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A TIME OF CHANGES

During the hot summer months, while the Autumn 1983 issue was being put together, it has not only been several hundred thousand visitors from Western Europe and North America who have turned their attention to Hungary, so have the international press, radio and television stations. Both professional observers and the general public noted that the Prime Minister of France came to Budapest just before July 14th, and that he issued a statement expressing France's special interest in socialist Hungary. Obviously connected with this interest—one could even say sympathy—was the fact that the French delegation proposed at the long drawn out Madrid Conference that one of the successor conferences, the cultural forum, be held in Budapest in 1985.

It is of course part of the business of this journal to ensure that the artists and writers, educators and cultural administrators who will come here as members of the delegations from thirty-five countries in Europe and North America will have some idea of this country's cultural achievements, and especially, of that intellectual atmosphere which made it possible to suggest Budapest as the site for this post-Madrid conference. It has of course been the business of this journal right from its inception to do just that for the English reading public at large. Such a target audience will, I am sure, help to concentrate all our minds over the next year or two.

In the present issue we continue to respond to this interest in things Hungarian through a number of articles on the economic situation. These discuss the results, the methods and personalities involved which, though they may not always have produced success, have managed to avoid failure. The June 27th issue of *Time* magazine in its Economics and Business section carries a full page profile of János Fekete, the First Deputy President of the Hungarian National Bank, on the occasion of his being invited to Hamburg to attend the Time European Board of Economists. The opportunity was

used to delve into the resources of the Hungarian economy. Reference is made to the fact that in the spring of this year "...Hungary signed an agreement for $ 200 million in credits with a consortium of financial institutions that included Bank of America, Chemical Bank, Bankers Trust and Manufacturers Hanover. Moreover, the World Bank last week granted Hungary $ 239.4 million in longterm loans." The article goes further into the way János Fekete has, for over a decade now, argued for freer East–West trade—on several occasions (though this is not mentioned by *Time*) in the pages of *The New Hungarian Quarterly*. János Fekete's Back to Realities, reviewed in *NHQ* 91, is quoted as follows: "...he called it 'a grave mistake' to exclude or restrict the 10 per cent of the world's population that is Communist from trade with the West." *Time* also quoted from János Fekete's Hamburg speech, which they must have found very interesting: "'We have 400 million people in the East who are very much interested in buying the consumer goods that you produce;' adding Hungary has actually been rather successful selling many items in the West, from the original Rubik's Cube to Crown-Ikarus buses, which are used in Portland Ore., and San Mateo, Calif."

Some of the glory reflects on this journal as well since the First Deputy President of the Hungarian National Bank writes often for us. His most recent contribution is "Problems of International Indebtedness as seen from Hungary" in *NHQ* 90. I am adding a footnote for the benefit of those interested in how the Hungarian economy coped with its liquidity problems, listing relevant articles by János Fekete as well as by József Bognár and Béla Csikós-Nagy.*

This economic and financial policy is closely watched by the competent people in the West. It is therefore not surprising that an article in the Business-Finance section of the *International Herald Tribune* of June 25th on a remodelling of the World Bank's co-financing plan appeared under the heading "Hungary First to Seek New Type World Bank Loan." The article

* JÁNOS FEKETE: Western Credits for Socialist Countries (73); The Crisis of the International Monetary System and the Hungarian Economy (79); Reflections on International Monetary Policy (84); Problems of International Indebtedness — as seen from Hungary (90); JÓZSEF BOGNÁR: Global Economic Security and Growth (79); The Driving Forces of Economic Development in the Intensive Phase (83); Survival, Development, Economic Cooperation, a Draft for the Year 2000 (86); Hungary's Progress in a World Economic Context (87); BÉLA CSIKÓS-NAGY: The Competitiveness of the Hungarian Economy (24); Nine Questions on Financial Incentives (85); Development Problems of the Hungarian Economy (88); Liquidity Problems and the Economic Consolidation (92)

mentions the $ 200 million loan, and then discusses the role of the Basle Bank for International Settlements. Again from the *International Herald Tribune:* "...is aimed at financing energy conservation and agricultural efficiency in that country."

Most interest has naturally been shown in a visit by János Kádár and György Lázár to Moscow in July. It is interesting to note the anxieties, expressed beforehand by a section of the Western European press on whether the Hungarian economic reform and the relatively favourable position of the Hungarian economy were in danger. If the Cold War had not taught me to dislike words in inverted commas I would certainly have now put them around anxieties. Those thoroughly familiar with the situation knew from the start that this was not the purpose of the Moscow visit. This is borne out by what János Kádár said at his Moscow press conference: "In the construction of socialism one must bear in mind experience and laws of social development of general validity, and the history of a people as well as the specific national characteristics of a country... Naturally we cannot recommend some of our solutions to others, nor do we do so, since these follow from our own characteristics. We would, however, feel greatly honoured should Communists of other countries judge that some of this experience could be of use to them."

Novoie Vremia, a Moscow foreign policy weekly, commenting on the joint communiqué issued after the visit, pointed out that it includes the conviction that specific features in the forms and methods of socialist construction in no way hindered the strengthening of the unity of the socialist countries. The journal reminded its readers that there was much speculation in the West regarding Hungarian policy. This had been answered by the stress which János Kádár placed on the exchange of experience between socialist countries. In socialist progress, the laws of social development, the revolutionary path traversed by a particular people, and the national features of each country had to be borne in mind.

A quarterly cannot adequately respond to direct interest, nor indeed should that be its task. In every issue, however, including the present one, we do attempt to present the social, economic and cultural background and to throw light on the policy which both arouses and explains this international interest. So far I have been mainly discussing the economy but sound policies at home and abroad form the foundation on which economic achievements are based. The *sine qua non* of such policies and their major field of activity abroad is the continuation of the international dialogue and the avoidance

of confrontation. This is the subject of the two articles, by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Secretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with which we lead this issue. To be precise, the contribution by Péter Várkonyi is not an article but the text of his address to the closing session of the Madrid Conference, one could call it the new Foreign Minister's international maiden speech. When the Foreign Minister declared that Madrid will become part of the history of Europe as an important station in the process of European security and cooperation, he expressed not only the position of the Hungarian government but also the conviction, and pious wish, of the whole of Hungarian public opinion. The basic theme of Péter Várkonyi's address is that the Madrid Concluding Document could well serve as the foundation of the maintenance and further progress of security and cooperation in Europe. Hungary is guided by a dual, mutually complementing, intention: the desire to be receptive towards the values of other countries and, at the same time, to make her own known and part of the mainstream.

This is the first time in twenty-two years that articles by a Foreign Minister and a Secretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs appear in the same issue. Readers will, I am sure, recognize that, given anxieties connected with the deterioration of the international situation, we are trying to do our best to ease things with our own modest resources by publishing what the most competent Hungarian personalities have to say.

János Nagy starts by surveying the past ten years, pointing out the factors which made détente possible, culminating in the Magna Charta of 1975, the Helsinki Final Act. He draws attention to the fact that the supporters of détente even then expressed the opinion that détente would not prove irreversible if military détente did not follow on political, economic and social détente. Unfortunately their anxiety has proved realistic or, more optimistically, might prove so in the months to come. János Nagy presents the basic position of Hungarian foreign policy and practice; the two accord with the policy and practice of other socialist countries, and work to intensify personal and institutional contacts with every government, party and institution in the western and developing worlds. It is dialogue and not confrontation which is being urged even if the Geneva talks should prove abortive.

An understanding of changes in agriculture, or, more precisely, in rural life, is crucial when forming a proper judgement of the present situation in Hungary. In describing such changes words spring to mind which are

common in Hungarian usage and were even more so some years ago, and which appear to offend against English habits of understatement; nevertheless there is no other way to compare the present situation with the poverty and personal insecurity characteristic of village life before 1945, or even the anxieties and shortages common up to the seventies but by saying that it is historical. As any change does, this too has had its difficulties and new problems have arisen demanding new ways of thinking and new solutions. Everyone in Hungary who feels involved in the future of the country is aware of this, and much thought is being devoted to the subject, individually and collectively. An example of the latter was the national conference held in Kecskemét in November 1982 on "The characteristics of socialist transformation in the countryside." A paper from this conference is one of the most important articles in the present issue. It was jointly written by Rudolf Andorka and István Harcsa, both sociologists on the staff of the Central Office of Statistics. The starting point of their argument is that rural society in Hungary underwent radical change first as a consequence of the land reform in 1945 and then around 1960, when the agricultural cooperatives were formed. These changes occured within a short time and could truly be called revolutionary; those changes that have taken place since the middle sixties have been slower but more radical: class differences in the classical sense have faded and even come to an end, the villages are becoming modernised and the division of labour is assuming a new and more complex structure.

