.

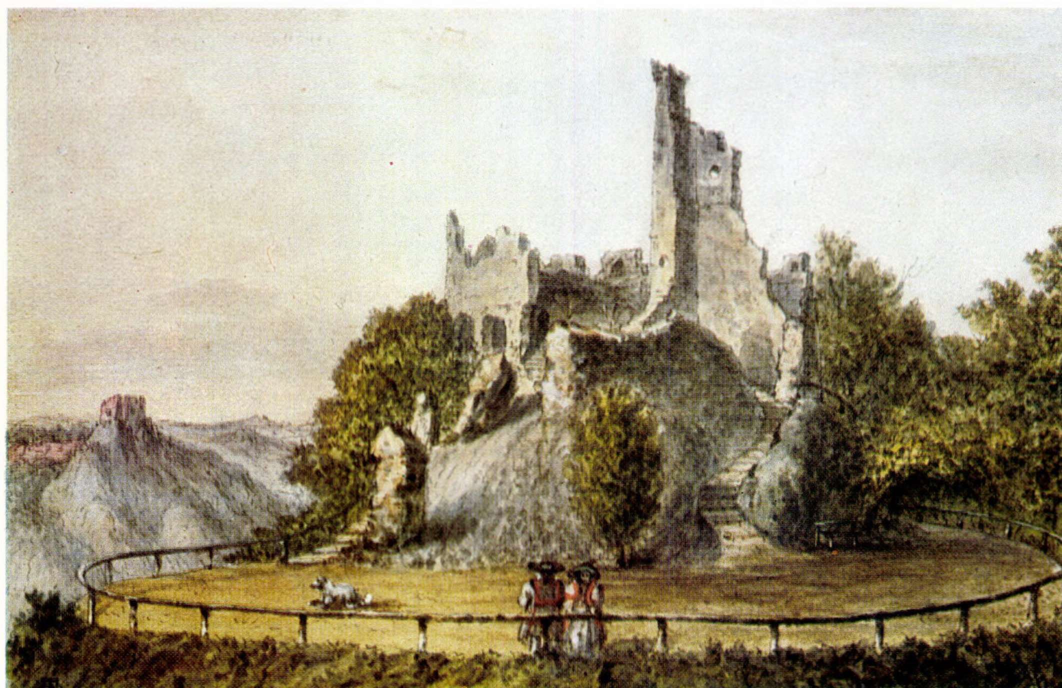


Éva Ajtósi

Josef Kreutzinger: Portrait of Ferenc Kazinczy
(oil on canvas, 51×45 cm, 1808)
(Hungarian Academy of Sciences)

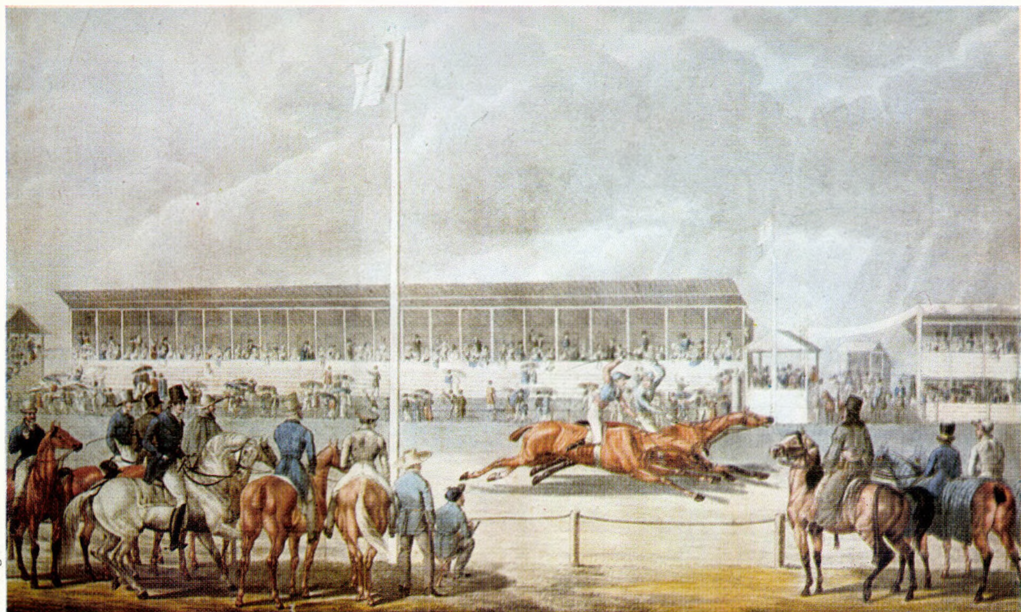
FERENC NEUHAUSER: FAIR IN TRANSYLVANIA I. (DETAIL, COLOURED LITOGRAPH, 34×168 CM; Hungarian National Museum)

János Pel



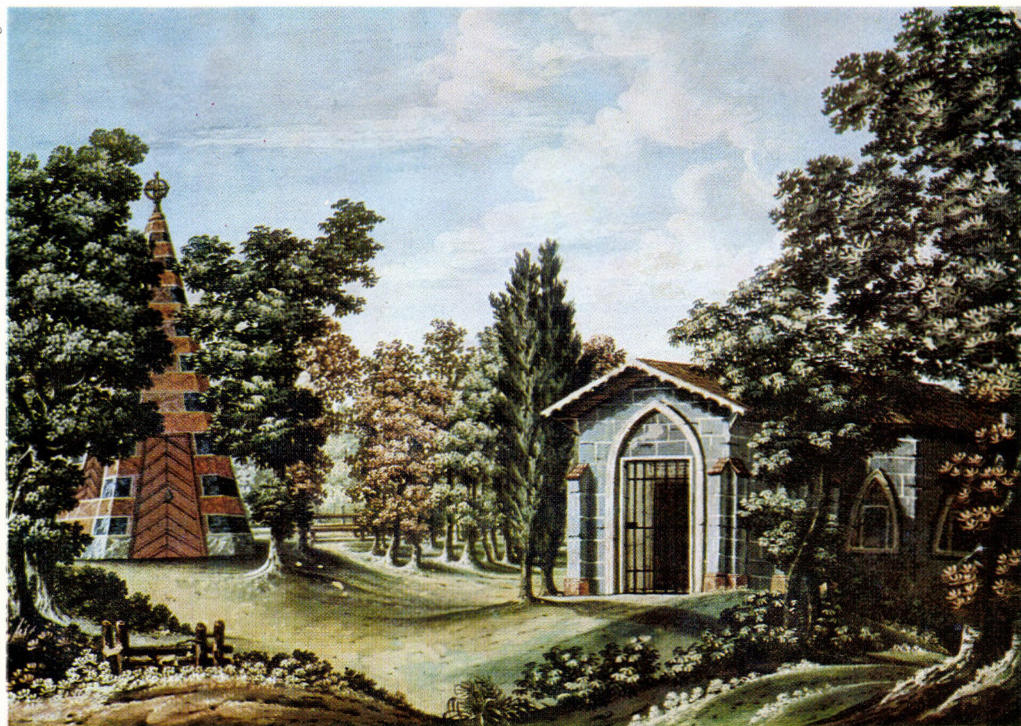
ANDRÁS PETRICH: THE RUINS OF TÁTIKA CASTLE (GOUACHE, PEN, 10,5×16,2 CM; Prints and Drawings Collection of the Hungarian National Gallery)

Béla Hegede



Béla Hegede

J. E. G. Prestel–A. Clarot: Racing in Pest (coloured litograph, Prints and Drawings Collection of the Hungarian National Gallery) 41×66,1 cm



Béla Hegede

Pietro Rivetti: "Egyptian Pyramid and House" in the Eszterházy Park Csákvár (gouache, 34,9×46,1 cm; Saint Stephen the King Museum, Székesfehérvár)

Béla Hegede

Ferenc Engel: Plan for the Mausoleum of György Festetics in Keszthely (coloured ink on paper, 67×51 cm; National Archives)

Béla Hegede

István Ferenczy: Portrait of Mihály Csokonai Vitéz (marble, 60 cm, 1818; Calvinist College, Debrecen)

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

RUNES, ICE AGE AND TIME

New volumes of poetry

György Rába: *Rovások* (Runes), Magvető 1980, 101 pp.; Gábor Garai: *Jégkorszak után* (After the Ice Age), Szépirodalmi 1980, 119 pp.; János Parancs: *Az idő vonulása* (The Passing of Time), Magvető 1980, 104 pp.

The essay has always been a genre favoured by Hungarian poets. In the inter-war period Mihály Babits wrote *The History of European Literature*, a comprehensive essay in two volumes. It is rare for a poet to be a professional literary historian. Among poets of rank I know only one, György Rába, a senior research fellow in the Institute of Literature of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, whose special field is Hungarian literature of the first half of the century. He has written an excellent book about Lőrinc Szabó, one of the finest Hungarian poets of the century, and in another book analysed the translations of three important Hungarian poets and translators. Although translation in Hungary is practically as old as literature itself, Rába's book was the first academic work which discussed both its historical and theoretical aspects.

Rába is an excellent translator himself: he translated medieval French poets and published a volume of Leopardi, but his principal work was his anthology of 20th century European poetry. He is especially intrigued by the modern French and Italian poets among whom he has many kindred spirits: one reviewer has compared him to Yves Bonnefoy.

Rába's first book of verse appeared in 1943 but his first representative volume was published only two decades later, in 1961, under the title *Nyílttenger* (Open Sea). This contained the best of his own poems written over a span of twenty years as well as some of his translations. *Rovások* (Runes) is his sixth volume.

Rába's poetry is deeply influenced by Mallarmé's thesis that giving a name to things deprives us of three quarters of our joy. Eliot's practice of objective correlation also had a strong impact on his work. He deliberately suppressed any narrative element from his lyrical poetry in later volumes and, unlike Eliot, he avoids direct statements and descriptions. He wrote: "From under the sand of events the stone of truth and law must emerge; anecdotes and impressions are personal matters, in themselves uninteresting and incidental." Between 1946 and 1948 Rába was one of the editors of *Újhold*, a review brought out by a group of twenty-year-olds. The idea that conciseness should replace the anecdotal, impression and narrative as a criterion of the value of the lyrical poem, were foreign to practice in Hungarian poetry at the time. A few years later the Hungarian poem was again swamped with narrative and since the mid-sixties the tradition of *Újhold* was revived again, mainly indirectly, under the impact of French poetry.

More than thirty years have passed since *Újhold* ceased to be published. Regardless of whether his poetic techniques have in the meantime been condemned, politically or otherwise, or have even on occasion been too fashionable, Rába has continued pur-

posefully to build his oeuvre. He is obviously helped in this by his experience as a literary scholar and translator. He is diametrically opposed to the ethics and aesthetics of the merely personal, the momentary and contingent. As a poet he limits himself to essential emotions and discoveries, and he imposes a strict hierarchy of values on his memories. Poetry-writing is for him a festive action. Passion and his joy at speaking in verse show in his unexpected associations and concise sentences. And in the depths of his complicated, elliptically structured images and hidden dialogues one senses the melody and rhythm of the Hungarian folk-song.

In one of his few non-hermetic verses, *Rovások* (Runes),. Rába writes:

"The ladder / taking you to your Heaven / is built with / daily used tools." Besides being a concise summing up of the relationship of language and poetry, a topic which has been done to death, this poem also proclaims the redeeming power of poetry. One of his poems, *Viaskodás* (Struggle), is the modern personal variant of the story of Jacob's struggle with God. It concludes with: "...I carry above my cheekbone the runes of lustrelessness, / in my entrails the blessing of the struggle."

It is significant that in this volume the word "time" or one of its synonyms occurs in surprisingly many poems with diverse shades of meaning, such as "the first chime of winter," or "my every living minute." Some characteristic metaphors are "the salt-traces of time," "but where time leaves no trace," or "time's spooled bass." One of his poems bears the title *Közbeszólások Herakleitoszba* (Interjections in Heraclitus): it is built mainly of hidden quotations of aphorisms on time, change and cognition. Antiquity plays a greater role here than in Rába's earlier books. He formulates an epitaph for Seneca and elsewhere he mentions "the shadow-Odysseus." And finally, in the last poem of the book, *Előszó a halálhoz* (Foreword to Death), a quotation from Plutarch about how Plato received his death stands as a motto. Besides time, the dream and half-dream are recurring motifs in Rába's poems together with problems of personality which can best be summed up in the words "face," "mask", and "double." Anyone who survived the war will always carry its memory with him in his nerves. The poem *Hasonmás* (Double) bears witness to this: this is, incidentally, the most important of Rába's personality-poems. In prose translation:

In my half-dreams I am never
neither survivor nor small child
my every living minute
is fuller with its own death
and as one life is too much for dying
and too little for changing
I pretend to be my own double
under the mask of my face
among its motionless rocks
where hiding life passes
I sink deeply into
myself.

*

Gábor Garai was born in Budapest in 1929. His first poems were published in 1948 and his first book in 1956. Since then he has published 19 volumes of poetry and numerous literary translations and essays.

In one of his fine autobiographical sketches he mentions his hard, sometimes miserable, youth. Garai's father was a renowed poet but the paternal heritage was fraught with tragedy and danger. The father left his family, and did not care much for his son, who was raised by his mother. After 1945 the paternal heritage and past weighed heavily on Garai who, because of his father, was unjustly considered politically suspect and more or less an enemy. His first book of verses appeared in the spring of 1956 when the period of dogmatism was over. In 1958 he was one of the poets represented in the anthology *Tűztánc* (Fire

Dance) which signified the beginnings of literary consolidation. From then on professional and social successes followed each other and he was awarded many prizes, including the highest literary award. Since 1976 Garai has been secretary-general of the Writers' Federation and has occupied important political posts for some years.

The central figure in the above-mentioned autobiographical sketch is the mother. The first poem in *Jégkorszak után* (After the Ice-Age) also evokes her memory: "And you promised with wise, strong words / —I wish I could hear them now— / that you will protect me also against myself / my confessor, my patroness, my mother."

This poem, a funeral speech, is entitled *A hangod* (Your Voice). It is not the only obituary in the book. As one approaches fifty, one encounters a growing number of deaths. Colleagues who died were not always necessarily Garai's close friends: beside the bier of the poet László Nagy he writes:

"You did not entrust me with any message / but I stand here in the general shock." Perhaps the most characteristic poem of *Jégkorszak után* is *Ötven felé* (Approaching Fifty), which throws light on the entire volume:

"Well past half-way / what could one begin anew? / If one does not change one's faith / will one learn the final fear?"

What is the value of a man's work, what remains of him and what can he do for himself if he has no hope of after-life?—meditates the poet. His concept of poetry is summed up in the opening verse of the book: *Ostromolni a lehetetlent* (To Assault the Impossible). The title triggers off a series of associations in the Hungarian reader. It first reminds him of a poem by Endre Ady—the greatest figure in the poetic revival at the beginning of the century—entitled *A szent lehetetlenség zsoltára* (The Psalm of Holy Impossibility). Ady is indeed a central figure in Garai's poetic pantheon: he takes care to mention that he was born on the tenth anniversary of Ady's death and that his mother saw this as symbolic. Secondly, "To Assault the Impossible" evokes a work by the abovementioned László Nagy. Garai writes,

"Yes, we assault the impossible when we attempt to fix into words, to hold a decisive moment of our existence so that it should not, if possible lose its perspective in time. (Surely the lifework of any poet is autobiographical)... Because we believe that we can find each other with the help of words, create a community with the help of words... the poetic word is the sign of our reason and stands in the way of irrational apocalyptic mass destruction; this sign can be passed on to others and at the same time records that we have lived here between the limits of our fate, determined by time, and yet limitless."

Almost twenty years ago Garai wrote in very similar vein about Eluard, in particular about his *Poésie ininterrompue.*

One poem in *Jégkorszak után*, *Kiáltás a szabadságért* (Cry for Freedom) pays homage to Faiz Ahmed Faiz: Garai has translated a whole book of verses by the Pakistani poet. He dedicates his *Példázat a szeretetről* (Parable about Love) to the memory of Bertolt Brecht. In some of his poems he takes up classical themes. The sonnet is one of his favourite forms and here he includes one entitled *Ovidius Tomiban* (Ovid in Tomi) as well as fictitious letters from Ovid in Tomi to Claudia. It is worthy of note that Hungarian poets have perhaps never written as many works in the name of other poets as they do now. Odysseus, Proteus and Narcissus have also inspired Garai.

Even the prose-translation of his seven-line *Trubadúrok* (Trubadours) gives an idea of his technique:

"Like medieval trubadours / below curtained windows / we watch the Belle of our Idea— / while the lady in there / tinkers around with her tabouret / or has intercourse with her husband / the copper-nosed lord of the castle..."

The function of image, metaphor and simile in Garai's poems is largely conventional. The organising element is the line, and often the rhyme, which break up the narrative and commentary. The descriptions of his travel experiences are similar. Years ago he wrote a travel diary about India in verse and in some of the final poems in *Jégkorszak után* he describes his experiences on a journey in the Soviet Union.

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János Parancs was born in 1936. When a second-year student at the University of Technology, he left Hungary in 1956. He got to Paris and began to write poetry there. His first book of verse appeared in 1963 and he returned to Hungary in 1964. He now works as a reader at a publishing house.

Parancs is an expert in modern and contemporary French poetry. He translated a volume by the Polish-American Nobel laureate Czeslav Milos, and also works by Saint-Pol Roux, Soupault, Breton, Péret, René Char, Yves Bonnefoy, and a number of black American poets. Since I myself wrote about René Char and translated a dozen of his poems a few years ago, I have compared Parancs's versions with the originals with particular care. They are excellent. The reader senses in every line that the translator has a thorough knowledge of the spirit and technique of 20th century French poetry in every possible form. This is perhaps why Parancs' original works are so different from what is going on in France. The difference is not something that is "innate" but is the result of a long process.

In 1973 he wrote in the poem *Fegyelmezetten* (Disciplined), which appears in his *Fekete ezüst* (Black Silver): "blow smacks after blow / rebellion is unthinkable".

In 1977 he conveyed the idea of this process in *A versírás természetrajza* (The Physiography of Poetry Writing):

"Long ago when I still believed
in the freely streaming images

— — — — — — — — — — — —

that my pain and despair
interested entire mankind

— — — — — — — — — — — —

I knew—or at least believed that I
knew
why things happened in the world
But these times are gone forever."