The authors have examined the structure of Hungarian rural society, using the time-budget and way of life surveys they undertook in 1976 and 1978 respectively. Most visitors to Hungary, and many readers' letters ask how socialism works in country areas. Part of their question, that concerning social change, is answered in essence by Andorka and Harcsa; they also refer, though to a lesser degree, to what has occurred in the economy, in the methods and achievements of production and marketing.

Some other articles in their own ways have links with Andorka and Harcsa's argument and should really be read in conjunction. Vera Nyitrai, the President of the Central Office of Statistics, writes on the international contacts of Hungarian statisticians and, in doing so, provides an insight into the painstaking and highly responsible work they do.

Péter Szuhay's article is based on a major exhibition, "The Message of ploughlands, technological innovations in Hungarian peasant agriculture in the 19th and 20th centuries." arranged by the Museum of Ethnography in connection with the World Economic History Congress held in Budapest in August 1982. Szuhay discusses changes in crop cultivation and animal

husbandry and the effects of industrialisation, including such side-effects as the creation of new markets which made it possible for pigs to be fattened for sale. Nor is it sufficient to know that Hungarian peasants were poor, that in the days of my youth, at the time of the Village Research Movement, we spoke of three million beggars. I can still remember flails being used in threshing. Ernő Kunt complements Szuhay's article in word and image. The photographs are from an exhibition on the Hungarian peasant past. Amongst them are photographs which are as moving as the paintings of naive artists.

Changes have not only taken place in agriculture but in industry as well and these in much more difficult circumstances. Béla Kádár, a Senior Fellow of the Institute for the World Economy writes on Hungarian industrial policy for the eighties. He discusses post Second World War changes in the structure of Hungarian industry, indicating the problems produced by what was in the main quantitative change. Industry has, of course, achieved much in the course of the past thirty years. Current industrial policy is replacing quantitative by qualitative development at a time when outside conditions are far from favourable. An important element here is the speeding up of the decision taking process and a more flexible adjustment to expected future developments. The strategy includes product specialisation and the more rational exploitation of human resources. Instructions from above will be replaced by a greater scope for the ownership functions of enterprises, the infrastructure will be improved, and due weight will be given to the new revolution in electronics (see Tibor Vámos' article in *NHQ* 84).

The last article I propose to discuss is by a man who is no longer with us. Sándor Szalai, member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and of the Editorial Board of this journal, died on May 18th. He sent in the article a week before he died.

Sándor Szalai's final gesture also exemplifies that unbelievable vitality, passionate commitment to science and sense of responsibility which were a byword in Hungary, and which characterised this last of the polymaths. There was no one in Hungary other than my closest kin whom I had known longer: we started school together, in the same class, at the age of six. Our friendship started on the playground and continued on the varied battle-fields of life. We founded a paper together in our secondary school days, and we were both on the staff of *Pester Lloyd*, a German-language daily, in the late thirties. After the War we both joined in building a new world. When, in 1949, the arbitrariness of personal power confined him to gaol, it was one of the tricky horrors of the time that he was given to believe that I was in a neighbouring cell in solitary confinement.

Before that he taught sociology at the University of Budapest as a pioneer of post-war sociology in Hungary. After 1956 he proved to be a passionate yet most conscientious organizer of the social sciences that had been neglected up to then. As such he spent a number of years in New York as a senior executive of UNITAR, a United Nations agency. After his return he became the President of the Hungarian Sociological Society. His international reputation was based on his unique Time Budget Series, sections of which were published in *NHQ* 16 and 70.

Last autumn when we celebrated our seventieth birthday within a week of each other he wanted to write for this journal under the heading "I.B., my lifelong friend." I asked him not to. The eightieth would be time enough.

His present paper on the quality of life is a little masterpiece. It gives proof of his knowledge within which sociology and literature, cybernetics and music all had a place. Sándor Szalai was a man who did more than most in Hungary for the recognition of what quality of life means, and for making this recognition known to others.

THE EDITOR

SECURITY AND COOPERATION

by

PÉTER VÁRKONYI

Madrid, I am convinced, will go down in the history of Europe as an important stage in the process of European security and cooperation. Some have argued that the period of détente is nearing its end or that it is even over. They have been proved wrong by the agreement reached here.

The Government of the Hungarian People's Republic notes with sincere satisfaction that the Madrid meeting has completed its work with the adoption of a substantive and fair Concluding Document. After several years we are witnessing the emergence of an East–West accord and this in itself is a highly important development. We are very much aware that the past nearly three years of deliberations have been particularly fraught with tensions in international politics. Yet, it has been possible, even under these unfavourable conditions, to maintain the spirit of Helsinki and to work and make progress under the aegis of the Final Act.

This proves eloquently that, between countries belonging to different economic and social systems and alliances, the sound road in world politics leads not via confrontation but through peaceful coexistence and dialogue. It fortifies us in our conviction that it is not only possible but also worthwhile to negotiate. Agreement can always be reached if the political will, respect for each other, and consideration for each other's interests, are present.

The Hungarian people, which—and it is certainly not alone in this—has suffered two world wars this century, is particularly interested in preserving the achievements of détente and of the all-European process that was started in Helsinki. Therefore, from the start, the Hungarian Government

Text of an address to the closing session of the Madrid Conference delivered by the Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs on September 8, 1983.

has been trying to contribute, with its modest means, to the success of the Madrid meeting. I am pleased to state that the final outcome has vindicated confidence in negotiation as a method.

If we make good use of this opportunity, the accord reached in Madrid will contribute to the maintenance and expansion of peaceful relations among the participating States.

In the course of our deliberations doubts have often arisen as to whether a common agreement can be reached. My Government notes with satisfaction that genuine common interests in preserving and advancing the process of European security and cooperation have proved to be stronger than any other interests and have made it possible to reach compromises which bridge the differences.

It is possible to conclude from all this that the participating states continue to regard the Helsinki Final Act as a long-term programme for East–West relations? I earnestly hope that optimism in this respect will not prove unwarranted. In the judgement of the Hungarian Government, the Concluding Document of the Madrid meeting suitably promotes the implementation of the Helsinki recommendations and furthers progress along the road started in Helsinki.

I carry out an honourable duty as I solemnly reaffirm that the Government of the Hungarian People's Republic accepts the Concluding Document of this meeting. Although several elements of this Document do not precisely reflect the Hungarian position, nevertheless, we hold that this is what is realistically feasible under the existing circumstances. We all have to be aware that one cannot always do what one ought, but one always ought to do what can be done. I feel that in this sense all of us may go home in the knowledge that, within the given possibilities, we have adopted a good programme.

I note with satisfaction that the Hungarian proposals concerning economic cooperation, cultural exchanges, youth travel and the teaching of languages of lesser circulation are appropriately reflected in the Concluding Document.

It is a fundamental political commitment of the Hungarian Government to do everything it can to preserve world peace and to maintain and promote détente. In keeping with that policy, the Hungarian delegation in Madrid has been seeking mutually acceptable elements which enhance cooperation, trying to avoid confrontation and filibustering.

Naturally, we have also had our own notions, but the Hungarian delegation all along warned against forcing issues that had not matured and against insisting on proposals that might prejudice the interests of some of the participants. Whenever it was necessary, the Hungarian delegatior

pointed out that recriminations were only likely to jeopardize the successful conclusions of the meeting. There is every justification therefore for me to mention that it was not due to Hungary or her allies that, finally, it took nearly three years before agreement was reached.

I should like to express the Hungarian Government's appreciation to the neutral and non-aligned countries and their delegations in Madrid for their efforts searching for compromises between divergent positions and for their work towards the success of the meeting as such. I trust that in the frequent exchanges of views the Hungarian delegation has proved to be an adequate and worthy partner.

The efforts made particularly in the last phase of the deliberations by the Government of Spain, the outstanding host country, in order to ensure its successful conclusions, also deserve appreciation.

The Concluding Document of the meeting contains a rich programme for all those bodies that are to discuss various aspects of security and cooperation in Europe. I should like to refer in particular to two of them, the conference on Confidence and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe and the Cultural Forum.

It is a source of anxiety for the Hungarian Government and public opinion that, in the recent past, attempts to provoke confrontation and to upset the military balance of power have continued. We also regret activities that gravely endanger normal relations among States and which, through actions inconsistent with international norms, further burden the already strained international situation. It is in this spirit that we see the case of the South Korean aircraft which, by intruding into Soviet air space, irresponsably violated the generally accepted principles of sovereignty. This tragic incident is being exploited by some states to make it more difficult to get out of the present tense stage of international relations and to put a break on the momentum that the long overdue successful conclusions of the Madrid meeting may give to the process of security and cooperation in Europe.

We are convinced that further resolute efforts are needed to preserve peace, to ward off the danger of war and to control armaments. My Government therefore welcomes the early convening of the Conference on Confidence and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament and regards it as one of the most valuable results of the Madrid meeting. Without underestimating the obvious difficulties we look forward to the Stockholm Conference which may open up a new dimension to the process of security and cooperation in Europe and convincingly demonstrate to the peoples of

Europe, our shared native land, that it is not only necessary but also possible to prevent nuclear war, both in its total and allegedly limited forms.

Of course that Conference cannot replace ongoing bilateral and multilateral negotiations on the limitation of military confrontation in Europe, nor does it detract from their importance. It could, however, produce a favourable effect on them and may, over time, provide a broader, all-European background and perspective for the negotiations on the reduction of military confrontation and on some aspects of disarmament.

The Hungarian Government associates itself with the constructive proposals presented by the Warsaw Treaty Organization for the lessening of military confrontation in Europe and for the reduction, and not the increase, on this continent of the number of missiles carrying nuclear weapons. Hungary is convinced that we have to do our utmost to prevent the deployment of missiles in places where there are none and to reduce their number in places where they already exist.

It is precisely in this connection that I should like to underline the significance of the subject of the first stage of the Conference, that is the confidence and security-building measures. Such measures offer numerous, yet unutilized possibilities for reducing the danger of military confrontation and conflict. Hungary has taken an active part in the working out of the proposals presented by the member States of the Warsaw Treaty over recent years with the aim of strengthening confidence. We believe that the task of these confidence and security-building measures is to encourage arms limitation and disarmament.

I wish to thank all participants at this meeting for the confidence they expressed by chosing Budapest as the venue of the Cultural Forum. It greatly honours us and we appreciate it. We shall be happy to see in Budapest the representatives of the cultures of the states participating in the Forum, meeting there to exchange views on problems of creative work and cooperation, including, naturally, ways and means to promote cultural relations.

In the summer of 1982 at the World Conference on Cultural Policies held in Mexico, the Minister of Culture of France said: "The right to beauty is a people's right and, consequently, it is the duty of leaders and governments to ensure its effective exercise." Socialist Hungary—where conditions for creativity are ensured and the community's readiness to accept cultural values is present—is looking forward to participants in the Cultural Forum in Budapest seeing for themselves that Hungary is not only open to the real values of universal culture, but also makes a significant contribution to the reception of these values by offering government sup-

port. That way we wish to improve access to culture and to contribute to the comprehensive development of creative work in the arts and sciences.

We intend in the future as well, while preserving our own intellectual and moral values, to make all spiritual values of the cultures of other nations, and the creative work of their scientists and artists, our public property, contributing actively to the enrichment of the culture of our age.

Participants at this meeting have made their decision on the Cultural Forum obviously aware that Hungarian arts and sciences have made valuable contributions to universal culture. Yet, as the representative of the Government of a country comparatively small in size and population, may I be permitted to remind you that much remains to be done to promote a wider dissemination of the cultures of small peoples. This, it is hoped, will be furthered by the Cultural Forum as well.

In developing cultural cooperation and exchange—questions that also received considerable emphasis in Helsinki—Hungary is guided by a dual, mutually complementary aspiration: the desire to receive other values and to present and disseminate her own. I am convinced that the holding of the Cultural Forum in Budapest is in harmony with this pursuit. Hungarian public opinion welcomed the decision that we should host this important event and the preparations have already aroused nation-wide interest.

No matter how significant it is, the successful conclusion of this meeting does not constitute a solution to the tensions and problems accumulated in the East–West relations. There is every reason to believe, however, that it will assist in the search for ways and means to help recovering from the present tense and perilous phase of international relations.

The meeting of experts and other events scheduled to take place before the Vienna meeting convened for November 1986 will provide opportunities for furthering the security process in Europe. They offer broad scope for strengthening security and cooperation and for continuing a wide-ranging dialogue. I am convinced that if anyone attempted to use these conferences counter to their original objectives, for the purposes of confrontation, this would meet with indignation averywhere.

The Government of the Hungarian People's Republic will be working in this spirit, doing its utmost to ensure that all participating States will, with a sense of responsibility and guided by mutual interests, make use of the possibilities offered by the Madrid Concluding Document to strengthen security and cooperation in Europe and to progress on the road of détente. The Hungarian Government will certainly do all it can to ensure that the things will get going in that direction.

THE POLITICS OF DIALOGUE

by

JÁNOS NAGY

A realistic appraisal of the international situation is always of great importance. An extremist approach leads into a blind alley: it either inspires paralysing pessimism or creates illusions that disregard real dangers. In a period of growing international tension it is especially important for us to keep our feet on the ground of realities and, when analysing the particular events, to remember the general, conclusive processes.

Such a realistic appraisal is given by the Joint Statement on the Meeting of Party and State Leaders of Seven Socialist Countries held in Moscow on 28 June 1983. That Statement serves to draw attention to actually existing and even increasing dangers, and, being in accordance with the documents published by the leading bodies of the Warsaw Treaty and its member states in recent months, provides a guide to the entangled, rather complex and ever more unfavourable present world situation.

The conclusions of these documents give evidence of attention devoted by the parties and the Warsaw Treaty countries to the state of international affairs. While our appraisals of three years ago stressed the simultaneous presence of elements of détente and tension, today emphasis is given to tension. The latter is underlined also by the first sentence in the Joint Statement of the Moscow meeting: "the participants in the meeting express . . . concern over the continuing growth of tension, the further destabilization of interstate relations and the growth of the threat of nuclear war with its catastrophic consequences." This is not an over-dramatization of things but a highly responsible formulation. The unfavourable processes now pose different problems and require different tasks to be put on the agenda, and are necessarily accompanied by a shift of emphasis.

In order to judge the situation realistically, it is equally essential to realize the actual dangers and to draw conclusions from them, as well as to take

into account the positions and possibilities of international forces ready to do something about confrontation. In this connection one may rightly ask whether a return to the Cold War is inevitable? In principle it is, of course, possible. One party's action suffices after all to produce confrontation, to disrupt relations between states, and generate tensions. Cooperation on the other hand, recognition of the interdependence flowing from the conditions of the age, and of mutual interests requires partners, as well as their sense of political responsibility and readiness to cooperate.

It should be added that the options open to those who desire confrontation are not unlimited; unalterable realities exist that cannot be pushed aside. It is common knowledge that between the conclusion of the Second World War and approximately the late 1960s a political, military, social and economic rearrangement of global significance took place and the international balance of power changed in favour of social progress. It has become increasingly evident, however, that when approximate military parity between the two systems of alliance is an unalterable reality, when not a single country remains invulnerable, security, both global and national, acquires a qualitatively different meaning. It is our firm conviction, as emphasized by the Joint Statement of the seven socialist countries that "no world problem, including the historical dispute between socialism and capitalism, can be solved by military means." As a result only two options remain open. One is the continuation of confrontation based on the policy of strength. The other is the lessening of tension between the opposed systems, ultimately the assertion of peaceful coexistence in relations between countries of the two systems. This latter presupposes a structure of international security which is shored up by two main buttresses: respect for military parity based on the principle of equality and equal security, and normal bilateral and multilateral relations based on the principle of equality and equal security, and on the possibilities of cooperation. Such a system of relations can ensure familiarity with each other's intentions and interests, the minimum of understanding necessary for the preservation of peace and security, and the ability to formulate mutually acceptable attitudes towards crisis situations wherever they may arise. Soviet–U.S. relations are of paramount importance in this structure, as the relationship at any time between the two nuclear great powers largely determines both the general international atmosphere and the state of security.