Reading his new book, *Az idő vonulása* (The Passing of Time) one has the impression of a Hungarian poet in the last quarter of the 20th century who seems never to have heard of what happened in French poetry in the 20th century. Even the fact that a few of the poems are set in Paris does not altogether dispel this impression of naïveté. Sooner or later, however, Parancs's technical perfection leads the reader to the realization that somebody who writes these prosaic, everyday, mostly short modern verses, almost wholly without metaphors, must also be intimately acquainted with other techniques. And if the reader turns again to *Fekete ezüst* where he finds Parancs's splendid translations or looks at *Portölcsér* (Sand Whirl, 1966) the first volume of Parancs to be published in Budapest, in which the poet describes how he awoke to the consciousness of the world in Paris, he will relax and see that he was not mistaken: the simplicity and directness of his verses, which are sometimes akin to notes in a diary, are the fruit of hard and purposeful intellectual work.

NHQ 78 printed four poems from *Az idő vonulása*, translated by Alan Dixon. Here I quote one, *Apokaliptikus délután* (Apocalyptic Evening):

There is no help for anything
when the earth grows blisters only,
when blackened trees are lurching and
new shoots and multicoloured flowers
abandon shrivelled stalks before their time,
when bones just turn up out of soil

and colonies of maggots seethe and squirm,
when there's a tranquil summer sunset
which in reality is nothing but
a flimsy veil across the face of horror.

This poem is taken from *Noteszlapok* (Pages of a Diary). The following short survey of this cycle allows one an insight into Parancs's workshop. The first poem is the 12-line *A hétköznapi ember* (Everyday Man) for whom "the bagatelles of life" (e.g., the "everyday walk to the kindergarten") are becoming increasingly important because "one can solve them well, unambiguously, without any feelings of guilt." The second is a seven-line poem, *Fogfájás* (Toothache), the third, *Íróasztal* (Writing Desk), a factual enumeration in 18 lines of the paraphernalia to be found on a writing desk. The 14-line poem *Rue Yvart* is the description of a street and house, where a drinking companion of his "youth" lived. The next, *Köszöntő helyett* (Instead of Congratulations) is a collage taken from *Orpheus*, by Sándor Weöres. (Parancs has done other collages in the past). This is followed by the above-quoted Apocalyptic Evening. The cycle concludes with *A víz, a sár* (The Water, the Mud) which starts with the following lines:

"Here rest those / whom I have loved much / said the water, said the mud."

The poems are about past loves, dead friends, everyday work and tasks, the experience of the war from which it is impossible to recover, deceptions and hopes. Satirical tone, self-irony and elevated speech are not absent from his poems. And as indicated by the title, the hero of the book is time or, more precisely, man who lives in time.

LÁSZLÓ FERENCZI

ARION 12 — A PERSONAL ANTHOLOGY

The first issue of the almanach *ARION** appeared 12 years ago in honour of a congress of poets held in Budapest. It featured a study of the theoretical and technical problems of literary translation and also contained, alongside an interesting collection of essays and articles, a fair number of poems in two or more languages—the original and one or more translations.

The latest issue of *ARION* contains a collection of unpublished poems. The editor, poet, essayist and literary translator, György Somlyó, conscious of the approaching year 2000, recalled how appreciations of the last *fin de siècle* have changed in the course of past decades, and wanted to publish poems which would be genuinely representative of poetry of the present and even of the future.

* ARION 12, Corvina, 1980. 188 pp.

"The pages which follow were not compiled by the editor from material already known to him (and perhaps to others). Neither did he indulge in his own preferences. Arbitrarily borrowing a well-known concept of modern mathematics, he merely defined an empty set whose elements became known to him only later: a 'set' of unpublished poems and works in prose which poets sent for this special issue of *ARION* on request. Or, to choose an image from the field of our own *métier:* he proceeded in much the same manner as, evidenced by many an illustrious poet of world literature, the poet does, or (to be more precise), like poetic inspiration, which first envisages the poem as a melodic pattern and structural frame to be filled in only subsequently by the words and sentences as yet unknown to him."

"Thus, this anthology (for lack of a better term), is in truth an anti-anthology. Instead of an after holiday mood, it evokes something of the atmosphere of preparation for a holiday. And if this effort met with success, it will not so much portray poetry as we know it, but rather, as we shall come to know it in the near future. It is not a selection of what is, but rather a sample of what is yet to come."

These words imply a concern for high standards, and the material in the anthology subsequently justifies his efforts. However, in his enthusiasm and love for his profession he tends to slightly inexact formulations and it is perhaps not hair-splitting to correct him a little. He has, of course, asserted his own taste in the selection of the poets although not in the selection of the poems: because what else if not his own taste led him to select some poets and leave it to their discretion to send any of their unpublished texts for publication in *ARION*. (Of course, it was not only a question of taste but also of opportunity, since Somlyó did not ask anyone he knew in advance would refuse; incidentally, the anthology would have benefited if the editor had mentioned whether there had been any refusals and by whom.)

Somlyó, who has been a passionate translator and critic for four decades and has translated hundreds of foreign poets—many of whom also appear in *ARION*—knew of course more or less exactly what he could except from whom. He could not be one hundred per cent sure because poets, simply because they are poets, may surprise their most expert critics and most faithful readers; but he was not obliged to stake his all. He called upon mature masters, among them some of the likely classics of our century, and thus could rely on the quality of the unknown works. He was not mistaken, since the anthology has the considerable merit of containing no indifferent poems; but it is impossible to predict whether readers will feel the same in five years' time.

This is György Somlyó's personal book. It bears no relation to a literary protocol, which fortunately has never been written; neither is it a compendium of contemporary literary education in Hungary (to the creation of which Somlyó has actively contributed). It contains the poems of eleven Hungarian and fifty foreign poets; one-fifth of the latter are French or written in French. This proportion reflects more or less faithfully Somlyó's experience, prejudices, passions, and commitments—at least at the given time. You cannot argue with an anthology because of the captivating wealth of world literature or of one particular national literature; almost anybody could put together many anthologies of similar value without repeating one name. Instead of the eleven Hungarians in this volume there could be another eleven, not to mention the other national literatures. What counts in an anthology is what is in it, not what is not. And György Somlyó's personal book is a collection of hearteningly good poems.

With a few exceptions every poet is represented by a poem, a statement in prose, and his most important biographical and bibliographical data. The latter were put together either by the poet himself or his Hungarian translator.

The statements suggest that the poets are answering a general question, probably as to how they see the role of poetry in our age and what they expect from it. Possibly in his letters Somlyó's formulations of the question were not always the same, but it is regrettable that *ARION* does not contain even one version of that text. If it did, we would also learn whether it is only by chance that Rafael Alberti, the Spaniard, or the Swedish poet, Lars Gustaffson, are represented only by poems or whether in fact they refused to answer the questions. The Czech Miroslav Holub writes: "...there are around ten poets on our planet who, of course, in most cases, do not correspond to definitions and who do not answer general inquiries." And he adds: "Nevertheless, for

me the state of the poet is the function of initiative and imagination, strictly in that order."

Alain Bosquet, the poet, one of the experts of modern poetry and its most enthusiastic propagator, wrote: *"Je ne veux pas alimenter le dossier des poètes qui disent des bêtises sur la poésie, son importance, sa place, son histoire, ses droits, ses devoirs.". "...il y a autant de philosophies que de poètes et autant d'écritures que d'écrivains."* He then adds, as a poetry-lover: *"Mais peut-être pouvons-nous nous entendre sur notre action commune contre les ennemis de la poésie: l'indifférence des autres est notre plus grand danger."*

Some very interesting answers are given to the hypothetical general question. Gennadi Aïgui, a Chuvash poet born in 1934 who has been writing in Russian since 1960 and who includes among his masters Nietzsche, Baudelaire, and Pasternak, formulates in the aphorisms of *"Néhány mondat a költészetről"* (A Few Sentences about Poetry): "We should not only believe but prove that man has *not* lost contact with nature.—The "alienation." What we can find a way out of should not become a "law." His poem "Nap: Nyírfák" (Sun: Birch-trees) is incidentally one of the best in the anthology. The Estonian, Jaan Kaplinski, has been an ecologist, linguist, folklorist and sociologist. He obviously summarizes his own experience when he emphasizes: "poetry is the shortest, most laconic way of speaking about many things at the same time."

The poetic creeds are the most interesting aspect of the anthology. Several Eastern European poets mention their experience of the war in their answers or autobiographical notes. But it is also of interest when William Jay Smith mentions the oppressive impact of Ezra Pound on contemporary American poetry, or when the Belgian Robert Goffin, explaining the genesis of his poem in the anthology, writes about his critics.

The answers are of course not always very explicit. Ágnes Nemes Nagy writes one of the most abstract statements with the following variation on Goethe: "...the most important thing in the poem is the architecture of the living material. The true-to-character coordinatedness of any verse..." However, the same Ágnes Nemes Nagy wrote in a poem a few dozen years ago: "I almost die in my struggle to fence off a single sentence from the infinite."

From a selfish Hungarian standpoint one of the greatest merits of the anthology lies in its printing of "Lement a nap" (The Sun Has Set) by Ágnes Nemes Nagy in a translation from the French of Guillevic's "Le soleil s'est couché." Nemes Nagy, as apparent from the fragments of prose and verse quoted above, is a very taciturn poet. She has not published any volume of poetry since 1967; any new poem by her is an event. In 1975 she published her collection of essays *Hatvannégy hattyú* (Sixty-four Swans) which dealt with the problems of modern poetry on the basis of her personal experiences. A selection of her works translated by Bruce Berlind was recently published in the USA by Iowa University Press.

However interesting the different answers and autobiographical statements may be, the value of an anthology depends on the poetic material it contains. Illyés described himself as "Old Jonah" in his poem "Ninivében" (In Niniveh) which touched upon indifference to the fate of small peoples. In "Az istenvívó mítosza" (The Myth of the Godfighter) Evgeny Vinokurov begins with the story of Jacob fighting with God and goes on to relate his most personal experiences. Rafael Alberti, who became a mature poet at the time of the Spanish Civil War and returned to his country after over thirty years of exile, hints at the danger which threatens the "glorious light" in his poem "Primavera" (Spring).

One of the peculiarities of the poem in the twentieth century is that it cannot be summed up. It would be pointless to try to describe the contents or even the mood of the verses in one sentence. They are diverse

in form although very few contain rhymes. The sonnet form is represented only by two satirical sonnets by Bosquet.

It would be pointless to list the sixty-one Hungarian and foreign poems and the names of their translators in *ARION.* (In some cases poets, e.g. Guillevic, Orbán, Fodor, Gáspár, Illyés, W. J. Smith, figure also as translators.) Allowing myself a certain partiality, I should like to mention four or five of my favourite poems in *ARION* apart from those I have already quoted in this review. The Danish Uffe Harder's "Tre aspekter af mørket" (The Three Aspects of Darkness) is a beautiful translation of István Tótfalusi. Robert Graves' "The Green Woods of Unrest" is one of the poet's best; the same can be said of "Görög triptichon" (Greek Triptych) by Iannis Ritsos and "An Eros (Amor) Love Cycle," the work of Robert Duncan. The Finnish poet, Pentti Saaritsa, was unknown to me previously, but the Hungarian translation of Géza Képes has convinced me that he is worth noting in future.

ARION is clearly a success. Firstly in its inclusion in its twelfth issue of fifty high-ranking poets alongside eleven of their Hungarian colleagues. And György Somlyó and Corvina have put in honest and serious work, although sometimes one cannot be certain that the texts have never been published before, and there are a few errors of translation and printing in the autobiographical notes.

L. F.

IRREGULAR BOOKS

Nat Roid: *Nem szeretném, ha fáznál* (I Wouldn't Like You to Freeze), 447 pp. Gyula Hernádi: *Borotvált tabló* (Shaven Tableau), 196 pp. Gergely Rákosy: *Latjatuc feleym* (Look Ye Brethren Mine), 189 pp. Zoltán Panek: *Prometheusz felmentése* (The Dismissal of Prometheus), 365 pp. All from Magvető, Budapest, 1980.

One could perhaps say with only slight exaggeration that in the last twenty years commotion in Hungarian cultural life has centred around three persons. This does not mean, of course, that only these three people have produced works of lasting intellectual value. One is certainly Miklós Jancsó, who has radically renewed the film idiom. The other, György Moldova, author of splendid satires and reportages, whose books have been snapped up within a few days of publication for many years now, and who is probably the most successful and most-read Hungarian author of these times, at least among those who receive critical notice. The third, I should say, is Dezső Tandori, the strangest and most-debated phenomenon of Hungarian literary life in the seventies.

Early in the seventies Tandori started what amounted to a wholly new school of poetry all by himself. This is acknowledged by now. He brought something entirely new and although his special and individual mode of expression was inimitable, he became a determining factor as a point of reference. Young poets and readers of poetry made a cult of his books. In view of the fact that, these days, the size of a printing is omitted out of consideration for the susceptibilities of unpopular but influential writers, there is no way of knowing how many thousand copies of Tandori's volumes

were sold out within a few days; whoever grabbed one considered it a rare and precious object and this only enhanced their fame.

Whether these book-buyers also read the verses is another question. Tandori is sometimes difficult to understand—the comprehension and digestion of his poems requires devotion, patience, absorption, no small acumen, and learning. He introduced a new perception of reality, a critical outlook of language and thought, and a type of intellectual playfulness which was almost without precedent in Hungary. He wrote about himself, about his trifling concerns, and about his problems as if he examined and cleaned unknown lost property, whereas Hungarian poets in general remained passionately identical with themselves. (His long poem, *Egy talált tárgy megtisztítása*, The Cleaning of a Lost Property, translated by Tony Connor, appeared in *NHQ* 76.)

Tandori's books followed in rapid succession, both verse and prose. Between 1977 and 1980 he published five alleged novels, one more voluminous than the other, also several books of tales, a volume of essays, and another of translations. The latter contains only a small part of his translations, since Tandori translates novels, plays, essays, reportages, travel books, in short, everything. He is, for instance, responsible for the Hungarian version of Robert Musil's gigantic *The Man without Qualities*. Almost every literary, critical, or cultural journal has included something by Tandori in just about every issue: a poem or review, an essay, a translation, etc. According to publishers' publicity and information straight from the horse's mouth, this tempo will, if such could be possible, increase. He even has plays awaiting publication.

This baffling fecundity is suspicious in itself. In latter times the hue and cry around Tandori has been kept alive mainly by never ending productivity. Nobody disputes the originality and novelty of his first books, his method of writing is an active force making an impact, but with the hypertrophic proliferation of his writings it seems as if he himself has turned into a host of Tandori-imitators. The stumbling blocks of his method have emerged, the method has begun to deteriorate into mannerism. At least this is the impression one gains if one takes the trouble and wades into this mountain of writing. But there are not many who show such enterprise and so reports about Tandori are rare and unreliable. Anybody who really wants to know something must keep in his tracks. This, however, is all the more difficult since it is not enough to read Tandori, one must assimilate him, attune oneself to his way of thinking and mode of expression, and even then an expert Tandori-reader might fare like a short-wave buff who tries to tune into a station that threatens to fade away. It is sometimes impossible to follow Tandori's way of thinking, his associations, omissions, or sequence of ideas, and they may even become boringly uninteresting, and the question arises whether it is worth attempting to keep up with them.

The shadow of bluff often hovers above Tandori texts. He does not wish to trick and mislead the reader but he elevates the bluff to a mode of expression. Bluff is one of his many forms of play. Bluffing in his case does not mean that his text becomes incoherent. The compact and coherent text exists in the mind of the author and the reader may reconstruct it the same way, and even then the meaning of the text is not exhausted because its function-missing or function-losing are also fed into it as a meaning. It tells you also that it does not tell you what it seems to tell you or that it does not tell anything.

Tandori presents himself all the time as an *objet trouvé*, that self in which he manages to cover the void only with the help of empty chatter and the mythological blow-up of extremely private concerns. Beckett described the emptiness itself, Tandori pretends not to know and not to see what it is all about. The reader, however, if willing and able, may see yawning void behind the torrent of words.

Of course, this playfully feigned literature, always in quotes, is a thing of dead earnest for Tandori. The manic compulsion to write, and games of the mind, mean life itself to him. When he writes down everything that occurs to him he does not write his works but lives his life. That they get published? Why not, if the whole thing is only bluff? He winks at readers: let's play together.

For once let us play thriller. Not as they have been written countless of times but as he imagines them. The clichés are there, of course, the game is just how many different variations can be written of them.

Tandori's newest book is *Nem szeretném, ha fáznál* (I Wouldn't Like You to Freeze). The game begins already on the cover: the photo montage designed by the author signals shrilly that the book is a real thriller, a cream of thrilles. And as really good crime fiction is written by English men or Americans, the cover carries the promising name Nat Roid, an ingenious anagram of Tandori, worthy of Tandori himself.

The book itself is an unmitigated Tandori-book and should be understood as his hobby horse like his earlier novels from which one may learn absurdly unimportant details about the other characters of Tandori's personal mythology: koala bears, cactuses, his tamed sparrows, and table football championships of the old days. The scene is an imaginary large town in California, a decayed residential area almost in ruins. The exact topography of the place can be studied in pictures and the text. It is a ghostly, dreamlike, dead city not because the story requires it to be so; the effect is produced by Tandori's deliberately one-sided rendering: other than the character (or rarely characters) we have our eye on nothing and nobody stirs anywhere.

The characters themselves act mostly only in their minds, and spasmodically at that, they ramble without control. Their actions, the smallest and most elementary as well as those essential for the plot—as emerges later, the two kinds confusingly coincide once, at other times they do not—organize themselves into unity and continuity amidst endless detours, wanderings, senile verbosity, and delirious fussiness. Tandori babbles and meditates endlessly in the interior monologues of his characters and meanwhile he spins the threads with the slowness of a spider until, towards the middle of the novel, they become a complex web spun of millions of tiny details from which the author can extricate himself at the end of the book but the reader cannot.

Some people say that the book is an ironical persiflage of a thriller. It is not. True, Tandori is witty, some fragments contain charming points, passages, and allusions, but in the last analysis he wants us to take the story seriously primarily as a crime story. The shadow of bluff hovers above the text, not because of the intention to parody but because of the Tandori-syndrome: we pretend to write fiction, this time a thriller, we pretend to communicate with the reader, but in reality we only murmur to ourselves, we are shut into ourselves, and we are at the mercy of the yawning void.

Tandori's book was sold out within a couple of days.