The socialist countries have always and consistently fought for this second option. The Warsaw Treaty member states, collectively and severally, have for decades now submitted to NATO a number of proposals in the interests of lessening tension, curbing the arms race, disarmament, the

normalizing of relations between states with differing social systems, and of developing of mutually advantageous cooperation. We have always been firmly convinced that the conditions for this can be created if the necessary political will exists on both sides. This is the only rational alternative.

On 1 August 1975 the highest-ranking political leaders of the states participating in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe signed the Final Act of the Conference in Helsinki. In it thirty-five states, as is recalled by the Joint Statement of the Moscow meeting, "solemnly pledged to make détente a continuous, ever more viable and all-round universal process. They unanimously expressed their striving for better and closer relations between them in all areas and, thus, for overcoming the confrontation stemming from the character of their relations in the past, and for better mutual understanding."

Concurrently with the unfolding of the process of détente, however, disturbing, more then once alarming, signs multiplied in the behaviour of the leading circles of NATO. With reference to certain developments—which, however, did not follow from the normalization of East-West relations nor had they any direct bearing on it—and relying on false conclusions drawn therefrom, extremist political forces and pressure groups closely connected with the military-industrial complex unleashed increasingly vehement attacks against détente, against Soviet–U.S. contacts, and in general against the policy of normalizing East-West relations. They gave the status of official policy to the assumption that all the losses which the imperialist powers suffered in various parts of the world were due to détente and to the eagerness of socialist countries to profit from problems of the capitalist world. This view denies the objective laws of social development and the possibility of peaceful competition between social systems, and immediately charges any change, though it be only slightly progressive, to the account of socialism.

Starting with the mid-1970s such views increasingly prevailed in the leading circles of the United States and NATO, and from 1980 became the dominant feature of foreign policy. Such a policy is directed against the foundations and results of détente and against the essentials of mutual security, it weakens cooperation between states and augments mutual distrust. The protraction of the economic crisis of the capitalist world also contributes to this trend as does the intention to take advantage of the internal problems within the socialist community.

The launching of previously prepared programmes for the manufacture of all kinds of weapons is a central element of this policy. The declared aim of such a military doctrine is to recover military superiority, to secure

first-strike potential and the ability to deliver retaliatory and selective strikes, as well as to plan modalities for the use of nuclear weapons in a limited thermonuclear war on the European continent. The politico-social aim is to impose on the Soviet Union a process of military development that withdraws immense economic resources from peaceful constructive work.

The anticommunist and anti-Soviet campaign and rhetoric reminiscent of the Cold War period and an oversimplified criticism of socialism go together with the deterioration of Soviet–U.S. relations—the central element of European and international security—, the prevention of the entry into force of already negotiated agreements (the SALT-2 treaty, the Soviet–U.S. trade agreement, etc.), the termination or withering of other agreements, and the breaking off or delaying of important negotiations already in progress. The American admission of the early 1970s that it is possible and necessary to negotiate with the Soviet Union only on the basis of equality and equal partnership and that not only irreconcilable contradictions stand between the two great powers, but they have common interests as well, is being pushed into the background. Efforts are intensified to cope with crisis situations at the expense and with the exclusion of the Soviet Union.

Given this situation one may well ask what view one should take of détente. Does it make sense, that is, if it ever did? Have its results vanished without trace or have the major elements of the spirit of Helsinki stood the test of time?

We continue to hold that détente in the 1970s served the fundamental interests of all states. It gave expression to new realities and demonstrated that peaceful coexistence and mutually advantageous cooperation between states were possible.

We never imagined that collective chiselling of the foundation of détente would be an easy process. This was contradicted from the start by the heavy burden of the Cold War and by the unalterable fact that peace had to be maintained and security created in the full awareness of the fundamental confrontation of differing social systems. It was also clear that the developing countries would become international factors of growing importance. The course set by these countries is pregnant with tensions and internal conflicts. Most of them are still part of the capitalist world market, but they do not want to carry the heritage of colonialism forever, they want to be the masters of their own fate. The socialist countries have always endeavoured to ensure that the inevitable changes taking place in the developing world should burden the policy of détente as little as possible.

Political literature in the West already frequently accepts the demise of détente as a fact. Even some of the American politicians and political scientists critical of the present U.S. administration dissect the whys and wherefores of the failure of détente. But did it really fail? People who say so usually and exclusively judge détente in terms of the state of Soviet–U.S. relations. We also say that the relationship between the two great powers has a defining role for the future of détente, but absolutization of this thesis would be an oversimplification.

No doubt, détente was really never extended to disarmament and arms control. Actually what came true is what we had been afraid of from the start, that it would be bound to have a negative effect on political détente if the process were not extended to the military sphere. Well, it has not been and, what is more, a new round in the armaments race threatens, and this is no doubt a serious blow to détente. If we add that the quantity and quality of armaments available today cannot even be compared to those of the 1950s, the danger is still more obvious.

Soviet–U.S. relations have moved a long way backwards from what at the time of the Helsinki summit was an encouraging possibility and, to some degree, reality. Another important pillar of détente was thereby shaken.

In the eyes of public opinion the most spectacular departure from the period of détente is western, mainly American, rhetoric and propaganda which, in approaching questions concerning the fate of millions of people, permits itself strange things even by the standards of the psychological warfare of the cold-war years. One cannot simply dismiss this by saying that such are the ways of those who lack genuine arguments to support their cause.

But détente has results which have proved to be irreversible and which have stood the test of times of tension. Such a result is embodied, first of all, in the international recognition of the facts established after the Second World War, in the settlement of the German question, and in the continuance in force of instruments such as the Final Act of Helsinki, the treaties between the Federal Republic of Germany and the socialist countries, and the quadripartite agreement on West Berlin. These important treaties and agreements are also under attack by various extremist circles, — in essence, however, they hold.

The growth of tension has put its stamp on East-West relations as a whole, including Europe, their chief sector. And yet it can be stated that the trend of East-West relations does not in every respect take its cue from the deterioration of Soviet–U.S. relations. This is true, above all, of bilateral relations between the socialist countries and the neutral developed capitalist

countries, the European member states of NATO and Canada; and it is also true that the Soviet Union maintains better relations and a more substantial political dialogue with other developed capitalist countries than it does with the United States. The smaller member states of the Warsaw Treaty can also be said to have been able to maintain their dialogue, the backbone of bilateral relations, with the countries of Western Europe and also with the United States; and the failure of the policy designed to isolate the People's Republic of Poland is more and more evident. Nor has East-West economic cooperation—encumbered as it is with problems due to the economic crisis of capitalism and with politically motivated sanctions and embargoes—sustained any irreparable damage, as is indicated also by the fact that the United States has negotiated with the Soviet Union an agreement on the long-term sales of wheat. All this can slow down the further deterioration of the situation and help us find a way out.

It is common knowledge that a tenser world situation does not favour personal contacts. Thus it is an achievement in itself that no serious decline has so far occurred in this respect. It could be said that this is not unambiguously a good sign since it is indicative of slackening vigilance; European public opinion is not fully sensitive to the dangers. It is probably closer to the truth to say that insistence on contacts and a quiet life is, here in Europe, rooted more deeply, in the period of détente.

International forums and negotiations are important indices of the world situation. It is characteristic nowadays that all international negotiations are protracted, that it has become extremely difficult to work out mutually acceptable agreements. The main problem is not that the questions awaiting solution are complicated, but that the leading Western Powers do not show political readiness for agreement or compromise even on relatively simple subjects. This is particularly regrettable in respect of negotiations of direct interest to Europe, being indicative of the deterioration of the atmosphere on the very continent which has a decisive role to play in the shaping of the international situation, and where détente has led to the most substantial results.

International public opinion rightly pays great attention to the two Soviet–U.S. talks in Geneva. Those devoted to the limitation of strategic arms, seem less to be a topic of conversation these days, although they deal with a question of vital importance. Under the SALT-2 treaty the United States also accepted the existence of approximate parity between the two great powers in strategic arms. Its provisions have been mutually observed

in practice. Further measures envisaged in the agreement for the limitation of strategic weapons have, however, been frustrated by the failure to put it into force. It is to be feared that the U.S. armament programme announced late in 1981 which envisages a considerable development of strategic weapon system—and which has since been complemented by a scheme for the building of a satellite-killing system designed to wage war in outer space, to secure first-strike capability and to parry all counterblows—is meant to undermine the principles and planned measures mutually agreed upon in the second SALT treaty.