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Gyula Hernádi writes the scripts for Miklós Jancsó's films (*The Round-Up*, *The Red and The White*, *Agnus Dei*, etc.). In his original works he also works out model-situations, sometimes in a historical milieu, sometimes in a future environment. He does not concern himself much with the concrete historical facts, trying to elevate them into the sphere of abstraction. His parable-like works are characterized by anachronisms, fantastic and shocking effects. Most of them could be turned into typical Jancsó film. A Jancsó film as we know it could not be imagined without Hernádi.

Hernádi's style of writing resembles film-scripts. His novella *Borotvált tabló*

(Shaven Tableau) shows unmistakably that the author has all along considered the possibility of a transfer to celluloid, as demonstrated by the present tense, the division into scenes, a lot of dialogue, and a firm and direct dramatic structure. The theme and problem are also closely related to those of Jancsó's films. We are in 1920 at the time of the White Terror, after the defeat of the 1919 Revolution. Members of irregular detachments recruited by Horthy amongst ex-army officers killed two Social Democrat journalists. The story as such is true. Owing to international indignation some sort of prosecution had to take place. In agreement with the right-wing legal system the officers staged a charade. They selected a bogus offender from their own ranks who knew the plot and placed him in the dock with the promise that not a hair of his head will be hurt and that, after the verdict, he would be taken care of receiving compensation. All this is merely suggested in the background of scenes which show how the chosen officer is worked-on to the point of brain-washing. Once an unexpected event interrupts preparations. It seems that the plot is unmasked, the pseudo-offender and those who hired him are captured by their adversaries and they are confronted with each other. The officer is tortured, intimidated, and confused to a degree that he does not know what he has really done and what he has not, who he is and who he is not. By the time the brain-washing is ended, in the course of which his girl and his best friends are also sacrificed like so many pawns, everything around him is again as before and he plays his role as a willing and obedient automaton. Then it looks as if he is forgotten, and deceived, and he is almost hanged, when it emerges that the whole thing has been staged for a newsreel to be shown abroad. After he has been filmed on the scaffold he is cut down. He recovers after all these ordeals in a château at the side of a beautiful female bodyguard, and prepares to travel to India until things have blown over when he is killed during a shoot to end the whole business.

A few outside circumstances relate the story to the chosen historical situation, but otherwise Hernádi lets his fancy ramble freely, nor does he avoid coarse and shrill colours. It is a gruesome story written with a sure hand, without any social message. The main virtue is that there is not one superfluous word in the whole book except perhaps for a few artificial and mannerist abstract metaphors—one of them accidentally found itself on the title-page.

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Gergely Rákosy's *Latjatuc feleym* (Look Ye Brethren Mine) appears, like the aforementioned Hernádi novella, in a fiction series from Magvető. The title refers to the earliest surviving unbroken text in Hungarian, the *Halotti beszéd* (Funeral Oration), dated around 1200, whose first line transcribed into contemporary language is as follows: Look you brothers of mine what we are, we are dust and ashes. Gergely Rákosy is known for his choleric satires: now he has written a passionate funeral oration on the death of a mining engineer killed by a methane explosion.

Latjatuc feleym is a confusingly incoherent book. Its present-tense plot is no more than the story of the few moments before the explosion. This narrative amounts to only one-tenth of the book and consists just of a few flashes which are surrounded by text blocks of diverse material and mood. With their multifariousness and size they suppress the basic situation which serves only as a pretext for Rákosy to overwhelm us indiscriminately with his reflections as a crusading journalist. Some of these text inserts are like short stories which recount the earlier stations in the life and career of the mining engineer, and the journalistic, historical, and cultural detours, which are sometimes like encyclopaedia articles, may be interpreted as the meditations of the

principal character, but all these produce only an inorganic heap. We do not learn much about the man himself, not even why he became the principal character of the story, unless it is because the common denominator of all his vicissitudes appears to be that he takes things seriously. "Is it possible to live if somebody takes the dim little signs as deadly serious? Or is it worthwhile? Why must one wait for the moment when one is already bound on the rails, and can at most whimper pitifully?" Our mining engineer seems to have taken seriously the signs, the words, the calls of human solidarity even at the last moment, and he had to perish of them.

The insertions are in themselves interesting and witty. They are about János Hunyadi's victory over the Turks in 1456 at Belgrade in memory of which noonday bells are still rung in every church all over the world; Nobile's North Pole expedition which ended in men eating their own kind which not even lions do; a riding school for gentlemen in the thirties; the visit to Budapest of the then Shah Reza Pahlavi which coincided with a mine disaster; burial and torture customs; the Koran story of the Creation, a sweet and sour romance on Lake Balaton; the shortage of tyres in Hungary, and an ice-rink back in childhood thickly covered in snow. All these could be the elements of either an interior monologue or a funeral oration which stop time and extend the moment to a whole lifetime, but here they are thrown upon each other as with a pitchfork and only a crusading journalist's passion brings some unity into this heap.

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Irregular, capriciously arbitrary books are here reviewed. Hernádi's can be considered as such with his recurring fixed ideas which can be described with a metaphor borrowed from the title of an earlier book of his—"dry baroque." *Prometheusz felmentése* (The Acquittal of Prometheus) is also an irregular book. The author, Zoltán Panek, is a Transylvanian writer who uses his native language, Hungarian. For many centuries the distinguishing mark of a Transylvanian writer has been that everything he wrote has been closely related to the particular world of the Transylvanian experience. His traditions, way of life, environment, not to mention the trials and tribulations of a minority of fifty years' standing, clearly distinguish a Translyvanian writer from his fellows in Hungary. To this day the richest flowers of Translyvanian literature have been the prose memoirs, a recent beautiful example being András Sütő's personal writing about his village and parents: *Anyám könnyű álmot ígér* (My Mother Promises Light Sleep).

Zoltán Panek's life is also irregular: he is past his fiftieth birthday and attention has turned to him only now; his short stories show almost nothing of this Transylvanian character. Here and there a place-name is evocative but even short stories which come to a point, not really characteristic of his writing, are given an imprecise setting. The common denominator of these short stories could well be the broken window on the cover of his book. As if in every story a window suddenly cracked and broke not because of outside violence but because of some inner stress. A man, whose wife has developed a manic passion for actors, breaks up the furniture of their flat which they had acquired during long years of pinch penny saving. In another a postman habitually opens letters he has to deliver in order to find in them turns of phrase he may use in his letters to his insatiable sweetheart. A search takes place of the home of a respectable doctor: the accusation seems to be that he has squandered his life and has left his possibilities unrealized. A couple go on holiday in their newly acquired car and the husband is mortally wounded as a result of a gesture on the part of his wife addressed to their son who sits in a British bus which they overtake. "... he overtakes carefully but cannot avoid the accident, he

will take it with himself wherever he may go with the car he has got at last."

It is their style which gives these stories their special aspect. They emerge from a disguised interior monologue or from dialogues which do not contain any descriptive element. The reader finds at every step aphoristic statements, meditations, grotesque moments bordering on the absurd. In a story about a driver and his boss and the family of the boss, going out to a carelessly built and ruined bridge, Panek writes: "The boss has already explained to those with him that he never took salt with his buttered bread but salted the tomatoes he ate with it but it could also happen that if he ate the tomato separately let us say before he ate the bread and butter, because he lacked the patience to wait until the bread was buttered, he also ate the tomato unsalted, the difference was that he put much salt on his half-boiled egg, but never on bread and butter not even in this case.

"At this moment somebody yelled:

" 'The tree is sinking. Hi, don't go there, the tree has started to sink.'

"We stopped. The large oak tree sank before our eyes. We stared at it. Neither the sound of crash, nor of anything else, only that it sank faster and faster in the landslide emerging around it. It was already half devoured by the earth, then it was swallowed entirely, its top disappeared also. For how many years had this tree grown to die now within seconds? I have never seen anything like it in my entire life."

Panek's more characteristic writings are meditative, aphoristic texts, monologues, grotesque parables, which cannot be considered short stories in the traditional sense. Some of them are difficult to follow, their understanding requires some knowledge of the classics and of scholastic philosophy. They never lack grotesque playfulness, and they are really memorable if Panek succeeds to put in them some elements of the conventional short story. The splendid parable *Prometheusz felmentése* (The Acquittal of Prometheus) narrates that the divine subcommittee, in the space age, has at last completed its investigation of Prometheuss theft. Prometheus is discharged from hi' post although bearing in mind past services. His bad record, however, remains. But in that very moment all the fires of the world go out. Panek recounts in a splendid series of images where and how, how many different sources of fire and light go out. Mankind is unable to revive fire. Now "P. who before had been commander of the fire brigade in a Greek mountain village, asked to be released from his post. He knew his task, he was determined, this was an interior call like that first one; he also knew what he risked. It had to be started somehow: the idle in his own post can set back the world a century on a single day."

This, most probably, is also Panek's confession of faith. And which true writer would not accept it as his own?

MIKLÓS GYÖRFFY

COMPARATIVE JURISPRUDENCE

Attila Rácz: *Courts and Tribunals.* A Comparative Study. Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1980. 245 pp. (In English)

Hungarian law is of far greater interest then the country's criminals—and lawyers, legislators, and judges for that matter—might imagine. With the revision of its criminal code in 1979, Hungary moved out into the forefront of contemporary juris-

prudence. All of the code's provisions may not be greeted enthusiastically by all criminologists, but the progressive thrust of its provisions—and the very ambition of such a wide-reaching undertaking—are giving foreign scholars reason to study Hungarian law.

This alone makes Attila Rácz's *Courts and Tribunals* a timely study of Hungarian law in the context of European law. The author locates the country's legal code within the framework of socialist law as it developed from the inheritance of European jurisprudence. He displays a vast knowledge of the history of law going back to 18th century French administrative courts. He sees new foundations in legal theory growing out of French and American revolutions, so that people were included in the judicial process as a matter of right.

Against this background, *Courts and Tribunals* details the development of socialist law and the changes it wrought in legal theory and practice. The great change, of course, came with the Soviet Revolution of 1917, but the author includes provisions of the short-lived Hungarian Revolution of 1919 and the more extensive provisions put forth in the Soviet Constitution of 1936. The main thrust of his argument is that written bourgeois law has formed around a separation of state powers and the breaking up of the judicial process into categories to fit the various realms of law.

In contrast, socialist law has tried to preserve a unity in jurisdictional organization that maintains the strength and integrity of the administration of justice. Although bourgeois and socialist legal systems are derived from opposite premises, it is surprising how many of their component parts are similar. For example, both systems emphasize equality of individuals before the law, equality of jurisdiction, and the abolition of special courts (or at least limiting them to extraordinary circumstances). The way each system regulates its special courts is of particular importance to the author, who provides a detailed examination of such jurisdictions as administrative, labour, military, and economic courts. However he does no more than present each side's orientation without giving any comparative analysis. And how two systems based on such contradictory premises could share basic parts itself deserves some discussion.

The book ably defends the socialist legal system. It is set out in painstaking detail covering civil, criminal, and military law. The wealth of information reveals a great deal about the whole of socialist law as well as its constituent parts in each of the socialist countries.

Courts and Tribunals, however, tends to be drawn on too wide a canvas. The experiences of administrating justice come almost exclusively from the earliest times, like the historic failures of French justice, which are more detailed than today's successes. The history of law, much as we like to respect it for its immutable quality, is the story of important changes in response to changing perceptions of people's rights and responsibilities as well as the law's effectiveness. That effectiveness can be judged only by experience and the willingness to look objectively at the administration of justice. An old maxim of American jurisprudence is, "Better ten guilty men go free than convict one innocent man." The importance of the maxim has been its goad to constant vigilance in the effort not to justify the courts but to judge them as they, indeed, judge the accused.

As a system, then, Attila Rácz makes a strong argument for the socialist method of justice. The real story, though, would be told in more human terms. American sociologists and criminologists have been making thorough studies of the justice system, using statistics on hundreds of cases to judge the effectiveness of sentences and other penal sanctions. Such thinking also went into the recent revision of the Hungarian Criminal Code. It bears all the marks of the latest criminological thinking, where

a priori attitudes, be they categorizeable as liberal or conservative, make much less difference than the voice of experience, or at least the statistics obtained from such experience. Examples from experience would have particularly elucidated the author's broad contentions, like:

> Contrary to the bourgeois society, class contradictions have no role among the causes of labour disputes in the system of socialist economy; the causes are to be found in other factors. Socialist jurisprudence has attached great importance to detecting them. The causes of the birth of labour disputes have been attributed generally to various factors. Especially capitalist residues surviving in the consciousness of men, failures of precision in labour legislation, defective knowledge of the rules of labour law, and differences in the interpretation there of are regarded as having an important role among factors.

To be sure, law owes its very existence to a thorough and healthy respect for theories. Law is, in fact, a certain kind of theoretical description that a society makes of itself. Attila Rácz has put some meat on the bones of that description. He has shown through his wide knowledge what socialist law looks like compared to other systems, and compared to the past out of which it grew.

But the law itself bears the marks of its own experience in the changes it undergoes. It is much more capable of describing itself than the author gives it credit for. In fact, his early brilliant description of the development of European law does show how law bears the marks of its own development. Had the same techniques been applied throughout the book, it would have succeeded admirably in its defense of the socialist legal system.

The book would also have benefited from a more fluent translation. While the author's points were often complex, the translation might have made them seem less obtuse. Shorter sentences could have helped clarify the text without affecting the subtleties of the author's points.

NANCY LISAGOR

HISTORY ANSWERED A MAN

Graham Petrie: *History Must Answer to Man.* Corvina, 1978. 340 pp.

The first article about Hungarian cinematic art written outside Hungary appeared in a reference book on films in Paris in 1935; it was an account of *Tavaszi zápor (Marie, legende hongroise)*, a film directed by Paul Fejős in 1932 in Budapest: "Naif, charmant, inégal, ou plusieurs épisodes sont ravissants et ou, à la fin, Marie monte au ciel, dans une cuisine merveilleuse, avec des casseroles d'or et un fourneau d'argent, laver avec ravissement pour l'éternité, dans le paradis tel qu'elle l'imagine, un parquet étincélant de pierreries." (Maurice Bardeche and Robert Brasillach: *Histoire du cinéma.* Paris, 1935. p. 348.)

It may be guessed that the attention of the authors was directed to the film by the French actress Annabella who had played the leading role—she was Marie the housemaid. The same book contained on page 381 a table showing that 135 foreign films had been presented in the U.S. in 1935: 44 German, 26 English, 24 Spanish, 16 French, 10 Soviet-Russian, 7 Hungarian, 3 Swedish, 2 Polish, and 1 Italian. The presence of seven Hungarian sound films in

the U.S. was by no means negligible considering that this was nearly half the number of French films, not to mention the single Italian. Carlo Lizzani complained in several editions of his *Il cinema Italiano* (Rome, 1960, 1979) that in the thirties the Italian film imitated the products of the then internationally successful Hungarian film industry, and the Italian film vegetated only in its shadow. Several encyclopedias, reference books, and comprehensive works published after Bardeche and Brasillach's film history mentioned Hungarian films (the Belgian critic Carl Vincent wrote about *Emberek a havason* [Men in the Mountains] in his history of the film in the forties), specialized journals published appreciative reviews (see the leading article in the October 1942 issue of the Roman *Cinema* on the importance of *Emberek a havason*) but until 1978 no major work on the Hungarian cinema was published by a non-Hungarian author. Although Georges Sadoul's 62-page booklet is not unsparing of praise it is not much more than a quality publicity handout. (*Panorama du cinéma Hongrois*. Paris, 1952.) One also recalls with gratitude an article by Claude B. Levenson: "Jeune cinéma hongrois" printed in the December 1966 issue of *Premier Plan*, which was entirely devoted to the Hungarian cinema. There have also been articles about this or that Hungarian director (e.g. about Miklós Jancsó in *Études cinématographiques*, no. 104–108, Paris, 1975). All these, however, could not replace a book on the Hungarian cinema written by a non-Hungarian. (I am not here concerned with works on Hungarian film directors who worked in other countries. One of these, Karol Kulik's *Alexander Korda* [London, 1975], shows a fairly thorough knowledge of the Hungarian cinema.)

The first major work by a non-Hungarian on the Hungarian cinema is Graham Petrie's: *History Must Answer to Man*. The author, a Canadian, has been publishing articles on the Hungarian cinema since 1973, which appeared in *Cinema Canada*, *Film Quarterly*, *Cahiers du Cinéma*, and this journal. He has a thorough knowledge of his chosen subject, and he has been planning this book for a long time.

Although his special subject, as indicated in the subtitle of the book, is "The Contemporary Hungarian Cinema," in the first chapter he gives a short survey of the historical background. Naturally he also mentions *Tavaszi zápor;* there is almost no difference between the 1935 account and his 1978 view although Petrie appreciated another detail: "Though the plot is rather tritely melodramatic, Fejős creates some very powerful scenes, notably one in the brothel where the clients sit around in silent, nervous suspense as the birth takes place upstairs, then break out into exultant rejoicing when the safe delivery is announced."

On the five chapters following the historical survey, three discuss the films of Hungarian directors considered most important by the author (Miklós Jancsó, István Szabó, István Gaál), and another two chapters treat other directors and styles to whom Petrie attributes importance.

The best thing in this thematic arrangement is that it differs considerably from the standard view accepted in Hungary. Although Jancsó's œuvre and some films by Szabó are recognized as being among the best contemporary works, Gaál is much less appreciated. Hungarian critics did not place these three at the pinnacle, since directors such as Zoltán Fábri, László Ranódy, or Károly Makk had not only been prominent in the fifties but have remained important. I do not propose to argue with Petrie since we badly need to know how Hungarian films are evaluated abroad. The chapter on Jancsó is more or less identical with evaluations in Hungary but even within this consensus Petrie has something new and original to say. It is a pertinent observation that "In more recent films this enigmatic element in the narrative structure tends to give way to a more explicit avowal of

motivation on the part of the characters *(Confrontation, Elektreia)* or to the ballad-like, symbolic form or *Red Psalm* where cause and effect no longer have any real importance..." One might add that Hungarian folk-tale elements increasingly appear in Jancsó's films; it is characteristic of these tales that "cause and effect"—sometimes—"no longer have any importance"; resp. that the connection between cause and effect is deeper or, if you prefer to say so, more mystical.

The Jancsó studies still do not devote enough attention to his youth as a member of an ensemble which performed folk tales and dances in a progressive spirit. We should not forget that the Elektra motif is deeply rooted in folklore: a Hungarian Elektra play was written in 1558 (Péter Bornemissza: *Tragédia magyar nyelven a Szofoklesz Elektrájábul*—Tragedy in the Hungarian Language from Sophocles' Elektra, which fitted the Calvinist theory of tyrannicide into the Greek tragedy).