An interpretation of parity cannot be accepted which implies the unequivocal superiority of the western alliance. The Soviet proposals presented in Geneva take into account the justified interests of the other side, too; they contemplate a meaningful, gradual reduction on the understanding that, as far as security is concerned, the two great powers should be in an identical position throughout the entire process and strategic parity should not be upset. The Hungarian people are also interested in the earliest possible reaching of an agreement on this basis.

A key question of the situation in Europe is whether the deployment of missiles decided by NATO in 1979 will take place, whether the Soviet–U.S. talks expected to prevent it will produce any result.

The dual-track decision by NATO—missile deployment and talks—is contradictory in itself. The proposal is multilateral, but the talks are bilateral. A further contradiction is that the outcome can depend only to a lesser degree on the Soviet Union, since deployment entirely, and the Geneva talks at least half depend on the other party.

On three occasions still in the 1970s, the Soviet Union proposed the opening of negotiations with the United States on the limitation of medium-range nuclear arms and the reduction of such arms far below the present level and, in terms of aircraft and missiles, to an identical level on both sides. Since the situation and the trend of development at the time were favourable to the western alliance the United States rejected those proposals. When, on the other hand, the Soviet Union took the measures necessary to counteract the American forward-based weapon system as well as the naval and air nuclear strike forces of Britain and France, NATO responded by escalating the arms race.

It is common knowledge that the NATO decision of 1979 was formulated in conjunction with the West European member states. Though it lacks foundation and is manipulated from the outside, nevertheless it is discern-

ible that, among leading circles in Western Europe, there is a certain feeling of being threatened. Public opinion, too, has difficulties in finding its way in the complicated questions of the world today and the ramifying factors of military parity. Nevertheless, the attitude of the West European governments concerned was ambiguous from the very outset. It was not mere chance that they insisted on the American missiles being deployed at sea. They required, as a military and political signal, that the United States should ratify the SALT-2 agreement and commence negotiations with the Soviet Union.

Things, however, took a different turn. The Western European countries concerned ultimately agreed to the land-based deployment of the missiles, thereby assuming a political responsibility and military risk. The projected way of deployment lent support to views which envisage the possibility of limited nuclear war. The United States has not ratified the SALT-2 agreement and has submitted only unacceptable proposals in Geneva.

Soviet proposals which take into consideration the justified security interests of all sides are on the Geneva conference table. They offer a way out of the impasse. According to these proposals the number of nuclear weapon carriers in Europe would be reduced by around 1,300 and there would remain 300 missiles and medium-range aircraft on each side. The Soviet Union is ready to agree to retain, within the 300 delivery vehicles, only as many missiles, equipped with as many warheads, as Britain and France together.

As the time-limit set in Brussels approaches it is frequently said thar NATO will in any event begin the deployment of missiles. The high priority task today is to reach agreement in Geneva which will remove from Europe the danger embodied in the deployment of new U.S. missiles.

A start on implementing the NATO decision would increase international tension, it would further burden East-West relations and bring with it it serious political and economic consequences, perhaps even gradually turning Europe into a focus of tension. It would mean a new escalation of the arms race, since nuclear weapons would appear on sites where they are not deployed at present. The most serious danger would arise from the fact that it would modify the strategic conditions in favour of the United States, since the new-type missiles can penetrate deep into Soviet territory, while the analogous Soviet devices cannot reach the United States. Warning time would be reduced to a minimum of 4 to 6 minutes, and the chance of an unexpected catastrophe would considerably grow.

These are real dangers, although the deployment of missiles in itself would not create an immediate and acute threat of war. It cannot be supposed

that NATO leaders want to spark off a thermonuclear war and that they do not reckon with the catastrophic consequenceswhich such occurrence—or the launching of even a single missile—would entail for their own countries and the whole world. The fact that deployment conceals stratagems aspiring to positions of strength and other political designs does not, however, make these mass destruction weapons of a new type any more acceptable.

The deployment of missiles, should it take place, will not be able to upset the military balance in Europe. The Soviet government's statement of 28 May 1983 emphasizes that appropriate countermeasures will be taken both in the interest of restoring regional balance and in relation to the territory of the United States. The Party and Government leaders of seven socialist countries stressed in their joint statement following their meeting of 28 June 1983: " Proceeding from the interests of peace and their own security, the states participating in the meeting declare that they will in no case allow military superiority to be achieved over them. They resolutely insist on ensuring the balance of forces at the lowest possible level." This is no threat but a realistic consideration of the situation. These are measures that are absolutely necessary and there is no more of it. The Warsaw Treaty member states have made many proposals and concessions in order to avoid having to take such measures. We have never made proposals which could be interpreted as closed or as an ultimatum, but ones which can serve as a basis of discussion about mutually advantageous agreements with a view to avoiding a new round of the armaments race.

It would be a highly deplorable development if military parity could be maintained—against our intentions—not at a lower but only at a higher level of armaments. In this latter case the socialist countries will have to continue the struggle for disarmament and for a negotiated settlement of controversial issues in a more difficult and complicated stiuation. We shall never give up our efforts; our programme is laid down in the Political Consultative Committee's statement of January 1983 and in the communiqué issued in June 1983 on the meeting of the party and state leaders of seven socialist countries.

For the reasons outlined above, it must be said that the Vienna talks on the reduction of armed forces that started nearly ten years ago are marking time. At the Madrid meeting, which lasted for more than two years, a constructive conclusion was reached a few months ago. The neutral and non-aligned countries displayed considerable initiative and submitted a draft final act.

Many participants, including Hungary, could imagine a better and more substantial document. Many delegations, the Hungarian among them, could

have added something to it, and would be pleased to improve on it. In the given situation, however, this is the maximum that can be attained. And this is something, since the closing document of the Madrid meeting formulates a considerably richer programme than that of the previous meeting in Belgrade. Indeed, this document, which is undoubtedly balanced and meaningful, offers something to all. Questions having no real chance of being settled under present conditions, must be put aside. Sober thinking and the principle of consensus demand that much.

It is desirable that we start, as soon as possible, on implementing the programme contained in the final document, preparing the conference on confidence-building measures and on disarmament in the first place. The constructive conclusion of the Madrid meeting is not a remedy for all the troubles and problems of the world, but it improves the European atmosphere and promotes the cause of security and cooperation in Europe. All participating countries benefit from this, all delegations could rise from the conference table as winners. The Hungarian delegation has seized every opportunity to promote the successful conclusion of the meeting. The Madrid Concluding document envisages a series of conferences and meetings on important topics over the coming three years. This is a positive contribution to continuing the Helsinki process.

It is a particularly great honour that the Hungarian People's Republic will be host to the Cultural Forum in October 1985. Hungary will be happy to welcome outstanding representatives of the cultural life of European and North American states who will participate in the Forum. We will do everything we can to make this unique meeting of the representatives of European cultural heritage a success. We sincerely hope that the Forum will further enhance our country's international reputation and will be powerful evidence of the vitality of the Helsinki spirit.

All the meetings set forth in the Concluding document meet with Hungary's approval. Nevertheless, we attach special importance to the conference on confidence-building measures and disarmament which is going to begin in Stockholm in January 1984, as this will deal with issues vitally concerning the fate of Europe. But we prepare for all the other meetings in good faith and with constructive intensions, let it be the Stockholm conference or the experts meetings on human rights and human contacts.

The programme decided upon in Madrid is meaningful indeed. Let me note, however, that each of these new occasions can be used either to promote and reinforce European security and cooperation or to increase tension and confrontation and to undermine East-West relations in general. The Hungarian People's Republic will do its utmost to contribute to the

success of the former efforts. We hope that all other participants to whom the cause of European security and cooperation is dear will be partners in this endeavour.

In its April resolution the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party stresses its firm conviction that "in spite of growing international tension, the greatest dangers threatening mankind can be warded off, and a world war is not inevitable." Important factors substantiate this conviction. The decisive one is that the strength and resources of the socialist countries are immense. The Soviet Union together with the socialist community reacts to the events resolutely, calmly and prudently, as the Moscow Joint statement declared. As I mentioned there is no doubt that, if compelled to do so, it will take the necessary steps to guard its security. At the same time it proclaims with full responsibility that the way to the strengthening of security is not through an arms build-up but through disarmament, that the genuine zero option for the peoples of Europe would be if the continent were rid of all types of nuclear arms. The Warsaw Treaty member states, while doing their utmost to make the work of existing bilateral and multilateral East-West forums meaningful, maintain the currency of a large number of proposals for the improvement of East-West relations and also present new ones. These days, when progress in solving the most burning questions can only be gradual and when the confidence necessary to agreement is increasingly replaced by suspicion in international relations, confidence-building measures based on equality are of great importance. It was on the basis of this position that the Warsaw Treaty Political Consultative Committee recommended to NATO countries the conclusion of a treaty under which the two systems of alliance should mutually renounce the use of armed force. NATO ought to give a positive answer to this proposal. It would thereby make really credible what its own Ministers of Defence asserted in June this year, that NATO will never use its weapons except in response to an attack.

The outcome of the struggle to push back confrontation is influenced to a large degree by the attitude of the public and of the political and government circles in the developing and the developed capitalist world. We can safely say that the vast majority of the developing countries and the neutral capitalist states oppose the growth of tension which frustrates their strivings and objectives and narrows down their scope of action. In these countries influential social and political forces are unwilling to subordinate the cause of peace to ideological considerations, and this is characteristic also of their international activity in general.

A highly important role is played by the European member states of NATO from the point of view of the future of détente. When this subject comes under discussion the advocates of a policy of confrontation usually argue that the Warsaw Treaty wants to drive a wedge between Western Europe and the United States. The differences or conflicts inside the western alliance are, however, occasioned by objective conditions and not by the desire of outsiders.

Recent political activity has not significantly modified the relation of forces in Western Europe. The changes of government and the election results in most cases stem from internal social tension due to the economic crisis. It would be mistaken to interpret these changes as meaning that a Western European country where a conservative government has come into power would at once lose all interest in East-West contacts and in more settled international relationships. The converse is true as well. The coming to power of a socialist or social democratic government does not in itself mean that the supporters of confrontation and arms escalation in the country in question have been excluded from policy-making. The essential difference is that a decisive part of the mass support of socialist, social democratic and communist parties derives from those most opposed also to war preparations.

The widening of the peace movement indicates that the masses in Western Europe are increasingly aware of the dangers involved in the arms race and the deployment of nuclear missiles, and they clamour for measures to avert those dangers. Governments cannot entirely leave out of account the anti-nuclear movement and the anti-war mood of the masses. This also contributes to the fact that some minor member states of NATO more and more frequently voice their reservations towards the official policy line of the alliance.

There is no denying, however, that in the most sensitive sphere, that is on questions of military policy and missile deployment, the leading NATO powers show unity and not disunity. The commitment of Western Europe to the American nuclear umbrella has not changed; what is more, it seems as if this commitment—judging by the Williamsburg summit meeting—were formulated more in conformity with the intentions of the United States. This, however, has not yet eliminated, but has sometimes even sharpened, the conflict of interests concerning economic cooperation within the developed capitalist world, East-West relations, the situation in Central America, and the monetary problems of the capitalist countries.

In all probability there are many also in Western Europe who are aware of the mutual political and economic benefits rooted in the period of dé-

tente, who will not give up their claim to independent politics, to a scope of action suited to their specific interests. The continuation of political dialogue and economic cooperation shows that this confidence of ours is not unfounded, even though we know that the continued growth of tension would inevitably harm East-West relations in Europe as well.

A key question is whether the strivings and possibilities of the United States will change—and if so, in what direction. Without harbouring any illusions, it can be said that the external and internal limits to American endeavours begin to become discernible.

The external limits have been discussed before. The internal limits are not decisive as yet, their effect makes itself felt only slowly and step by step. Experts familiar with the situation, however, are of the opinion that not even as powerful and rich a country as the United States can for a long time shoulder burdens as enormous as those imposed by a budget deficit of $ 180 to $ 200 billion a year, by the high rate of unemployment that is not even lessened by the armament programmes, and by tensions arising from cuts in social services.

Criticism of official U.S. policy is intensifying, and so is the positive approach to Soviet–U.S. negotiations. War psychosis has increased the fear in the U.S. too that their territory would not remain inviolate either in a thermonuclear war. People professing the most diverse religious and political convictions, the American bench of R.C. bishops, members of former U.S. governments, leading figures of the Democratic Party and of the legislature—all loyal citizens of their country and defenders of the interests of the American ruling classes—likewise speak up against the present line.

It would be a mistake to overrate all this. President Reagan's policy enjoys the necessary legislative and political support. Critical forces lack unity and would not be able to enforce a change in policy even if united.

But it would equally be an error to leave all this out of account. Experience shows that internal and external circumstances can exert an influence upon the policy of the United States. In the long run, therefore, it is not impossible that—for example, under the joint impact of election considerations and international realities—even the United States will have no other choice but to return to more settled and more relaxed conditions and to accept the principle of equality and common interests in Soviet–U.S. relations.

In the more difficult situation of today the Hungarian People's Republic considers it a duty of outstanding importance to promote the struggle for

the safeguarding of peace and security, for the strengthening of international cooperation. The foundations of détente have not been destroyed: by expanding bilateral relations and settling disputes through negotiation it is possible to get over the current difficult period.

These aims have for long been given preference in the international activity of Hungary.

The more tense international situation obliges Hungary to do all it can to strengthen the alliance and unity of the socialist countries. At the same time the country strives to develop bilateral relations with every state that declares itself ready to do the same on the basis of equality and mutual advantage. It can be said that efforts have so far been successful in the socialist, the developing and the developed capitalist world.

Hungary's bilateral relations with the socialist countries continue to develop fruitfully. Meetings between party and state leaders take place regularly. An outstanding event in Hungarian–Soviet relations was the visit, in July 1983, to the Soviet Union by the Hungarian Party and Government Delegation, led by János Kádár. Hungary recently welcomed party and government delegations from the Polish People's Republic, the German Democratic Republic and the People's Republic of Bulgaria.

Besides traditional fields of interstate relations Hungary attaches increased importance to regular and personal meetings between leading representatives of states with different social systems. High level talks contribute beneficially to knowing each other better and to improving the international atmosphere. Without trying to give a complete list, I wish to refer to visits by János Kádár, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the HSWP, to the Federal Republic of Germany and to Finland, and by Pál Losonczi, President of the Presidential Council, to Portugal. In the same period François Mitterrand, the President of France and M. Koivisto, the President of Finland paid a visit to Hungary. György Lázár the Hungarian Prime Minister paid official visits to the Federal Republic of Germany, Denmark, Greece and Turkey, and was host in Budapest to the heads of Government of Austria, France, Greece, New Zealand and Turkey, as well as to George Bush, the Vice President ot the United States. Deputy Prime Minister József Marjai, when visiting the U.S.A. in May 1982, was received by President Ronald Reagan and had talks with other high government officials. It is very rewarding to note that during the past three years Hungary has engaged in political dialogue on a foreign minister or higher level with practically all the developed countries of the West, including the Federal Republic of Germany, France, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Hungary attaches great importance to contacts between legislatures. Significant progress in this field was achieved over the past years. Delegations of the Hungarian Parliament visited the Federal Republic of Germany, Australia, Belgium, Luxemburg, Italy, French, American and Australian parlamentarians paid visits to Hungary.

The development of tourism is one of the welcome fruits of détente. The Hungarian Government regards it not only a branch of the economy but an important means and possibility for human contacts as well. We agree with the proverb that "seeing is believing" tourism can strengthen mutual trust and respect. That is why our government does whatever it can to promote it. The number of Western tourist visiting Hungary increased three-fold—to 1,5 million—between 1970 and 1982. The same growth rate resulted in almost half a million Hungarians visiting Western countries in 1982.

A dynamic increase can be witnessed in Hungary's cooperation with the developing countries. This cooperation often incorporates regular contacts on the highest political level. The President of the Presidential Council visited the Philippines, Burma and Kuwait, and received in Budapest the heads of state of Angola, Libia, the People's Democratic Republic if Yemen, Cyprus, Kuwait and Nigeria. Parliamentary delegations were exchanged with ten developing countries in the course of two years.

Hungary plays an active role in more than a thousand international organisations. It is a special honour that, in 1982, the General Assembly of the United Nations elected as its president the representative of Hungary.