Like most of those who write on Jancsó abroad, Petrie also attributes great importance to his symbol-system of objects and movements. I may be mistaken but I think that they are more incidental in his films than one might believe: it is unnecessary to explain everything at all costs. (See Petrie's footnote "of the smoke flares," p. 61.) Jancsó should be viewed and left to exert his influence, and not treated like a crossword puzzle.

The Hungarian public will find much that is new in the chapter on István Szabó. Petrie considers Szabó determinant as a film director and especially the analysis of *25, Firemen Street* is a masterpiece of criticism; but he also clearly sees that Szabó, even at his best, is subject to the influence of his great foreign ideals: "Jancsó is a genuine original; whether one likes his films or not, it has to be admitted that there is no director quite like him in the world today. István Szabó... is more obviously in the mainstream of contemporary film-making." And he enumerates the influence of Truffaut, Godard, Resnais, Bergman. It is a pertinent remark that Szabó, as a film director, is instinctively autobiographical: he is at his best when he draws on his childhood and youth. "Though Szabó's development is a less spectacular and controversial one, the modest and unpretentious surface of his films should not disguise their profound originality" (p. 137).

I am most pleased with Petrie's "discovery" of Gaál. According to him, besides Jancsó and Szabó, Gaál is the outstanding personality in the contemporary Hungarian cinema. I agree with him: and hearing it from a non-Hungarian only increases my pleasure. This reticent artist who avoids society and the limelight has never been noisily fêted; some of his valuable films were played down *(The Green Years, The Falcons)*. Petrie's observation that Gaál's landscapes have a "human face" is noteworthy.

"Certainly Gaál, like Jancsó, makes use of landscape as a metaphor for the bleakness and coldness of the moral behaviour of his characters; but Gaál constantly maintains an interaction between the human beings and their setting, the tone of the landscape changing as they change, whereas Jancsó, having established one kind of relationship, proceeds to exploit the formal possibilities of this, playing off vertical and diagonal movements of his people against the vast and unchanging horizon" (p. 158). Petrie states all these *à propos The Falcons*. I agree with this view that *The Falcons* is one of the masterpieces of the last twenty years; with the passing of the years this film will not become obsolete, on the contrary, it will improve.

In the last two chapters Petrie enumerates the other, now working, Hungarian film directors; of them he finds a few true and well-chosen words of appreciation for every one. His attention ranges from Sándor Sára to Ferenc Kósa to Imre Gyöngyössy, to Pál

Gábor, to András Kovács, to Péter Bacsó. One thing, however, is striking: we Hungarian critics and cinema-goers do not feel that Kovács and Makk are so "old" and live in the past as Petrie says; and I personally miss among others the names of Félix Máriássy *(Rascals, Fig Leaf),* Zoltán Várkonyi (*Eye to Eye, Georges Dandin, The Bitter Truth*—unfortunately Petrie could not have seen the latter), György Révész (*Journey around My Skull, Marci Kakuk,* and—*horribile dictu*—the name of Viktor Gertler whose worth is really doubtful or Márton Keleti are not even mentioned—at the same time I think that Márta Mészáros or Imre Gyöngyössy, although they have their merits—have been overpraised.

A few words of criticism could also be said about the shortcoming shared by all histories of the film—my own history of the Hungarian film is no exception: that they almost completely neglect the actors without whom the Hungarian film directors could not have achieved what they have achieved; without Mari Törőcsik, Éva Ruttkai, Zoltán Latinovits, András Bálint, and others—to mention only some of the illustrations in Petrie's book—there would be no Hungarian cinema.

But all this is not really important. Petrie's book is a remarkable work regardless of the fact that its subject is the Hungarian cinema. His discussions are pertinent and profound: as shown also by the title of his book, in course of having viewed scores or maybe hundreds of Hungarian films he has understood that peculiar and close connection between past and present, history and daily events, as it exists for Hungarian art. As long as Hungarian history can answer also to a Canadian critic, the Hungarian cinema fulfils its mission.

István Nemeskürty

ARTS

THE VISIONARY ART OF LAJOS SZALAY

A retrospective in the National Gallery

As fate willed it, one of the most impressive masters of modern Hungarian graphic art has not been living in Hungary since 1946 but one still feels that his art is Hungarian. His passionate drawings give a very visual impression of drama: in fact this emphasis on the visual was a main feature of Hungarian art in the inter-war period, and still characterizes Szalay's works to this day. The artist is mercilessly honest with himself, and this is reflected in his work. His form world has remained more or less unchanged for the past half-century. He said with regard to this: "...I had no wish to invent any new tool for achieving a nonexisting end. I have always wished to do only one thing: cover the shortest possible distance between my tension and my imbalance". The retrospective in the National Gallery allows the younger generation of Hungarian art-lovers to familiarize itself with his work.

Lajos Szalay was born in 1909 in Őrmező, a small village in Northern Hungary. He enrolled at the Budapest Academy of Fine Arts in 1927—his master was Ágost Benkhard who had trained many outstanding Hungarian artists. Szalay finished his studies in 1935—he had in the meantime spent a year in France. When he started his career the officially promoted 'Roman school' flourished in Hungary; this was a neoclassical style which emerged as a reflection of the Novecento. The other dominant trend was the art of the post-Nagybánya painters: refined lyricism based on colours. Neither of these trends suited the young artist who wanted to express the tensions and contradictions hidden within Hungarian society and erupting to the surface.

The years between 1939 and 1942 were decisive in the development Szalay's drawings. The main characteristic of this early period was his sensitivity to social problems: in these works he expressed his wish and hope of "raising the humble and the miserable". At that time religious themes already started to appear in his drawings: an important component of his art is the attitude that resulted from his Catholic education: he referred to this as his "peasant-based Catholicism," which was more an attitude than a question of dogma. He complemented this with the lyricism peculiar to his art: he uses himself as a basis for his work and in it speaks mostly of himself. In their make-up his drawings are related to the works of Gyula Hincz and Vladimir Szabó: "... I learned beauty from Gyula Hincz and truth from Vladimir Szabó. From this I have evolved a style with the help of which I have liberated the drawing from the either true or beautiful magic of sight..."—he elevated sincerity to make it the drawing's basic feature. He did not content himself with a system of jagged, broken lines built beside or behind each other and with loose composition based on

the patch effect which characterised the then prevailing styles. His pictures were much more concentrated: the lines on his drawings —as in the works of Picasso or Hans Erni— seem to carve out at a stroke the heavy, block-like and yet moving figures from the space, surrounding them. This comprehensive outline is interpreted by means of rhythmically repeated inner lines along the shape of the body: these alternately thicken into a patch or thin out depending on whether they represent a convex or concave mass. These drawings convey mainly moods and attitudes, not actions: they are dramatic and not illustrative. The positioning of the figures always marks space, whether through the posture or step of a figure or through the placing of several figures in relation to each other. The figures tilt or stretch, they are shown from above or below and often seem to be pressed together. The diagonality and asymmetry of the composition emphasizes the psychological or social tension of the figures in the drawing.

Szalay produced many illustrations at that time: Cervantes' Don Quijote, Dostoevsky's Brothers Karamazov and the characters of Steinbeck. His first book *Sixty Drawings* was published in 1941 with an introduction written by Lajos Kassák. In 1980 it was re-printed in unchanged form in New York. He then made twelve drawings for twelve poems by Lőrinc Szabó, and in 1945 published another book of sixty drawings. These works remained in Hungary and, towards the late fifties, with their expressive style, exerted a decisive influence on the then-reviving Hungarian graphic art, and contributed to making it the leading genre in Hungarian art.

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In 1946 Szalay went to Paris. But the styles there did not influence him: he preserved his own original conceptions. Rouault noticed the sensitivity of his lines when in 1948 he awarded the then still young artist a Unesco grant; and the liveliness of his drawings enchanted Jean Cassou, the art historian. In the same year Szalay went with his wife to Argentina. At that time the different avantgarde styles which had emerged in the late twenties coexisted there, and under the influence of Mexican mural painting, realistic art also flourished; in 1934 Siqueiros himself worked in Buenos Aires. None of these styles influenced Szalay's art. Between 1949 and 1955 he taught drawing at the Universidad Nacional of Tucuman, and from 1958 onwards at the Escuela Superior de Bellas Artes in Buenos Aires. In this period he published two books, one in 1954, the other in 1958. In the first the drawings move between two extremes. On the one hand there are drawings of the Golgotha, the saints, the apostles, and the torments of creation, on the other hand there are pages representing harmonious scenes from family life: the Love of Woman, the Affection of the Child. The life of Man moves between these two amidst work, creation, struggle, defeat and triumph. At that time he did not yet utilise complicated transpositions, allegories and symbols: the titles of the drawings correspond exactly to their content. The order and movement of the lines adjust organically to the theme in question, they wind softly, and embrace and unite as in the *Duo of Love*, or convey a sculptural effect as in the oral ensemble of the mother with her child clasped in her arms.

In 1958 he published a series of illustrations containing the new versions of the Brothers Karamazov, the Don Quijote drawings, and the illustrations he made between 1955 and 1957 for Baudelaire's Les Fleurs du Mal.

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In 1960 Szalay moved to the United States. He meditated about the difficulties which this change involved: to start from scratch in a new culture at the age of 51 with

Levente Szepsy Szűcs

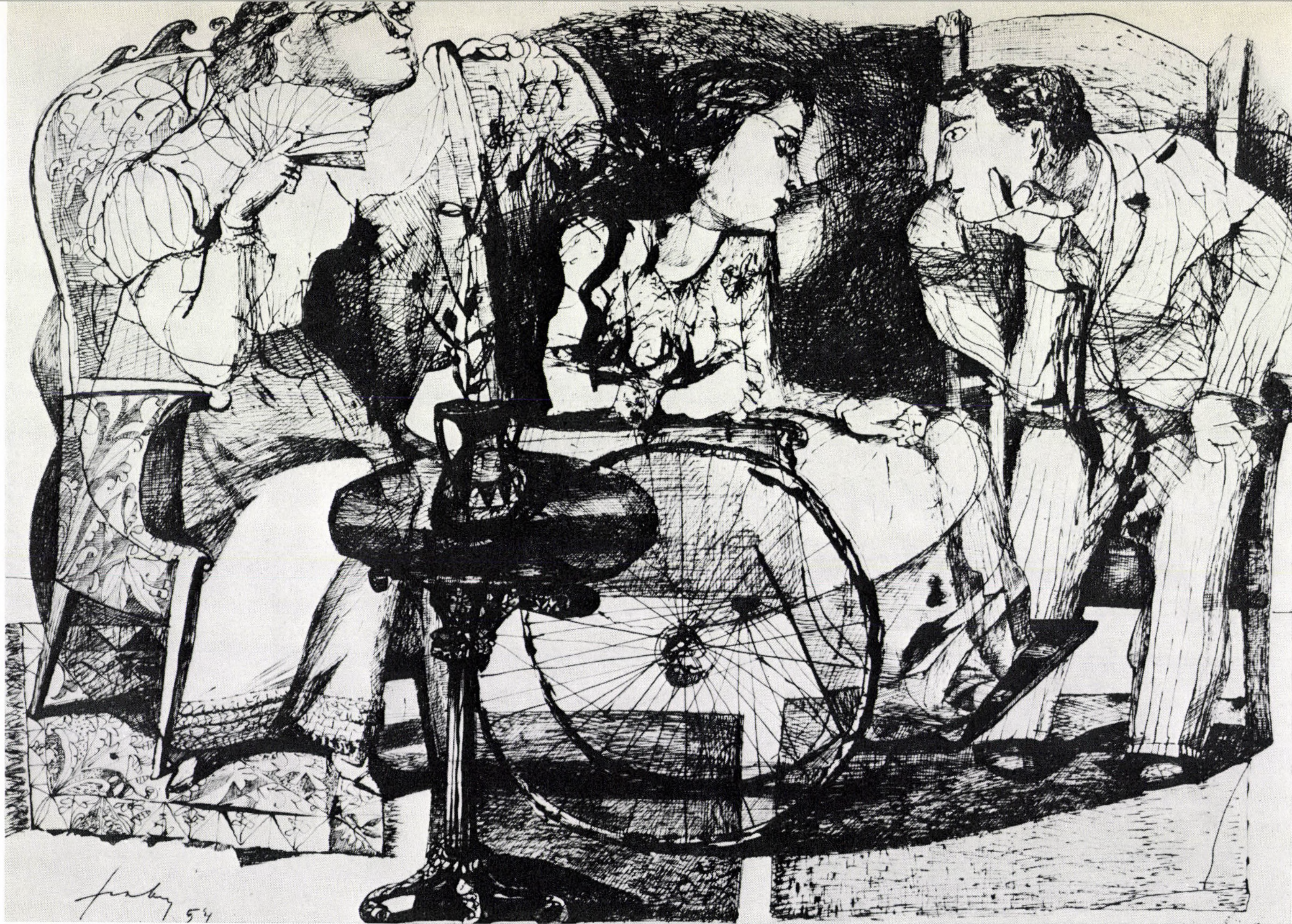
Lajos Szalay: Jacob wrestles with the Angel (1965)

Levente Szepsy Szűc.

LAJOS SZALAY: JANUARY 1943 AT THE RIVER NON

Levente Szepsy Szűcs

LAJOS SZALAY: SAMSON AND DELILAH (1939)



Levente Szepsy Szűcs

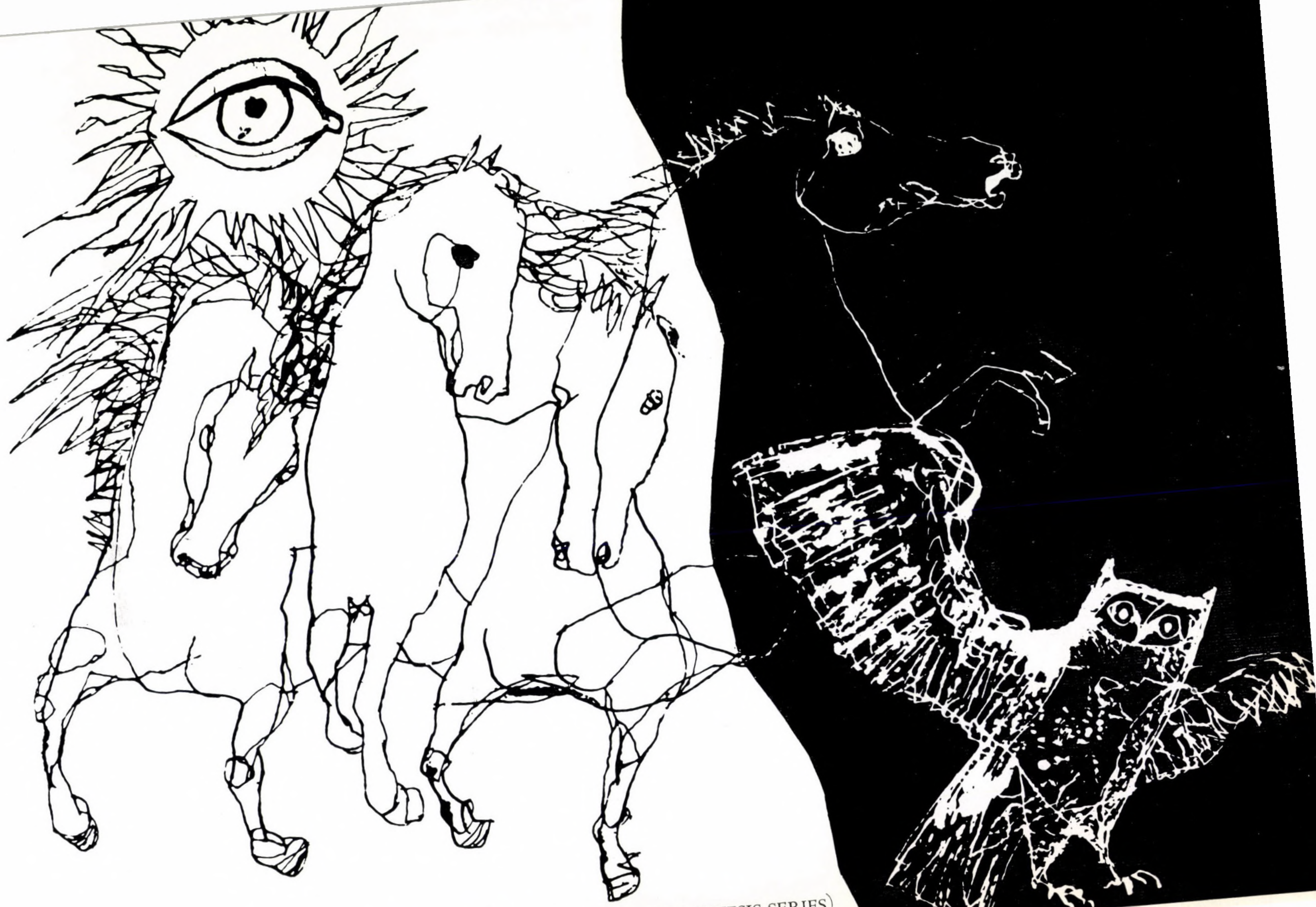
LAJOS SZALAY: ILLUSTRATION TO THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV (1954)

Levente Szepsy Szűcs

LAJOS SZALAY: JONAH (1972)

Levente Szepsy Szűcs

LAJOS SZALAY: FAMILY (1947)



Levente Szepsy Szűcs

Lajos Szalay: The creation of light and darkness (from the Genesis series)

Photographs by the artist

KÁROLY KOFFÁN: HANDS (PEN, 1971–74, ONE OF A SERIES)

KÁROLY KOFFÁN: SOMEBODY'S HEAD
(WOOD CARVING, cca 20 CM, PART OF A SERIES, 1974–79)

wife and child, and in a profession which is difficult enough in itself and where every position is jealously guarded, and, to crown it all: "...the figurative form of my drawings at a period when the non-figurative tendency of abstraction was virtually the official style everywhere." Since the late sixties he has spent some of his summers in Hungary and on these occasions his persistence in figurative drawing has been the subject of much discussion. "Even then (in childhood) I saw art as communication and now too I want to give others a message from myself. I have always felt the language of this message to be figurative and I still feel it to be so. By this I mean that my figurative art is not antiabstract, it is merely devoid of abstraction." This means that in his case abstraction in the artistic sense never transcends the limits of the visual image. To this he added that "what I do abstract is also an anthropomorphic agglomeration".