We have good reason to claim that Hungary enjoys a respected status in the community of nations. Relying on this prestige Hungary will in her international activity, in the future as well, do her best to uphold the conditions necessary for creative work and an undisturbed life here at home.

One cannot, however, forget that the growth of tension continues in the present international situation. It is our country's firm conviction, that those who set the tone in NATO will sooner or later recognise the political futility of the armament programmes under way, and that a policy of negotiation and cooperation will again prevail.

CHANGES IN VILLAGE SOCIETY DURING THE LAST TEN YEARS

by

RUDOLF ANDORKA — ISTVÁN HARCSA

Hungarian village society underwent fundamental changes after 1945 because of the land reform measures and later, around 1960, because of the socialist reorganization of agriculture.[1] The pace of change has not slowed down since, but its nature and direction has modified. It is thus different from the two revolutionary transformations which occurred within a short time, and which brought changes in the social standing of those living in the villages. From the mid-sixties and even more in the eighties village conditions developed gradually, though rapidly, towards a fading of class differences; parallel with this there was a trend towards the development of a more involved structure based on the division of labour. In this study we wish to analyse the most recent changes and phenomena using new data, primarily the 1970 census, the time-utilization survey of 1976–77,[2] and the living condition survey of 1978.[3]

In the last ten years some fundamental changes have occurred in the external conditions which influence the development of villages and in the village population itself. Let us mention the following:

The effects of the economic reform which begun fifteen years ago have fully unfolded themselves by now, and perhaps have been strongest in agriculture and in the villages.

World economic conditions have changed to the detriment of Hungary; it is also a consequence of this that the importance of agriculture has increased in the national economy, both in meeting food requirements and as production for export.

In recent years the fall in the number of those employed in farming, which had gone on for many years, came to a halt; at the same time, the number of those employed in industry began to fall off after a long increase.

The article is based on an address delivered at a national conference on "The Characteristics of Socialist Transformation in the Countryside." Kecskemét, November 24–26, 1982.

In the seventies migration from the villages also slowed down. Although the population of the villages fell by over 600,000 between 1970 and 1980, 400,000 of this figure was accounted for by the promotion of some villages to the status of towns; thus the population of today's villages has only dropped by 200,000 in total.

The majority (three-fifths) of the village population today was not yet alive or was very young (under ten years of age) when the war ended (1945), and consequently they have no direct experience of village and peasant conditions in a capitalist society; nearly half of the active earners in villages cannot remember either what village conditions were and what happened in the villages in the years between 1945 and 1956. Thus the historic experiences of these younger generations are different, and consequently they have ambitions and requirements other than those of older generations.

The change in the social structure of the villages

In examining the social structure of the villages, primarily two major social classes were earlier differentiated: 1. The cooperative peasants, including the manual workers employed by the farm cooperatives, and 2. The working class, including the industrial and other non-agricultural workers, as well as the workers on the state farms.[4] On other occasions those employed in agriculture and those employed in the other economic sectors were considered the two main social categories.

Today these very simple groupings are no longer adequate. Within the two large classes numerous smaller strata have become distinguished: the large farms employ an increasing number of manual workers who do not carry out conventional agricultural work but have industrial jobs; an increasing number of skilled people work on the large farms.

It is obvious that the non-agricultural workers on the large farms as well as the skilled people working in agriculture have an intermediate position between those employed in industry, and the members of the farm cooperatives whose jobs are agricultural. Consequently to include them in any of the conventional categories diminishes our picture of the social structure of today's Hungarian village.

Let us then examine the composition of active earners in the villages as well as the changes which have occurred recently.

Using the large comprehensive categories let us first look at the shift which has occurred in the town and village structure since 1970. In ten years the proportion of those belonging to the cooperative peasantry in the villages

Social Composition of Active Earners Living in Villages (1980)

Social class, stratum	Men		Women		Total	
	'000s	%	'000s	%	'000s	%
WHITE-COLLAR WORKERS						
Professional, manager	49.4	3.7	33.6	3.6	83.0	3.6
Other non-manual	92.1	6.8	194.9	20.8	287.0	12.5
MANUAL WORKERS						
Foremen	26.7	2.0	4.4	0.5	31.1	1.4
Skilled	390.9	28.9	73.8	7.8	464.7	20.3
Semi-skilled	240.5	17.8	279.2	29.7	519.7	22.7
Unskilled	96.4	7.1	89.2	9.5	185.6	8.1
Skilled, state farms	33.2	2.5	1.3	0.1	34.5	1.5
Semi-skilled, state farms	25.2	1.9	15.2	1.6	40.4	1.7
Unskilled, state farms	10.8	0.7	5.7	0.6	16.5	0.7
Skilled, agricultural services	1.4	0.1	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.1
Semi-skilled, agricultural services	0.8	0.1	0.2	0.0	1.0	0.1
Unskilled	2.4	0.2	1.2	0.1	3.6	0.2
Skilled, forestry	8.9	0.7	0.1	0.0	9.0	0.4
Semi-skilled, forestry	10.5	0.8	5.5	0.6	16.0	0.7
Unskilled, forestry	3.7	0.2	1.9	0.2	5.6	0.2
Occasional farm worker	0.7	0.1	0.4	0.0	1.1	0.1
Assisting member of worker's family	0.4	0.0	26.8	2.9	27.2	1.2
COOPERATIVE PEASANTRY						
Manager, foreman	8.9	0.7	0.7	0.1	9.6	0.4
Skilled	133.4	9.8	6.5	0.7	139.9	6.1
Semi-skilled	129.9	9.6	102.3	10.9	232.2	10.1
Unskilled	45.9	3.4	25.1	2.7	71.0	3.1
Assisting family member	1.2	0.0	54.1	5.8	55.3	2.4
SMALL-SCALE COMMODITY PRODUCER						
Self-employed peasant	13.6	1.0	3.6	0.4	17.2	0.7
Assisting member of peasant family	0.4	0.0	3.4	0.4	3.8	0.2
Self-employed artisan, shopkeeper, etc. and assisting member of family	25.0	1.9	9.3	1.0	35.1	1.5
Total	1,353.1	100.0	938.4	100.0	2,291.5	100.0

went down from 29 to 22 per cent and that of the small producers (self-employed peasants, artisans, shopkeepers) from 3 to 2.5 per cent;[5] at the same time the proportion of those belonging to the working class rose from 55 to 59 per cent, and that of white-collar workers from 13 to 16 per cent. As in the meantime the working class proportion dropped in Budapest from 57 to 50 per cent and in country towns from 61 to 60 per cent (parallel with the increase in white-collar workers), the statement is even more valid than earlier that villages are just as much worker settlements as are towns. Although the village population has fallen in the meantime, nearly one half of those belonging to the working class live today in villages.

If we set out from the other two large comprehensive categories often used in the professional literature, the number of those employed in agriculture and forestry, we see that a proportion, which was in 1970 already as low as 43 per cent, has fallen further by 1980 to 33 per cent. However we cannot treat this one-third simply as successors to the old Hungarian peasantry, or as a category identical to the peasantry of European capitalist countries. First, of the 753,000 village inhabitants working in agriculture 79,000 are white-collar workers,[6] and among these 15,000 have a tertiary education, and consequently belong among the professionals. Nor can the several thousand manual workers working in agricultural and forestry services be considered as successors to the peasantry.

Yet the 565,000 who are engaged in manual work on the large socialist farms (91,000 on state farms, 31,000 forestry workers, and 443,000 farm cooperative members) cannot be considered peasants either in the traditional sense of the word or in that used in international professional literature since nearly one half of them do not have agricultural jobs. Among men, non-agricultural manual workers are even the majority. Here are the figures: 32,000 fitters, 31,000 lorry drivers, 20,000 transport workers, 16,000 carpenters and other woodworkers, 14,000 bricklayers, 9,000 car mechanics. Some of them work in the auxiliary units of the large farms and others in jobs servicing agriculture (repairs, construction, transportation).

We may draw two important conclusions from the above. The first is that when we compare the degree of Hungary's economic development or the efficiency of Hungarian agriculture with that of other countries, this cannot be simply based on the relative proportions of those employed in agriculture. The reason is that in Hungary farms perform an amount of agricultural servicing, much of which is undertaken by specialized enterprises in capitalist agricultural conditions; consequently people working in these jobs are recorded as belonging to the agricultural sector, whereas in the capitalist countries the statistics do not so record them.