This is borne out by his *Genesis*, published in 1966. (First edition New York, Madison Avenue Church Press). In 1973 this work was also published in Hungary by Magyar Helikon-Europa. On its pages Szalay does not only narrate the legend of Genesis: it would be more exact to say that it is the genesis of Lajos Szalay himself. In the first drawings he is still faithful to the Biblical verses although he repeats one or another theme and searches for different artistic solutions but later he breaks even this tie. He returns to one or other earlier theme according to his fancy, makes variations on it and so, while flitting from one age to another, brings the book up-to-date.

In the 126 drawings, which are divided into six groups, he begins the history of Genesis from the primeval chaos when of symbols is very complex: he draws them from the Bible, from Assyrian-Babylonian and Greek mythology, and uses them in free association according to the requirements of the drawing.

The following example illustrates his style: the fourth drawing represents the creation of Sun and night, light and darkness. On the left an eye enclosed in the Sun which appears on a white quadriga—one of the horses gallops half in the dark field on the right, (here the positive form turns into negative) where an owl flies with outstretched wings. Szalay has also "modified" the original Biblical text because he puts the creation of light and darkness on the same day as the creation of celestial bodies. Light is represented by the symbol of the horses of Helios, taken from Greek mythology. The eye in the centre of the Sun has several meanings: in Jewish mythology it is the symbol of the Creator, in Greek-Roman mythology, in Plato's interpretation, it also represents inner, spiritual vision—and vision itself has a religious meaning here in the sense of the third, highest grade of initiation. One could go on unscrambling the complex meaning of the symbols—not only in this particular drawing—but this is enough to show how well Szalay knows the ancient cultures and with what confidence and versatility he utilises their symbols for exposing his own thoughts.

The thinker, the artist who feels responsibility for the fate of mankind appears constantly behind the letters of the Bible and the drawings which represent them. The most frightening danger of our age, the nuclear threat, appears from time to time as Annihilation against Creation. In one drawing Roman fighters in a quadriga raise their arms; the wheel of the quadriga is the symbol of the atom; elsewhere the arrow-shooting skeleton of death rides on a bull which has the atom symbol between its horns. Perhaps the most awe-inspiring chapter of Genesis is about the first murder—Szalay projects his own war experiences on to the story of Abel: his drawings from the Second World War reappear, the horror of that age of destruction with the panic of "Fix bayonets" in the eyes of the soldiers dispelled by rum, contempt for death in the corner of their mouths, the compulsion to kill and the fear of being

killed. Szalay's Abel with puttees and bayonet is the helpless Hungarian infantryman of the two world wars in all his misery. Thus Genesis appears not as an illustration: the drawings were suggested by today's experiences. In them Szalay transposes truth derived from the nature and social helplessness of man into the realm of art, and in his own language, he tries to awaken in us a feeling of responsibility for each other.

In 1970 the Hungarian National Gallery announced a drawing competition on the theme of György Dózsa the leader of the peasant revolt of 1514. Szalay entered expressively formulated awe inspiring works but the horror of the closing page surpassed them all: "I have eaten of it my horrible god"—screams the bestial torturer of the peasant leader burnt on the throne of fire. Szalay attains a seldom achieved degree of dramatic condensation and intensity. At that time he said that he wanted to construct his autobiography: after so many written examples he would attempt it in drawings. He has not started it as yet—instead he has represented in his drawings literary and historical events farther removed from his personal experiences. Their themes recur: the tragic events of the Bible, war, violence, the great figures of world literature, and countless variations on the figures of Dózsa, Hunyadi, Cain, the Pietà, Abraham, Isaac, Christ and Judas bear witness to his ethical temperament, to the growing demands he made on himself, regarding the quality of his work, and his feeling of responsibility for the world according to which it is the artist's duty to warn men.

In these pages his mode of expression is more complicated. The compositions are tense and condensed. Szalay does not avail himself of the usual methods here: his figures lack the costumes and usual attributes of their person. Form is adjusted to the theme; the artist had created a special archaizing-historizing style. This is most conspicuous in the drawings depicting a vision of the Ancient Hungarian Lament of Our Lady: the lines struggle and become undecided, the frantic pain of the mother is represented in medieval style, the depiction of the Sufferer is also old-fashioned with the thinner figures in the background and the more massive figures in the foreground. The whole series is a masterpiece: in Gyula László's pertinent wording Szalay has created in this work the "tortured line".

Szalay's world of images has its roots in Hungarian and universal European culture: the themes of his drawings cover the regions of the great cultures that have lasted for thousands of years. His works are a reaction to the great moral and social cataclysms of our age. His draughtsman's genius has absorbed the graphic art of European masters and his form world is a special blend of classicism and expressionism rendered individual by the dynamic force straining at his lines. He has never considered himself a successful artist: and has said that if his art has achieved anything it is the realization "that, though at a price of terrible difficulties, it is possible to live as one should and not as it would be easy." The high quality of his art and his superior ethical attitude lead us to the conclusion that the work Lajos Szalay is an important component of Hungarian art.

SÁNDOR LÁNCZ

STICKS AND HANDS

Károly Koffán's Retrospective

In May 1980, the Hungarian National Gallery showed some 200 drawings and prints, and nearly 30 wood carvings, presenting the work of 71-year-old Károly Koffán, or more precisely, part if it. Because Koffán is also a photographer, and there was a time when critics thought of his graphic work as abandoned for the sake of photography. Koffán is a mysterious figure. He was a draughtsman to start with, later he took up photography, birds and faces—chiefly those of fellow artists—and finally he started carving strange sticks of no special use. This exhibition makes it clear that Koffán's work has an integrity that bridged breaks produced by the inner needs of his art as well as the gaps imposed by history. His portraits of fellow artists, which made his name, but which are not included in the exhibition, show the same qualities as his brilliant line drawings, and his sticks, carved with a peculiar, grotesque realism, and even his photographs of birds do that which are much appreciated not only by art lovers but also by ornithologists and bird watchers.

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The real sensation was Koffán's latest work, a series of 29 pieces: grotesques carved into the knotty heads of hard dogwood: tiny human heads. The contrast between the small size and the concentrated emotional expression creates an explosive tension. One of the carved portraits of hardly one inch bears the title *Someone's Head*, another is called *Bitter Face*. The portraits display great powers of observation reminding one of German Gothic wood-carvers. They suggest that the artist has a special eye for grief, affliction, and sorrow rather than for the joys of life, and also that this "Someone," this "Bitter Man," is the artist himself, as he has always wanted to be, one of the others, an unknown man in the crowd, like the medieval craftsmen. He is a witness rather than an active participant of life, its perpetuator rather than its shaper. In Koffán there is nothing of the modern artist projecting his own problems, the tangles of his inner world, calling attention to his own self. Even when he draws his own face, he does not produce a "Self-Portrait of the Artist," but *Appetite* (1945) and *Eating* (1945) themselves, hunger, cold, work (*Man Hoeing*, 1946; *Hoer Resting* 1946), grief and care which belong to all. The life of Koffán, always in the background and being able to pay heed to others, has taken the course it did take because of his own modesty.

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It has been said more than once that the boom in Hungarian draughtsmanship in the 1960s can be traced back to the conceptual barrenness of the earlier narrow official art programme, the prejudices of the state patronage (the only patronage that matters in Hungary), and to the fixed tastes of incompetent officials. Graphic art alone was able to meet demands that differed from official taste: because of its inexpensiveness it could be more easily popularized, and thus graphic art brought forth a freedom of expression and content which, to the present day, though changes in the official attitude to art obviously also apply there, is still absent in painting and sculpture.

It is therefore understandable why Koffán, who according to scholars started as a painter (although this retrospective shows no signs of this), switched to drawing and etching in the early fifties. He might have been driven to it, not only by conditions at home but also by the northern artistic

tradition, that had earlier affected his outlook, in which graphic art always played a major role, and in which draughtsmanship always meant more than illustration and sketches. Koffán's sensibility and realism was truly committed already in his youth: his approach may be compared to that of Masereel or Käthe Kollwitz, although Koffán has been more restrained and intimate, and not so militant. Thus, despite five years spent in Paris between 1934 and 1939—his only major stay abroad—Koffán opted for an expressive line, to accentuate the sad resignation to life of old women and grief-stricken old men. The expressive alternation of light and shadow in his series of lino and wood cuts, *De profundis*, published as a volume in 1940, forecasts the darkness of war. Everything decorative, all beauty for beauty's sake is alien to Koffán. Later he felt a need for the peace of the hearth, the warmth of a simple life, which he opposed to the devastations of war. His models were those closest to him: his wife and small son.

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The author of the only book on Koffán —on his photography—Gábor Ö. Pogány, who is also responsible for the catalogue of the exhibition, says of the artist that in the post-war years, "at the time of the great historic turns," Koffán, together with a group of artists, imagined "that the world can be changed overnight." In Hungary, the teaching staff of the art schools was replaced in 1948. Some of them lost their jobs, and others were then appointed; Koffán was one of the latter (in 1949), with some other members of the group already mentioned (László Bencze, Sándor Mikus). Koffán at once proved to be an outstanding teacher. The design class he taught produced major talents. One of his former students said: "...I went over to Koffán's class... that was the luckiest choice of my life... That Koffán class inscribed itself in the history of art... What held us together at that time was still that this company had something to say... they had a social message..." This social message was a logical continuation of Koffán's earlier human, moral, and aesthetic ideals. However, it did not conform to the official concepts. Pogány, the author of the catalogue, is noticeably embarrassed when he comes to discuss the hiatus in Koffán's interrupted graphic work. He does connect the way Koffán the photographer and Koffán the graphic artist is looking at things, but he speaks of a "jack-of-all-trades type of talent" when he should speak rather of moral compulsion. His embarrassment also extends to the artist himself. Koffán's declaration that he judges his life to have been prolific enough despite the fact that "for a full twenty-three years he did not practice any fine arts activity" reads like making excuses.

What did actually happen in 1957, when the 48-year-old Koffán, still a long way from the age of retirement, was forced abandonment of his job at the College of Arts for political reasons, following his '56 activities? He returned to his old passion of bird watching. Three years later, the success of the German and English books *Birds in Camera* (London, 1960) proved that Koffán was able to use the camera just as expertly as a pen or pencil. This marked the beginning of his work in photography, and within a few years he became very popular with his photographs of artists. The hundreds of portraits of his contemporaries and fellow artists created a new style, the strength of which lies not in technical virtuosity but in a sharp eye trained as a draughtsman, brilliant perception, sound judgement, and often sharp criticism. From that time on he has photographed for a succession of art publications, has carried off prizes, and has given the impression that he had really wound up his past as a draughtsman.

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Nevertheless, the pen-and-ink drawings produced since 1971 are striking not so much because they prove the continuation of an activity that some imagined to be over and, indeed, of an outstanding professional standard. Each of the thirty-eight pieces of the series shows the artist's hands in countless postures. Not in way of studies, but in strange, animated compositions. Like the whirl of nudes on the sketches for wall paintings of eighteenth-century Italian and Austrian painters, these hands and fingers, intertwining, branching off from one another, rigidly clenched or lightly fluttering, are the pictorial equivalents of a great symphony. Each of the sheets, and each of the compositions, are ever so many motifs, scale passages and assonances. Looking at the sheets at some length, one witnesses a strange metamorphosis: the hands lose their individual reality, the forms become blurred and, splitting off again, turn into abstract compositions, recalling now a torrent of plants flowing from a precipice, now herds of animals, now again whirling clouds, flocks of flying birds, grappling and wrestling figures, or beasts of prey creeping forth from the shadows. These hands, like actors on stage, perform a great play: a *comédie humaine,* experienced in real life.

MÁRIA ILLYÉS

METALS AND TEXTILES

Exhibitions by Tibor Csiky and Zsuzsa Szenes

The work of Tibor Csiky, the sculptor, spans a mere one and a half decades, but with his very first appearance on the art scene he was applauded as a grand master, which even at the time was never questioned by his colleagues, his students and by art historians. His current exhibition in Budapest's Dorottya Street lends weight to his reputation and truly bears out the Csiky legend.

Csiky is a self-taught artist, who originally was not going to become an artist at all. He studied physics at Budapest University, and ended up winning a diploma as a teacher of Hungarian literature. He did in fact teach for many years. But meanwhile woodcarving started to take his fancy: he taught himself and soon acquired a name through his new geometrical abstract reliefs which observed the biological peculiarities of wood. He was virtually in love with wood, but he had the strength to break with it. At his latest show he displays the work of hardly more than two years, mostly done in the material of his new love, metalbronze, steel, flame-cut steel, aluminium, and combinations of bronze and copper or bronze and chrome steel. His tools are the turner's lathe and cutter and he creates each sculpture from a single block of metal.

The Dorottya Street hall could hold only a few of Csiky's large-size sculptures, but even these few pieces give an idea of his monumental achievements. *Unity of Opposites* consists of a set of acute and obtuse angles—one of the most consummate works in plastic art of recent years. The sole, or at least the main message of the cherry-wood *Curve in Space* lies in its break or more exactly in the choice of the angle of break. *Identical Forms* appears superficially to be nothing more than a common beam of road, but on closer observation one perceives the divergence of the two flat prisms and

the sophisticated, involved message hidden in them. The two-part model in steel in the series *Sounding* and *Harmony* is one of the major exhibits. It resembles a group of recumbent horseshoe magnets, U-shaped forms turned on their sides, with their curved ends turned towards each other. All three pairs are variations on a theme, with different curves and also differing in their surfaces, which may be smooth, or raw and unvarnished, showing traces of the cutting torch. What links these large scale pieces is their quality of carrying a minimum of action. They are silent and yet tell a great deal.

The main part of the exhibition consists of medals. Or at least, of medals of a sort, because Csiky has turned our traditional notion of medals upside down, and has created a new concept—the Csiky medal, the Csiky plaque.* Medals are usually some 7 to 9 centimetres in diameter. Csiky has increased this measurement to 11, and even 17 centimetres. A conventional medal, half a centimetre thick, may easily be pocketed but now, with Csiky, the thickness has been increased to between 2.5 and 5.5 centimetres and counts as a dimension of height, (since his pieces are unifacial, standing on their base), not to mention the considerable weight of the solid objects. But it is not merely a question of altering the scale; Csiky's objects differ from classical medals in form and content as well.

At first I thought I would divide these works into round "medals", and square "plaques", but this did not work because their intellectual and stylistic connections are stronger than any relationship of form, a series may include pieces of both round and square cross-sections. The various series include a group called *Space* and *Time*, and also exhibits named after the enterprises where the artist actually made them. These were works which could not be made outside a factory, without the equipment and metals available there. One year the Rába Works in Győr, and the following year the Aluminium Foundry in Ajka provided Csiky with a base and thus with the opportunity of putting his ideas into concrete form. The titles *Rába* and *Ajka* are therefore a tribute to the works which offered him a home.

It would be too easy to classify the works by saying that the ground-plan of the pieces in the *Space* series is square, whilst those in *Time* are circular, representing variations on a dial plate. Rather, they illustrate the stages of a deliberate and continuous process. With *Rába '78* he hits the nail right on the head: it is a large, cube sugar-shaped block of steel with a ball bearing inserted in it like a jewel, a sort of *objet trouvé.* The round and square protagonists of the *Ajka* series, whether they consist of bronze, steel or aluminium, are crowned by bolts which are sunk into them. One screw, two screws, three screws, four screws—all carry different meanings.

Csiky pays tribute not only to factories, but also to prominent modern artists, architects, his friends, contemporaries and all those fighting for the same cause. These works appear to make reference to the art of those being addressed: the compositions *Malevich* and *Gropius,* dedicated to *Tange Kenzo,* are also *pièces de trouvaille,* as is his medal, *Tamás Hencze is 40 Years Old,* so simple and architectural in its complexity and lyrical in its micrometric precision, and another birthday plaque, *Imre Bak,* which dates from the following year.

Tibor Csiky's works are made lively and animated by virtue of the opposites inherent in them. In his treatment of surfaces he may be rustic, or work with the craftsmanship of a jeweller, or find precisely the required balance between the delicate and the crude. These two kinds of treatment are frequently encountered in the same work. Many of his works are in two or three parts, or in the form of mobils. Alongside the main forms, he often uses

* *NHQ* 70

forms that are mostly used in industry: yet I would never place his art in the sphere of machine aesthetics, however much poetry he finds in technology. Whatever Csiky does, he does in a mediating way: I think this is instinctive with him, in spite of his determined programme.

The machines he works with determine both the shape and dimensions of his objects, but they do not make them monotonous. Csiky never repeats himself. He codifies strict laws for his own use, and it is not until one is about to accept his extreme law-abiding tendencies that one detects that he himself breaks the law at most unexpected moments. That is why the Csiky spectrum is so wide.

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The history of art usually evolves slowly. The transformation that has taken place in Hungarian textile art must have been an exception to the rule, since it happened quite suddenly at the memorable textile design exhibition in 1968. *Zsuzsa Szenes* was, and has remained a key figure in this revolution in textiles.

Humour and irony have always figured in her works—the latter tending towards implied sarcasm alongside her calm, somewhat resigned, soothing superiority. Her basic, virtually intransigent code of ethics shines through in the fascinating beauty of her works. Her exhibition in the St. Stephen the King Museum of Székesfehérvár could be termed a retrospective since it brings together the work of half a decade, but she has firmly left out her gorgeous tapestries with their coloured and neutral wool stitching, and displayed only two of her large stock of drawings. For her two-dimensional work has become too narrow and artistically meaningless.

Her exhibition consists, to use an inexact term, of textile sculptures. The way in which she has furnished the exhibition hall is an original example of spatial design. Even when compared with her earlier, rich tapestries, her transformation five years ago appears very significant and her presentation has now become still more strongly conceptualised. This is not only because she displays objects instead of tapestries. "I have covered everyday objects with textiles, she says. "Sometimes we protect objects unduly, fetishizing and concealing them. This is what I am talking about." Primarily about that, although her complexes of covers and casings can also be explained in terms of Freudian symbolism. One thing is certain: her message is always human. "Textiles", she continues in the outline of her new creed, "can transform objects. They change the rough into mellow, the unpleasant into the tolerable." I do not think that is completely true. Szenes's humour expressed in textile idiom merely softens her now cruel irony. And this is how it should be: it is precisely this cruelty which achieves the cathartic effect of her works. Zsuzsa Szenes is so dramatic because she never dramatizes anything.

The titles of her works are closely connected to the objects; they are part of the object, expressing its antecedents and its continuation, but never explaining it. They resemble the subtitles of old dramas and novels, linked to the title by the word "or". Szenes's titles are descriptive, but they do not prevent the viewer from having to think. The gas mask of *What Was once a Commodity, Is Today an Ornament* fortunately never became a commodity during the Second World War, but as a symbol was, and has remained, frightful. It is repulsive in itself: no shaman mask could have been as hideous as this modern piece. The artist acquired this ready-made and has merely sewn woollen knobs on it and embroidered the strap with colourful flowers. All these additions do alienate this monstrosity and make of it an open allegory of peace. Like the gas mask, *Against Cold in General* is also a direct call for peace, but this time without any frills. It is a human-size military sentry-box of original

form and size, government issue—and yet it is not a wooden sentry-box, for it is covered in material—coloured, thickly-striped woollen cloth. Instead of the usual national colours, the colours of the stripes are a deliberate paraphrase, indeed almost a caricature of banal household textile harmonies, reminiscent of ice cream.

This artist gives many examples of her artistic credo. For example: "People frequently put covers on their possessions to protect them, but also to hide them. It doesn't occur to them that covers conceal the essence of the object." A chair, a suitcase, a telephone, a television set, a guitar, a hunting gun, are all neatly set out on display. All of them have been covered with carefully cut-out, nicely finished, stitched green-and-white linen covers to show what the artist thinks of people's alleged protection of their modest belongings, their pitiful sense of possession. Syrupy hit tunes from thirty years ago are played on a hidden tape recorder; one of them has the refrain "And yet I believe what the little gypsy girl prophesises". The *Cell* is overspread with a cover, and Szenes has even slipped real, freshly burnt pink bricks into a case which partly obscures them *(Brick Case)*.

The same artist has transmitted the same message in a different setting, the Budapest Museum of Applied Arts, where prior to her retrospective, Zsuzsa Szenes had another show this summer, entitled *Alma Mater*. This is an "installation" exhibition in character, and this word fully defines its conception, wrote Szenes in her foreword to the catalogue. In Szenes's student days the School of Applied Arts School was housed in the Hungarian art nouveau building of the Museum of Applied Arts. Now she has covered the stucco ornaments in the exhibition room, the Teacher's desk, the chairs and the plaster models of the drawing faculty—more or less symbolically—in white sheeting.

But to return to her retrospective, *Package Design* is also a kind of a recipient, as it were. To quote the artist again: "it is a perpetually recurring sight at the market. I am always amazed to see that such staple goods are sold in such crimpled little sacks." Bags of beans, rice, coffee, tea, caraway seed, dried peas, red pepper, husked wheat, cocoa, lentils, camomile, nuts, poppy, peanut, bay leaves, cloves, nutmeg, prunes, mustardseed and herbs. (When presenting the work, the collection may also be supplemented by potatoes and garlic.) The setting of the whole table-counter is as composed, or rather decomposed as it is in real life on the marketwomen's stands or at the grocer's. The composition is a simple character portrayal of our everyday needs.

Frigyes Karinthy once wrote a humorous sketch on nonsense inventions, such as the artificial corn. *Tempered Blade* is an invention of this kind. It is an original, factory made plastic Gillette case, but the razor blade in it is made of soft, warm-coloured felt. Zsuzsa Szenes has taken the edge of the razor, but her message has remained as sharp as a blade.

The huge textile complexes and the smaller objects are complemented by fine drawings, sketches and photographs that can be described as conceptual art. During a conversation some ten years ago Zsuzsa Szenes said: "My childhood was burnt out, in the strictest sense of the word, because our flat in Fény Street was destroyed by fire during the war. My childhood was burnt down, and so were my dolls, my novel, my drawings, my relatives... they took many things away from me, and I would like to recreate them." At that time she still meant this symbolically, when she was defining her artistic programme. Since then her tone has become sharper, her expression more direct and lean: in the drawing *Budapest II, 6 Fény Street, No. 2 Ground-Floor,* she has resurrected her childhood flat which was burnt down 36 years ago. With amazing recollection, she has prepared the ground floor plan of the flat marking in it all the pieces of furniture and equipment that were once

Ferenc Kovács

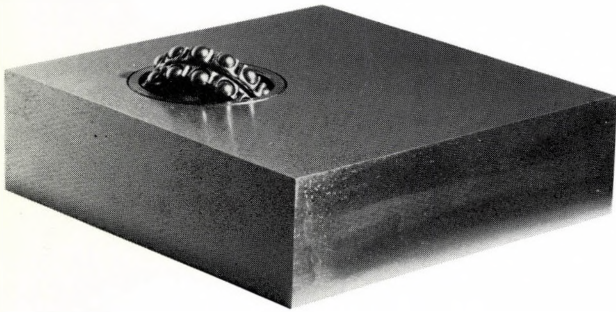
ADALBERT BÉLA RIEZ: WITCHERY (OIL, 100 × 80 CM, 1979)

Ferenc Kovács

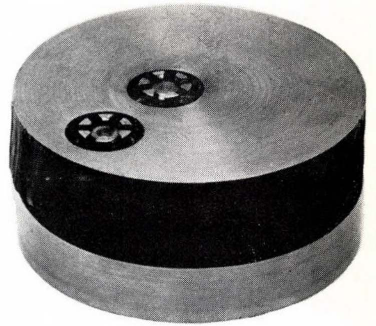
ADALBERT BÉLA RIEZ: ZOO (OIL, 90 × 120 CM, 1978)

Ferenc Kov

Vera Székely: Sails (1979)



Tibor Csiky: Rába '78
(steel and bearing, 51 × 170 × 170 mm)



László Csigó

Tibor Csiky: Study for the "Ajka" series II. (bronze, steel and castellated bolt, 52 × 114 mm, 1980)

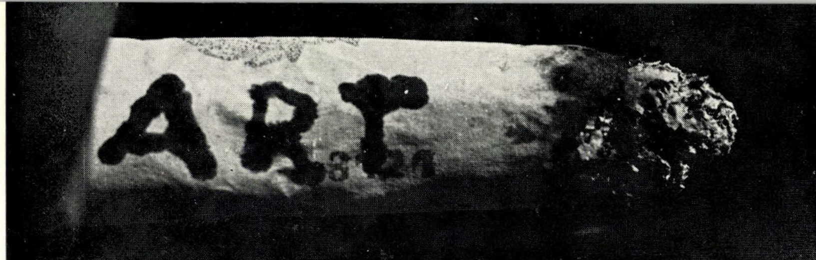
Tibor Csiky: Kazimir Malevich
(steel, bronze, embossed bolt, 43 × 159 × 165 mm, 1979)

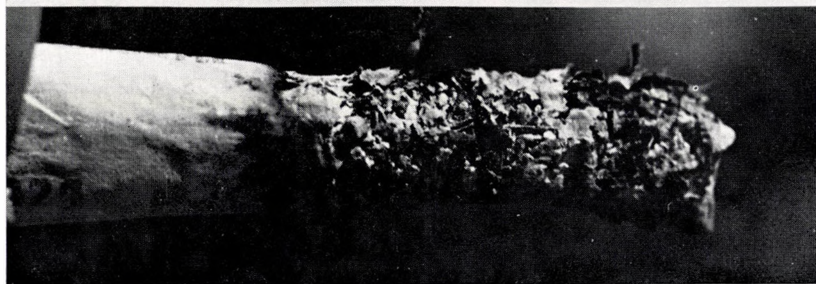
György Makky

György Erdély

Zsuzsa Szenes: Cover on various objects
(canvas, 1976)

Zsuzsa Szenes: Against cold in general
(wood, wool, 200×80×75 cm, 1976)





KÁLMÁN SZIJÁRTÓ: FROM THE SERIES "ART GESTURES," 1974

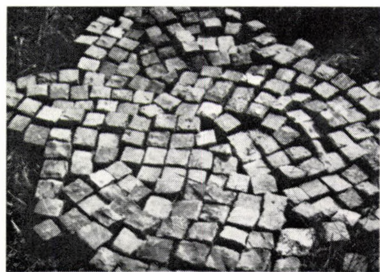
Photograph by the arti

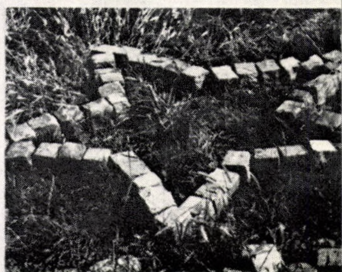
Katalin Nádor

FERENC FICZEK: HAND-SHAKING, 1977
(From Changing steps, a film)

Károly Kismányoki–Kálmán Szijártó: Sand pit in Pécsvárad, on october 18, 1970

(Photo 30×42 cm taken by the artist)





Sándor Pinczehelyi: Star (pavement stones)

Photograph by the artist

there: and, she accompanies it with a lengthy hard-written, meticulously detailed text.

And finally allow me to give myself a pat on the back. My book, *The Live Textile*, about the textile revolution led by Zsuzsa Szenes and her fellow-artists, appeared not long before the exhibition. At the exhibition I suddenly came upon the title of my book, as the title of a picture. True, the theory I had had in mind was that textiles are alive because they are active. But her humour has not failed Zsuzsa Szenes now either: her photograph *Live Textile* depicts a young, thick-furred live hutch-rabbit—an uncommonly fine specimen.

JÁNOS FRANK

THE JOURNEY OF BÉLA ADALBERT RIEZ FROM BUDAPEST TO BUDAPEST

An Exhibition in the Museum of Fine Arts

"We see as painters, sculptors, architects, photographers, and poster designers have taught us to see. The social significance of the picture is that it transmits new visual norms," wrote György Kepes. This statement has been valid ever since art has existed, regardless of the fact that in every age certain sections of the public persist in the world of taste formed by yesterday's art and reject the art of their own age which is different. There are also people who find pleasure in works of art belonging to both worlds of taste. In the case of Béla Adalbert Riez they may enjoy pictures based on real visual images and also non-figurative or abstract pictures which are either devoid of objective elements or use these only as signals. His latest exhibition in Budapest in the Museum of Fine Arts offers a comprehensive view of the wealth of his vision and world of expression, from almost exact replicas of landscapes to non-figurative pictures.

This Hungarian painter, who lives in Monte Carlo, emigrated to France in 1923. In Hungary he had embarked on his artistic career with the reproduction of drawings; his favourite technique had been lithography. He continued this work in Paris: he lithographed paintings by Léger, Foujita, Chagall, Modigliani, Picasso, Soutine, and their contemporaries. Later he switched to textile painting and churned out dress designs from his studio—he ranked among the top ladies' fashion designers in the world. Some time later he abandoned the applied arts and devoted himself to painting. His speedy rise as a painter is borne out by the great number of exhibitions he held—apart from France, in the USA, Athens, Istanbul, Monte Carlo, to name but a few.

Political and social questions, as well as the fate of "his two homelands," have interested Riez since his early youth. On the occasion of his exhibitions in Hungary in 1976 and now in 1980, he donated political documents collected over thirty years to the Historical Institute of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party.

Before the present exhibition Riez had had two exhibitions in Hungary: in 1973 in the Ferencváros Cellar Art Gallery and in 1976 in the show-room of the Institute of Cultural Relations in Budapest.

At the exhibition in August 1980 he donated 50 works to the Budapest Museum

of Fine Arts, five to the Budapest Union of Art Collectors and Art Patrons, one to the new picture gallery to be established in Battonya, and one to the National Union of Hungarian Building Workers.

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Riez constructs his pictures with care; he often fashions his picture fields like the *pointillistes,* without diminishing his liveliness of expression, the buoyancy of his forms and the explosive force of his colours. His pictures, even the most abstract, have a refreshing effect. They owe this not only to the brilliant sparkling of their colours but also to the artist's years of experience working as a textile designer. And since his talent manifests itself precisely in overcoming difficulties, each one of his pictures is carefully finished, and the harmony of the colours renders them now buoyant, now static. His works are devoid of aggressively naturalist traits, and at the same time most of his abstract paintings transmit messages which are recognizable to reason. In *Béke a földön* (Peace on Earth) (81 × 100 cm), he sets out the characteristic cultural, architectural, and artistic artifacts of over 20 countries in squares of different sizes which match each other quite naturally, i.e. pictorially. The transitions are ensured by the harmony of the colours and structural unity is achieved by the overall effect of colours and patches of colours.

In his picture *A vadon* (The Wilderness, 1979) "flower buds" bend from the two sides towards the centre where the illuminated centre space perhaps symbolizes the brightness of the intellect which lights up the dense wilderness. He has ventured even further, painting completely abstract "landscapes" *(Corsica, Meteor).* The "formless" phenomena of nature such as the eruption of a volcano and its glow *(Meteor)* are elements of "nature" in the full sense of the word, their pictorial expression appears as "abstract" but in reality it fits well into the concept of "boundless realism."

Új energia (New Energy, 1971) draws attention to the effect of the flaming colours of dawn, in which the yellows and reds dominate with a glow which makes them appear to be on fire.

Riez is also interested in architectural themes. The internal structure of big cities, the blocks of houses, streets and roofs melt into picturesque unity in *Róma templomai* (The Churches of Rome, 1972), *Városközpont* (City Centre, 1976), *Belváros* (City, 1971).

The view of the world held by this artist, who has completed his studies in the school of art, industry, trade, and politics, appears in his works in a mass of symbols: every man is between the devil and the deep blue sea, we *must* wear a mask in order to be tolerable to each other. Everybody knows in himself what he keeps hidden in his soul for the sake of social coexistence and the artist expresses these feelings: *Színház* (Theatre, 1977), *Boszorkányság* (Black Magic, 1980). Apart from the deliberately non-figurative pictures, there are many which are in the final analysis figurative although difficult to decode: in them the objective paraphernalia are abstracted as in *Színház* (Theatre), where the figure of the stage master, the telephone and the make-up tools can be recognized only after a thorough search. The same applies to *Állatkert* (Zoo, 1978). Here abstraction is carried to the extreme: the viewer must be very familiar with the animal world to pick out individual terrestrial and aquatic animals, fishes and birds.

Many pictures are simply entitled *Composition;* in these emphasis is on the relationship of colours, on the patch effects which emerge from them: their aim is to please the eye and yet they are not the random products of imagination let loose. On the contrary, they are deliberately constructed works although the role of imagination and the subconscious cannot be disputed. These are, among others: *Apály-dagály* (Ebb and Tide, 1973), *Evolution* (1977), *Izzás* (Glow, 1978), *Haladás* (Progress, 1979), *Kitörés*

(Outbreak, 1979)—all of them colour compositions.

Riez uses a great deal of aniline-powder mixed with acetone and varnish. He puts on his colours, even the dots, with a knife. This makes them shine like enamel, an effect which could never be achieved with traditional oil painting. In addition his colours show through each other, which probably accounts for the peculiar vibrating effect of his paintings.

Rezső Szíj

DOVES AND SAILS IN THE ART GALLERY

Vera Székely's Exhibition

Vera Székely lives in France, and, as she puts it, she has brought to the Budapest exhibition the summary of thirty-four years spent abroad. She was off into the wide world as a chit of a girl of 24, fed up to the teeth by the war, and taking along virtually no more than her drawing skills and the tragic memory of her teacher, Hanna Dallos, who, even when knowing that she was to be killed by the Fascists, went on teaching her students.

Though a graphic artist, Vera Székely first worked for many years as a potter and it seemed she would make a name as such. She held several exhibitions in Paris, England, Italy and the U.S., and in 1954 was awarded a gold medal at the Milan Triennial. Her main interest lay in the function of pottery, stained glass windows, and mosaics on buildings. From 1958 onwards her works appeared in high-rise flats, the buildings of family centres, churches, and the walls of communes where young people lived. In 1965, she showed paintings in the Case d'Art gallery in Paris. She even experimented with welding metal, like the monumental iron statue for the church at Clichy. While she continued to work with clay, woven stuff, and timbers, at the same time painting, making mosaics, and sculpting, her main interest has remained the relationship between architecture and the plastic arts. She designed holiday villages, took part in international festivals, and generally showed how to humanize the concrete jungle. The titles and slogans of her exhibitions would make ideal campaigning propaganda: "Art in the City" (Fontainebleau, 1970), "Forms for a Square" (Saint-Germain-en-Laye, 1974), "Boxes" (Paris, 1977), "Spaces in Memory" (Moscow, 1980).

In between all that, in 1975, she painted a series of a dozen pictures, which the following year were published as canvas prints, under the title *Massacre du paraclet.* These are the first works the visitor sees on entering the exhibition. A short introductory text, written by the artist, raised a monument to the memory of those who were the victims, regardless of time and space. There are doves in singles and *en masse,* in red, in black, at the centre of a target, winnowing or dropping into a mass grave. The message core of the series is that universality can only be confronted in freedom. As if the idea of free soaring had become materialized, the two neighbouring rooms are filled with wrung and twisted sack-coloured canvases, suspended and broken up by laths: works to modify space through bending. Sails, fans, shells, tents, which—as if hung or spun by the artist in the open air—show forms changing with the breeze. From a distance they look like a nomad camp, with differently shaped tents, or, if you like, a

square protected by balloon bastions, of irregular forms. It seems as if the material had been in short supply and had to be eked out here and there, but the artist who has hung it, did it in good humour. One can fancy a corsair under sail, or a royal galley—each according to his fancy and mood, depending on the angle. While experimenting, the artist discovered that the motion of the structures recalling a nomad camp, to some extent, follows certain laws, and reminds one of a spiral movement and changes of identical elements, without cessation and rigidity. A special magic of the alterable structures lies in the fact that anybody may dislodge them. They are playful and stirring, yet radiating reassuring harmony. Vera Székely fills an infinite, enigmatic, sometimes awesome space with her huge, playful mobiles which still have the effect of benign beings.

Ágnes Széchy

FROM ENAMEL PICTURES TO VIDEO ART

An Exhibition of the Pécs Workshop at Székesfehérvár

It was as amateurs that the members of the Pécs Workshop became artists, and yet their amateurism was truly professional in content. By circumventing the usual road through the Academy, and the conservative training and philosophy that goes with it, they demonstrated how the young artist embarking on his career does not necessarily have to struggle through realist painting but can also start out on the basis of the contrasting trends of contemporary art. Their reasons for forming a group were various, the major one perhaps being a consequence of what Ferenc Lantos* terms—in his catalogue on the Székesfehérvár exhibition—professional aristocracy. "Young people," he writes, "with an unconventional approach to the problems of art, are excluded from professional circles. This has made it necessary for those 'shut out' to stick together in some way, and to try to form a group which provides them with some opportunity for progress in their profession and at the same time affords a measure of protection against disapproval and attacks from outside."

* See *NHQ* 67.

The group began as a circle trained in the basic skills by Lantos. The next step was an exhibition held in 1970 by eleven of the members who called themselves the Pécs Studio of Applied Arts. The misleading term "applied arts" stemmed from the experiments on the use of enamel in interior design and decoration, which Lantos had been working on in an enamel factory since 1967 and which were the basis of his following.

The basic unit of the enamel composition is the square sheet, as demonstrated at the exhibition by a few works by Károly Halász, Sándor Pinczehelyi, and Kálmán Szijártó. When they fit the panels together they carefully avoid creating the effect of a disturbing fracture of a natural, self-evident parting that can be continued beyond the limits of the panel. Some of them have also tried to develop more self-contained units, to create the effect of a painting, and they transformed into enamel the ideas they had developed under the influence of geometrical abstraction and Op Art. This trend is well-known in the town of Vasarely. Others had a vision of boundlessness in their work and

imitated Lantos's method of composition.

Lantos has developed a system built on elementary geometric figures such as semi- and quarter-circles. The formal development is basically progressive: "the series of newer and newer qualities results in a consistent and open system, analogous with nature and capable of further development, pointing from the simple to the more complex, from the surface to the depth" (Lantos). For him the trio nature-vision-creation emphasizes the common structural roots of everyday life and the artistic view that things and phenomena, despite all their differences, have their roots in the same basic system and that their coexistence is also determined by complicated, but in the final analysis similar, relations. In Lantos's art structuralist notions have not excluded decorative motifs. For his students, however, the variability of elementary forms is of interest solely as a device for decorative effect, which, in the absence of an adequate philosophical basis, individual conviction, and enthusiasm, can easily become mechanical, withering away artistic sensibilities.

Lantos seeks contact with nature using "dressed up" natural forms in order to discover in them a full system of visual relationships. Károly Kismányoky and Szijártó's manipulations of nature of 1970–1, on the other hand, were built up on the realization of structural identity rather than on a play with contrasting effects: either by placing the geometrical form as an alien, deliberate element on the landscape background, or through the alienation of some details of nature. An example of the first is "Rolling Yellow Stripe", which examines the effect of a 1 metre wide paper stripe spread out on a sloping clearing, and recorded in photographs. The basic impression is that of contrast between the sparkling yellow surface and the sharp contours and the coarse, unbalanced landscape of the background. The paper stripes spread out in a Pécsvárad sandpit in a terraced structure place greater emphasis on the structure that determines the ground, or, depending on your point of view, its stability or dynamism. An effect of alienation is produced in part by a white-painted tree, which because of its unnatural colour stands out from its surroundings. Another example of alienation is Pinczehelyi's "How to Grow 4 m² of Blue Grass." Whichever method the artists have chosen, they consider the strange elements they insert into nature as experimental means, amplifiers, membranes, through which they try to establish contact with their subject-matter, to express its "intensive presence," and observe the relationship between the subject and the given environment.

Kismányoky and Szijártó document this work with photographs, and transform the results into meshwork prints. Even where photographs, seemingly merely of a documentary relevance, are used, the significance placing of the signs, which once appeared to be of an analytical nature, has definitely changed: on the one hand, the decorative aspect was significant, and on the other, the paper stripe used as a membrane, sometimes became a covering which obscured parts of the background. This latter phenomenon can be observed in "Blue Stripe" of 1970. Originally the protruding blue paper stripe was in contrast with the rocky environment and in strong contact with the sky. In the black-and-white photograph stripe and sky become identical, and in the place of the stripe a split seems to have formed in the cliff. This chance transformation resulting from the photograph is deliberately taken up in the meshwork print variations, giving a final outcome quite different from the original objective of the work.

Comparing Kismányoky's and Szijártó's work of 1970–1 with Kismányoky's later pieces, one might think that these secondary changes of meaning had an effect on his work on placing signs. This, however, is only partly true; much more is involved—i.e. a change of artistic attitudes and views. The

sense of identification with the world and the calm, analytical methods have given way to an attitude that is much more sensitive to conflict, more sceptical and more likely to question situations, either seriously or ironically. "Experiment" (1973), with the words MA-NEM (NOT-TODAY) inscribed in different formations, is a good example of this transformation of mere documentation, observation, and the contrast effect of signs into an anarchistically categorical negation of the world expressed conceptually and verbally. "Result" (1974), which bears the inscription "isa por és homu vogmuk" ("in truth, we are but dust and ashes," a quotation from the Funeral Oration, one of the earliest coherent documents in Hungarian literature dating from the end of the twelfth century), expresses this idea even more excessively and in a more personal way.

Károly Halász's links with Lantos's constructivist approach are more direct and lasting than those of Kismányoky and Szijártó. After a period of panel picture painting, when he worked with geometrical and Op Art elements, he began to analyse television pictures. In the absence of video equipment, he had to make do with photographic details of television picture sequences which he compared with the structure appearing on the screen (the series of photos, "Modulated Television," 1972–3). Geometrical and constructivist notions did not cease to interest Halász even after this somewhat superfluous pragmatic experiment, as is borne out by his more recent, much more successful panel pictures ("Black-and-White Composition," 1979; "Grey Pictures 1–3," 1979).

After their work on geometrical abstraction, later in the 1970s the Pécs Workshop artists became increasingly involved in intermedial forms of expression. Instead of analysis, their work was directed towards self-realization and symbolism, in addition to their photographic and serigraphic elaboration. Halász continues to be obsessed by the medium of television. A constantly recurring element in his work is fetishized screen frame, borrowed from a viscerated TV set, which in the picture sequence of "Irrational Television" manipulates the form of the human body through mirrors with adjustable axles placed within the frame, and in "Private Transmission" merely by the empty frame, resulting in unusual segments and montages. After this pseudo-video art, as Halász himself calls it, he also tried his hand at performance art recorded on videotape in the studio at Pécs in 1975 and in Amsterdam in 1978. Recently Szijártó has also been occupied with work which borders on body and performance art. He does not use the whole body, merely some of its characteristic parts—the hands and face. "Art Gestures" (1973–80) is made up of inscriptions of the word ART placed on a palm, a finger, a nail, and a burning cigarette. "Signal Variants" and "Transformations" (1978) are based on the effect or elementary movements of the hand and of a bandaged and painted face.

The problem of creating signs and manipulating his own image are perhaps most characteristic of the work of Pinczehelyi, whose interest has turned from serial photographs documenting processes in space and time, phases of movement and objects seen from various angles to the transformation of symbols. Pinczehelyi uses banal motifs, such as stars, flagstones, a sickle, and our daily bread, in two ways: either he takes subjects with an obviously symbolic character and treats them in a purely decorative way, thereby nullifying their original meaning through artistic transformation, or he postulates new contents in place of the earlier ones which he has called into question. In the case of the photograph "Hammer and Sickle" (1973), the hammer and sickle are represented as objects, as working tools which, since they are held by the artist himself, cannot be interpreted in the conventional way; at the same time, however, with its reference to

the older, deeper semantic layers and with its personification, it also creates the possibility of renewing the content of the symbol.

Ferenc Ficzek, the fifth member of the Pécs Workshop, is interested in forms created by projection. His devices—the illumination of objects by various sources of light, the interception of shadows on a screen, the joint presentation of the object and its shadow—appear simple and self-evident, but the visual image created is all the more complex and can be solved only step by step. The dimensions of the object as seen from different angles are projected upon each other, giving rise to seemingly impossible profiles of light and sciagrams, unusual effects which cannot be produced in any other way. Ficzek manipulates both the source of light and the screen that intercepts the projected picture, and observes how the spectacle created becomes modified along the refraction lines of the screen, with characteristics that differ from the original form of the projected object. He sends his simple, banal motifs and forms through a whole series of projected transformations until they reach their final image; for example, he photographs the picture projected on the manipulated screen alongside its original subject, and then projects this film, again inserting the subject, and photographs it once again, thus continuing to draw new aspects into the transformation. Over the past few years Ficzek has become less satisfied with the two-dimensional effect of the projected picture. He retransforms the illusive image of the subject into an object by the use of shaped canvases stretched out over profiles, representing it only in its characteristic motifs when seen from a particular angle. The mysterious object poetry of the projected pictures, their floating, fleeting impressions are transformed into "realia," these however, like the material of burlap they are made of, are much too raw and unimaginative.

The Székesfehérvár exhibition is a good introduction to the Pécs Workshop with a well-selected, richly documented set of works which bring together subjects and devices typically used by the artists. In the use of the camera, in land art inspiration, and in the interpretation of video, performance and symbols, one senses the inspiration of Hungarian sources—Kassák, Moholy-Nagy, and the constructivist heritage passed down by Lantos—and the link with contemporary foreign art. It also becomes clear that the united picture of the workshop is already a thing of the past, and, as one of the critics writes, "the Pécs Workshop, as a living creative community... is by now a mere fiction—it is difficult, and perhaps not even worthwhile, to reduce the independent paths of its members to a common denominator."

ZOLTÁN NAGY

THEATRE AND FILM

THE CLASSICS — AND THEIR SHADOWS

William Shakespeare: *A Midsummer Night's Dream;* Tom Stoppard: *Dogg's Hamlet;* Ivo Bresan: *Peasant Hamlet;* Shelley: *The Cencis;* Gogol: *The Government Inspector;* Imre Madách: *The Tragedy of Man;* Ottó Tolnai: *Sell-Out;* J. B. Priestley: *Dangerous Corner*

Hungarian theatres have adopted a policy of safety first for their 1980–81 season. They have transferred plays that scored success on open-air stages in the summer to the indoor theatre, or have opened the season with tried and tested works by the classics. So far there have been remarkably few Hungarian premieres, as though the theatres were waiting for both companies and audiences to warm up to the season. At the same time there are a remarkable number of English and American plays. Shakespeare naturally continues to be unbeatable, appearing on the Hungarian stage both with his original works and transcriptions of them. (In addition to the plays discussed in this article Dürrenmatt's *King John* is also being performed, as is *Halmi*, by the young Hungarian playwright, Géza Bereményi, which was reviewed here in an earlier number (NHQ 79). The first performance of this contemporary "Hungarian Hamlet" was so successful that Hungarian drama critics—who this year for the first time awarded prizes on the model of *Plays and Players*—ranked it second among the best new Hungarian plays. *Halmi* has now been staged in the capital where it was a failure, indicating that critics have still not become infallible. What the director offers in this production is merely the shadow of a shadow.)

The rather drab and boring opening of the season offers some lessons precisely because of its being drab and boring. Luckily one or two premieres still hold out the promise of continuing for some time.

Ever since the highly successful guest performances of the Royal Shakespeare Company some ten to fifteen years ago, Hungarian drama seems to have placed the figure of Peter Brook on a pedestal. He stands high above like a statue, surrounded by veneration, his outstretched hand pointing into sacred "empty space". Now a young director, who not so long ago was still a college student, has walked up to this imaginary statue, politely raised his student's cap to it—but then cut a snook at it, in the knowledge that Brook cannot be turned into a sacred cow because of the memory of his congenial re-interpretation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. This double gesture of respectful disrespect has given birth to the staging of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in Hungary's most dynamic and lively workshop, the Kaposvár Theatre. In János Ács's production even the borderland between reality and the realm of dreams, that Brook's interpretation left untouched, fades away. Not only are Theseus and Oberon, Hippolyta and Titania played by the same actors, but the director has even drawn each of them into one person. Athens or fairy-land —Ács does not bother with such questions. It is not the world that is split, only the personality. The set designer has spread a huge sheet over the softly undulating stage,

scattering a few cushions on it (these serve both as stones and as foot-stools): that is, he has made beds for the actors. Let them slip into them. Like white gauze the beard not only of Shakespeare but also of Freud looms over the stage. Jan Kott smiles perplexedly behind the black backdrop.

The basic idea of the production is that if Titania could fall in love with Bottom, she would be caressed by ass's ears till the end of her life. Neither the Queen of the Fairies nor the ass-eared weaver can sleep off his love. And if it is the power of the magic flower that has united the bodies of Hermia, Helena, Demetrius and Lysander in varying permutations, their hands will remember the one-time caresses and their lips the kisses even when they are preparing for their real-life nuptials. Master and servant, king and craftsman, all tumble about with the same awkwardness on this huge mat of love. The play is pervaded with unusual relationships and homosexual affections, the antecedents that motivate these unhappy love affairs. The ageing Titania sensually strokes the skin and thick hair of the "changeling". Oberon has also set his eyes on the boy, and only Puck, nestling jealously beside his master, knows why. Hermia and Helena would like to scratch each other's eyes out in their love combat, though not so long ago they sat so very close to each other at school. The white chill of the huge couch creates strange couples.

The performance is about the bonds of the human body, the passions of the body that also imprison the mind—it is therefore fitting that everything be represented by the body. Cultivated motion, dynamism, physical presence are raised to the level of protagonists, and even if the actors are unable to retain their artistic force throughout, in certain scenes they give masterly performances. For example, it is Puck who turns Bottom into an ass by jumping on his back: Robin Goodfellow's gloved hands fan the weaver's face like big ears, and Titania grabs at his clasped foot as though it were a splendid penis. Bottom, with Puck on his back and Titania in his lap, performs his saturnalian love dance to the organ sounds of neighing lust.

Like all really good ideas, this too sometimes back-fires: Puck is later needed here and there, and therefore has to keep getting off Bottom's neck, who at such times potters about forlornly, neither man nor ass. The production, devised on a large scale, is sometimes inconsistent or clumsy in its detail. At times the scenes of the Tradesmen are delightful in their perfection, at others they display an annoying awkwardness that could have been avoided.

As a novelty, the first actor to enter the stage and the last to leave it is Quince the carpenter. He roams around self-importantly, checking what is going on, as the writer and director of the Interlude performed by the Tradesmen and thus the planner of the whole performance. Looking at the empty stage dotted with cushions one wonders whether this whole thing was reality or a play?

The Kaposvár *Midsummer Night's Dream* is a first-rate production. If one wants to analyse its merits objectively, we can compare it directly with a guest performance in Budapest of the same play by the Deutsches Theater company, which took place at around the same time. Alexander Lang's actors moved around among sets familiar from Brook, strictly according to the Brook recipe; precise and disciplined but lacking all ease and humour. They missed the wry wisdom of the play, and the otherwise excellent company concentrated solely on depicting unrequited love. The Hungarian production, though it did not do any more, fortunately differed inasmuch a it left something of the dream as well.

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The Szeged Theatre presents a double bill with plays based on Hamlet: *Dogg's Hamlet—Peasant Hamlet.*

Of course, the titles are not by Shakespeare, nor were the plays written by him, and the two plays are actually one—or rather three. I sound confused deliberately since the two plays staged by three (!) directors also leave the audience in a state of confusion. Stoppard's cheeky and witty condensate of Hamlet remains for the Hungarian audience a shallow display of ideas, and any laughter mostly rewards gestures that are not included in its text (for example, when Gertrude, draining the cup of poison, dies like a victim of alcoholic poisoning). Stoppard ends the 15-minute play with a snappy "encore". For the Szegeders this was not enough: they perform an "encore of the encore"—and kill the witty little play with a flat platitude.

The play continues with *Peasant Hamlet* by the Yugoslav playwright, Ivo Bresan. Some thirty years ago, the peasants of a co-operative farm in a small village planned, in a delusion of grandeur, an amateur performance of *Hamlet*, "Omlet" as they call it. It turns out in the course of their funny blunderings that the impersonator of Claudius is also a murderer in real life, and that most of the actors are almost identical to the characters they play. This political satire written by an inexperienced playwright, but witty and forceful nonetheless, was a great success at an open-air performance last summer, but now in Szeged it drags along in a long-winded and wearisome manner. The only connection between Stoppard's and Bresan's plays is at the very most that a peasant who had been to the theatre once in his life might have seen *Hamlet* like this, as a piece of tomfoolery by Stoppard.

Reports before the premiere promised this double bill to be a masterpiece of invention. The only really novel thing about it is that the two plays on one bill constitute three plays. And it is truly regrettable that the one play which would really be worthwhile, *Hamlet*, is lost in the performance.

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Another large-scale production by the Szeged Theatre is *The Cenci*, but this has turned out to be more successful. Shelley's romantic tragedy has never been performed in Hungary before, and thus the very fact of its first performance is in itself worthy of attention. In addition, a class of students at the College of Dramatic Art have in it been given the opportunity to stage their examination performance in public (something completely unusual in the Hungarian theatre, although it did not count as anything new for this "experimental" class, who had already performed in public on two previous occasions).

Director József Ruszt, one of the most eminent Hungarian teachers of acting, undertook the production of the play more or less as a guest director, during what for him is period of an artistic crisis that has lasted for the past one or two years. In *The Cenci* he has marshalled the by now routine elements and paraphernalia of the strongly individual style he developed during the course of a whole range of Shakespeare productions. The production is permeated by a super-subtle artistry that has lost its content. Classical music rumbles in the background, pathologically twisted candlesticks provide the flickering light, the set designer has turned the stage into a giant bier, and a huge lace-cobweb hanging down from the heights symbolizes the decaying wealth of the Cenci palace, the tragedy of the Cencis. This gloomy black space is undeniably fascinating, with the figures flitting through like shadows in the soft light, but it is not the play that has created and shaped its own setting—instead it is the director who has brought along, and forced on Shelley's play, a stage which he developed earlier and which is ideal for productions of Shakespeare. There is no harmony between the play and its production.

This background of artistry and routine, contrasts with the clumsiness and eccentricity of young actors. The director, the actors and the tragedy come out as the losers in

this strange conflict, which does lack its brighter episodes. The 23-year-old actor in the role of the old Earl Cenci should commit incest as a matter of course, the assassins ought sometimes to find their way to the hilt of their daggers, and the fraudulent instigator ought to sit his examination in stage movement and not in Shelley.

Neither the routine nor the lack of routine, neither the over-mature artistry nor the often pardonable histrionic clumsiness can come close to Shelley's tragedy. Despite the great efforts which have undoubtedly been made, *The Cenci* remains unperformed. And the critic is left wondering whether a play should be staged at all if it is merely for a performance which the director could have produced some five to six years ago, and his actors only some five or six years later.

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In Kecskemét, Gogol's *The Government Inspector* has been a curtain raiser. Just as, due to the proximity of Brook's example, no Hungarian director undertook for a decade to stage *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, they also kept away from *The Government Inspector*, since Georgy Tovstonogov's guest direction some years ago is still fresh in people's memories. The Kecskemét company has shown its ability to break away from this interpretation. There is no doubt about the independent and energetic character of their production. It is a denuded production, set in a rustic, poor environment, a panorama applied in large patches and drastic colours on to a rough canvas, about people possessed by fear. The actors exaggerate the characters so that they virtually become caricatures: the Mayor stamps around with buckling knees as though his pants were always in a mess, the Mayoress screeches continuously like a village goose, Hlestakov welcomes the "gentlemen" who want to bribe him by kicking them about on the floor. This physiologically polished acting, of a pace and volume unusual on the Hungarian stage, would be acceptable if this method succeeded in depicting the whole inner realm of the comedy. This, however, comes out only in parts: the government inspector fails to raise himself from the level of a cunning scapegrace to a frightening tyrant, there is a contradiction between the Mayoress's exterior and her behaviour, and in the minor roles the actors replace the grotesque with shades of operetta. Most of the humour gets lost in the often laboured production, which concentrates only on the technique.

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The Hungarian classics are represented at this opening of the season by the most notable nineteenth-century play, *The Tragedy of Man*. István Paál's production of this play in Szolnok ranks alongside the Kaposvár *Midsummer Night's Dream* as the most noteworthy production. From the fifteen scenes of *The Tragedy of Man* he takes a single one, the phalanstery scene, and huddles all the rest into it. The play, which leads the first human couple from Paradise, through the Egyptian, the Roman and the Byzantine scenes to the ages of Kepler and Danton, and to the Britain of flourishing capitalism, finally facing them with phalanstery and the ice age, takes place here in a single scene, instead of the customary, frequently changing, rich sets. The building, which with its vaults and rosettes also resembles a church, is in fact a "Gothic phalanstery". Monotony and drabness prevail. The succession of scenes is regulated by the same, constantly recurring motif: Lucifer leads Adam to newer and newer regions, with Adam assuming newer and newer forms, but always failing in what he sets out to do. Imre Madách, the playwright, takes a pessimistic view of human history, but ends his drama with Christian conviction, with the repeated command: "O Man, strive on, have faith, and trust!" This is the famous, and most frequently quoted last sentence of the *Tragedy*, and the director omits,

among other things, precisely this sentence. In the closing scene his heroes, who have struggled through centuries of history, fall to the ground with arms outstretched, in the form of a cross: they have become weary, and give up the struggle which they have started ten times over. Of the unredeemed, crucified on earth, it is only the "primeval spirit of negation", Lucifer, who once again goes in for the impossible: he tries to lift Adam and Eve, to revive them and lead them to new paths. In vain. The Lord, the Creator, watches the useless attempt from the heights, with arms crossed, almost smiling.

The director, who has gained national repute mainly with his productions of plays of the absurd by Jarry, Beckett, Mrozek and others, has not let himself down with this one: he disclaims the notion that history is definitely progressing onwards, albeit with detours and by-passes, developing and promising mankind future delivery to a haven of refuge. One can argue with his pessimism, his visions of destruction, his inexorability which knows only black humour—and critics do indeed argue strongly with them; one thing, however, is incontestable—that he has created an adequate setting for his ideas. According to long-standing traditions, productions of *The Tragedy of Man* always had the Lord appear in the heights, in the "stage Heaven", or allowed only His voice to be heard. Now, except at the beginning and end of the play, István Paál has Him walk on a lower level—the human level—and he does not differentiate the Lord in his outward appearance from the mortals. He even puts many of Adam's sentences into His mouth. With that, for the first time in the history of *Tragedy* productions, he gets rid of the separation between the divine and the human, and for the first time indicates that man is both the creator and the created. Relations of subordination and superordination can change according to the historical situation.

This is splendidly expressed on stage in the space scene. Lucifer reveals space to Adam, and the way they sit in front of the bright rosette high above the stage recalls passengers, not even of planes, but of spaceships. And only the head of the Lord, who here embodies the spirit of the Earth, is visible above the stage. This exploitation of space expands the stage, and, through the power of association, temporarily reverses the Lord-Servant relationship. It is easy to predict that all this will give rise to a general outcry by literary historians, who will take to the field in defence of the classical masterpiece. Yet the director—even if he sometimes oversteps the mark—has interfered with the text in the interests of the play, and his unexpected modifications are so forcefully revealing that some of them will become indispensable in future, more conservative and literary productions. With more penetrating acting this conception of the *Tragedy* could have been more convincing and effective; as such it has been a production which offers a lasting experience, but of a very inconsistent level.

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One of the most unexpected and loveliest successes of the early season has been *Sell-out* by Ottó Tolnai, a poet who lives in Yugoslavia and is committed to modernism. The 80-year-old protagonist, sensing that his death is approaching, sells out the furniture and all the paraphernalia of his flat—and with them, his whole life. The irons, prayer-books and pastry-boards all hold decisive experiences, indelible memories. By drawing them all together the author lines up 20th century history, and reveals all the mysteries of a human life subjected to two world wars and to illness. A grotesque element creeps into this realistic and indeed naturalistic story through the situation of the protagonist's house on the world map: when, for instance, he sells his wardrobe to a touring company, Asia becomes visible.

A huge part of the continent has "surrendered": it has been eaten up by the moths.

When—after a series of scenes offering good acting and lively situations—the house becomes empty, the old man falls dead into the scattered rubbish and debris (this is reminiscent of Beckett, coloured with a certain irony). But with Tolnai, the forgotten man, who lived through and weathered the 20th century, does not himself become wastage: his death is not elevating, but neither is it the annihilation of the insect-man: he leaves a gap, he is missed by his only companion, who was also his plunderer—the Barber. The well-arranged production, which is concentrated largely on the text, is completed mainly by the performance of the protagonist: the 36-year-old actor, who plays the role of the 80-year-old man—and plays it excellently—without any make-up, merely by his bearing, his gestures and his expression.

After this tour of the provincial theatres, let me turn to Budapest, where for the time being no successful production can be found, however hard one looks. There are in fact hardly any productions at all; we have been awaiting the first premieres for an unusually long time.

*

The Budapest People's Theatre, under new leadership, presents Priestley's *Dangerous Corner* in its renovated chamber theatre (which, strangely enough, is now more spacious than its main house). Priestley is regarded in Hungary, as elsewhere, as an acknowledged classical master of the elegant well-made play, with a moderate degree of social criticism. The present production, which is highly popular with audiences, reveals not the playwright, but the genre itself as being old. Not so much old, as somewhat dated. As if *Dangerous Corner* were its own parody. Or does the trouble perhaps lie with the actors? This is possible, for they stumble about the stage, lacking all elegance. The critic is forced to reflect whether some of these actors who have already proved their talents in classical plays (the heroine, for example, in the memorable Shakespeare productions by József Huszt, mentioned earlier in connection with the Shelley premiere), who are at ease in throne-rooms, churches and battlefields, need necessarily fall flat on the carpet of a drawing-room. And the critic is also left wondering—because he has ample time to meditate as the predictable plot unravels—whether in addition to Greek drama, Shakespeare and the Hungarian classics, such plays should not be included in the examination repertoire of drama students. Then perhaps a Shelley tragedy would not leave us with an unnecessary experience of failure, and then perhaps later on they would also be able to move about on a carpet.

TAMÁS TARJÁN

TRAGEDY IN THE LOOKING GLASS

Péter Bacsó: *A tanú* (The Witness)

Wajda's *The Man of Marble*, Pál Gábor's *Vera's Training* and András Kovács's *The Stud Farm* show that the cinema of the socialist countries again looks to the times which in the East are called those of the personality cult, and in the West the period of Stalinism. These films, however, had significant precursors in the Hungarian cinema of the sixties, which owing to an unfavourable interplay of circumstances did not receive, or only partly earned (for certain of Jancsó's films may also be mentioned here) the attention and acknowledgement they deserved. I have in mind here above all Péter Bacsó's *The Witness*, a vitriolic and tempestuous satire, reminiscent at time of Orwell which has had a most successful run in Hungarian cinemas for months now but which, after its completion in 1968, had to wait over ten years before general release. True, people knew about it—it had been shown to clubs and to political training courses, so a relatively large public had seen it—but it still lacked a critical or international echo. This highly successful film never really enjoyed a première.

It is not only that the film has now been publicly and widely shown that prompts this notice, but also the recent publication of Péter Bacsó's script in paperback edition (in Hungarian).

The Witness is centred on the exposure of the mechanism of contrived trials. Bacsó's film demolishes, devastates, annihilates the mentality and the attitudes manifested in these trials training the heavy artillery of his scintillating humour on them, showing with what kind of blackmail and corruption, blending manipulative methods they won over and instructed the—often unsuspecting and naive—witnesses to act for the prosecution to testify falsely. Bacsó, in his own fiction, places the intriguers of the witches sabbath, the apparatus and mechanism of these trials, under a satirical magnifying glass, ranging from the highest level to the lowest: from General Bástya, the Commander in Chief of the Hungarian armed forces and Comrade Virág, the Commander of the State Security Authority through the presiding judge to the rank and file interrogators. He not only draws splendid portraits of these types, but also makes it possible for Hungarians to recognize the real men these characters are modelled on, at least as regards those who had been in the public eye.

Every theory of humour professes to find the sources of mirth somewhere in the contradiction between appearance and reality, in the automatism of self-seeking mechanisms. In this respect Bacsó finds good material in the professional machinery of this terrible construction, which holds up the escutcheon of all that is most sacred, the most noble ideas, the deference of the nation, of society, of socialism, but which in essence is the cynical trampling under foot of all the social and moral norms. However, if this were a conscious feeling in every participant, if appearance did not turn into living, real appearance in the apparatus of the construction—then there would be no opportunity for the automatism of the comic element, that is, for satirical elaboration. Bacsó perceives in this process precisely what—aside from the narrow circle of the principal contrivers—constitutes its essence: the paroxysm of alienation in myth, the duplication of the world in which the reality of facts is absorbed, and degraded to appearance by the reality of ideational constructs—more precisely—misconceptions. This is the fanatical running along of people living in a distorted world of dreams, who take their nightmares for reality, and reject reality as a nightmare, even if it stares them in the face.

Bacsó's film depicts this alienation in its total breadth. At times he revives the devices of classical burlesque. The protagonist, on whose primitive human honesty this manipulation finally runs aground, whom they want to instruct as a witness, and who ultimately, at the decisive moment, prefers to share the fate of the victims, is almost a Chaplin-like figure. József Pelikán, dikeguard, father of eight children, an unschooled, simple number of the working-class, keeps describing himself in the course of the film: "I'm a complete idiot", "ideologically ignorant". Under fascist rule he had hidden the very Communist Party leader—the minister Zoltán Dániel—and his associates in his basement at the risk of his life and the cost of knocked-out teeth, who was picked on as the leader of the criminal gang, the spy ring destined for exposure in the show trial. Pelikán's testimony is needed since, according to the scenario of the trial, Dániel met his foreign liaison men when, on a visit at his old friend, he went fishing in the Danube and accidentally fell into the water, where—according to the indictment—he made contact with the enemy's frogmen.

I do not want to tell the rather involved story which reveals reality in a series of bull's eyes of absurdity, in the course of which our hero is clapped into prison four times, and taken from there—against his will—to leading posts, so that ultimately he too is sentenced to death by hanging as a spy and former informer of the Horthy police—a sentence which as the consequence of a change in the political situation, is not carried out. In the episodes of this picaresque life, Bacsó splendidly condenses the contradictions of the age, depicting as it were, that social background, that discrepancy of facts and principles, which is delineated between actual and official reality and which, so to speak, offers the social basis for the surrealistic nature of these trials. Our hero is locked up for the first time—as no meat was obtainable for meat ration stamps, and he had eight hungry mouths to feed—for unlawfully killing a pig. For the second time, as the manager of the National Swimming Pool, obtaining this post by Comrade Virág in an effort to win his cooperation, they forgot to tell him that occasionally Comrade Bástya swims in the pool, and at such times nobody else is permitted to enter it. For the third time as the manager of the Budapest Luna Park, formerly known as English Park, now renamed the Amusement Park, who for propaganda purposes, transforms the Ghost Railway into the Railway of the Socialist Spirit, but forgets to remove the old terrifying sounds when replacing the tableaux. And finally for the fourth, and last time, when at the proceedings of the Dániel trial he flies into violent rage over the fact that the very same Horthy agent who had knocked his teeth out, was called as a witness in evidence of Dániel's enlistment as a spy. Instead of the previously rehearsed story, he tells the truth and thereby turns himself into a spy and police-nark. In these episodes common sense conflicts with the phantom world of alienation, and in this contest the catharsis of liberating laughter serves justice.

When the film was completed it was already obvious that it was not permissible or ethical to turn such human tragedies into a comedy. In truth this is dancing on the edge of the blade, but the film proves that it is possible and permissible—moreover it must be done. "Why does history progress in this fashion? So that humanity might depart from its past cheerfully" Bacsó quotes Marx in his introduction to the film. But I believe he was led rather by the aim that it should depart thoughtfully, and I think this is the right and obligation of art. The film does not insult the memory of the victims, on the contrary, by exposing a Machiavellism contemptible even in its frightfulness, it obtains justice for them. Zoltán Dániel, against whom the plot is engineered (and who is played by Zoltán Fábri, the well-known film director) is not struck by the barbs of

ridicule, the film speaks of him with shocked esteem, as does the scenario published in book form, in which one finds a firmer, more tragical and therefore more just conclusion than in the film version. The film also portrays József Pelikán (superbly played by Ferenc Kállai) with the sympathetic, gentle irony due to a man in trouble. The edge of the satire is aimed at Comrade Bástya (Béla Both), Comrade Virágh (excellently played by Lajos Őze) and the obtuse apparatus. What it ridicules, what it makes fun of—really deserves no more than ridicule and contempt.

The Witness is the testimonial of posterity to the disavowed crimes of a transcended era. Merciless evidence—but in this firmness lies the justice and strength of the film.

Ervin Gyertyán

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BREUER, János (b. 1932). Musicologist and critic, research fellow at the Hungarian Musicians' Association, an editor of *Magyar Zene* ("Hungarian Music"). His field is 20th century Hungarian music and its international connections, on which he has published 15 books, including "30 Years of Hungarian Musical Culture," published in English in 1975. See his "Pál Kadosa—Composer, Pianist, Teacher," *NHQ* 80.

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ILLYÉS, Gyula (b. 1902). Poet, playwright, essayist, Vice President of International Pen. See his poems in *NHQ* 33, 35, 46, 48 as well as his various essays and articles in 47, 50, 63, 66, 80.

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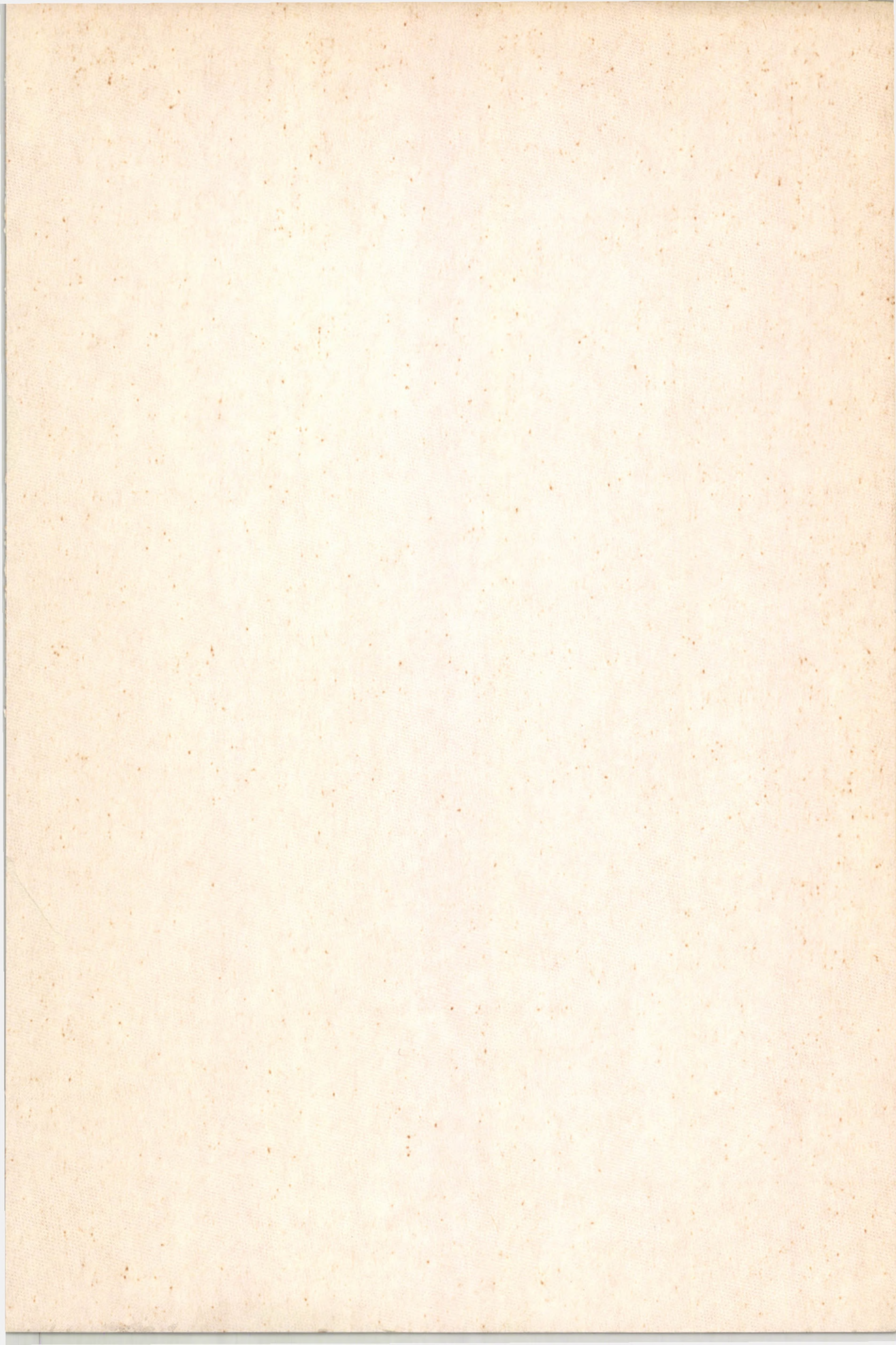

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