The other important conclusion is that these fitters, bricklayers, drivers and so on do work which is very similar to that of the skilled workers working in the industrial, construction, and transport sectors, and are consequently much closer to them than to the peasantry in the old sense.

But even those who do agricultural work (plant or animal husbandry, forestry workers, tractor drivers, etc.) usually in no way perform the kind of "scythe and hoe" labour either that the peasant used to do. They work with machines or chemicals, under the sort of fixed working hours that industrial workers have. From the aspect of the skills needed, this transformation of the manual work done in the agricultural sector is expressed in the fact that one-third of those working on the large farms are classifiable as skilled.

As a consequence, the composition of those who perform manual work on the large agricultural units as well as the characteristics of their work are both becoming more and more similar to those working in other sectors and less and less similar to the peasantry who used to farm independently.

In contrast, groups similar to those existing formerly continued to shrink after 1970. The number of individual farmers and their helping family members diminished: even by 1970 the majority of these were very old people or were persons farming very bad land where organization into large farms would certainly have been unprofitable. The number of those who worked occasionally, similar to the old day-labourers, dropped to barely more than 1,000. The number of family members helping on the cooperative household plots also diminished, because there is more advantage in working in the cooperative and engage in small commodity production additionally. On the other hand, the number of helping family members of workers increased by a few thousand, simply due to the fact that the number of worker households increased in the villages at the expense of cooperative peasant households. And these cooperative peasants who have become workers have for the most part not abandoned the earlier small commodity production.

While on the whole the share of those belonging to agricultural categories diminished, the non-agricultural worker strata increased in the villages. Within these last, the number of unskilled workers diminished while that of the skilled workers increased; however the largest increase was recorded—just as for the country as a whole—by the stratum of semi-skilled workers. In today's village population the proportion of unskilled workers continues to be higher than the national average; while in the towns the number of skilled workers is higher than the mean. The change has nevertheless been

the increase of the more skilled strata, or in other words, there has been progress towards modernization here too.

Finally, the share of white-collar workers, including professionals, increased among the active earners in the villages, but the rate of this increase was approximately the same (and in the case of professionals even somewhat lower) as that in towns; in other words, the concentration of white-collar workers, especially of professional people, in the towns has not been moderated.

Nevertheless, the breakdown of the 411,000 white-collar workers (including foremen) living in the villages also demonstrates a modernization of the social structure of the villages. Among the categories which were earlier found in the villages, the number of teachers (and others engaged in cultural occupations) was 61,000 in 1980, that of priests and ministers 3,000, that of district doctors and others providing health services 33,000; but the technicians (99,000), those holding administrative and economic jobs (98,000) are already more or less new occupational groups in today's villages, and the rapid growth of office workers (117,000) also indicates that the social composition of villages is far removed from that of the villages of the past.

The foundation of this transformation of the social structure in the villages is the phenomenon—which also occurs in other countries, but is in Hungary probably much stronger—that a large number (and recently constantly increasing number) of persons and families who leave agriculture and are thus mobile in the social sense, have remained village inhabitants, have not become mobile in the territorial sense.[7] Consequently they added to the number of manual and white-collar workers living in the villages. One consequence of their staying put has been commuting, which continued to increase to a small extent in the seventies. The other consequence is that they have kept, and in many cases even developed their household plots or auxiliary farms. This has led to non-agricultural workers becoming an even more marked majority among those engaged in small-scale production, when compared to the cooperative peasants and the workers of the state farms.

Social composition of households

Another projection of these particular structural and mobility processes is the high proportion of households mixed from the social aspect. In 1980, 14 per cent of the 5 million village inhabitants lived in households where there was no active earner (only pensioners and dependents), in 29 per cent

of households there was only one active earner, and thus these were necessarily homogeneous from a social aspect; the remaining 57 per cent were households having two or more active earners. Somewhat over one half of these households were of a mixed composition. Consequently, 29 per cent of the village population lived in mixed households.

49 per cent of the active earners belonging to the working class, 61 per cent of those belonging to the cooperative peasantry, 47 per cent of the white-collar workers, 53 per cent of the self-employed lived in households which included also at least one active earner belonging to a category other than their own. If we applied narrower categories, the share of those living in mixed households would prove to be even higher.

The fact that more or less one half of the village social categories mentioned live in mixed households underlines very definitely our conclusion deduced from the analysis of the occupational categories, i.e. that certain class and stratum distinctions have become blurred. We can hardly speak of separate worker or cooperative peasant interests, if a considerable number of workers and cooperative peasants are living together, in one and the same household.

The fact that there are such a large number of mixed households is causal to the fact that small-scale production covers almost the full range of village workers. If the worker lives in a household with a cooperative member, he obtains a household plot through the latter, in the working of which he or she of course participates (and when he is a man, he undertakes the largest part), and in the incomes of which he shares similar to the other members of the family. It seems likely that the most advantageous "strategy" for village families is to have one member a worker, and through him or her they enjoy the benefits (higher income, etc.) derived from this, while another member is a member of a cooperative, i.e. may obtain a household plot and the cooperative supports their small-scale production in other ways (machinery, fodder).

Way of life of the village population

How is the modernization of the social-occupational structure of the villages, the obliteration of class disctinctions, the formation of new strata reflected in the way of life of the village population? We attempt to provide an answer to this question by comparing the results of the time-utilization surveys of villages, country towns, and Budapest in 1976–77 to the results of the time-utilization survey of 1963.

From the national data of the time-budget survey we came earlier to the conclusion that in Hungary the time taken up by the various working activities (at the place of employment, for auxiliary income, household work, child care, and the travel connected with these) was very long, and had diminished less since 1973 than might be assumed owing to the shortening of the mandatory working hours and the automation of households. The fact is that some of the time released by the shortening of the mandatory working hours and of household work is devoted to auxiliary work which complements the income or makes the saving of some direct expenditure possible. In the latter category especially, agricultural small production and housing construction from self resources and using one's own labour are substantial. In the time-budget of women an important factor was that the share of those accepting regular employment continued to rise from the beginning of the sixties, and consequently more full-time working time is registered for the average woman.

All this applies even to a greater extent to the village population. It was here that the employment of women rose most, because it was here that the largest labour reserve was available; it is here that housing construction is the most widespread, because the great majority of village dwellings are built by a working-bee of the family, more distant relations, friends, and colleagues. Household plots and auxiliary farming are of course the most intensive here (although it is noteworthy that these take up 40 minutes of the average day of men and 21 minutes of women living in country towns). The time spent at the main place of employment is longest here (because in agriculture the actual working hours are longer than in other sectors). Finally, the time spent by women on household work is also longer.

Summing up activities which provide subsistence, the average daily time taken up by people between 15 and 69 years of age was for 1976–77:

	Men	Women
Budapest	8 hours 02 minutes	8 hours 55 minutes
Other towns	8 hours 21 minutes	9 hours 12 minutes
Villages	9 hours 14 minutes	9 hours 51 minutes

Although substantial differences exist among the various village social strata as regards the length of time taken up (that of those working in agriculture being the longest), every village social stratum is characterized by a longer time than its corresponding town stratum. The main reason for this is that—even if to a differing extent—the members of every stratum living

in villages participate in household and auxiliary farming. The average daily time spent on this by the various village strata was as follows:

	Men	Women
Manager and professional	22 minutes	11 minutes
Other white-collar	63 minutes	21 minutes
Skilled worker	59 minutes	22 minutes
Semi-skilled worker	74 minutes	42 minutes
Unskilled worker	93 minutes	76 minutes
Agricultural manual worker	143 minutes	126 minutes
Pensioner	164 minutes	104 minutes
Enjoying child care allowance	—	55 minutes
Secondary-school student	26 minutes	17 minutes
Dependent women	—	116 minutes
Total for village inhabitants between 15 and 69 years of age	99 minutes	92 minutes

As may be seen, in addition to cooperative peasants and state farm workers, the members of every social stratum (and more than a few country-town inhabitants), and above all the workers living in the villages, also participate in household and auxiliary farming. Although the average daily time input of the workers is shorter, within the total working time spent on small-scale production—which totalled approximately 2,700 million hours annually—the proportion of non-agricultural workers is higher owing to the fact that there are more of them than that of full-time farmers. It should be added that pensioners and the small number of dependent women also shoulder a very heavy share in small-scale production.

Since in the villages the time taken up by various working activities is longer, the disposable time—i.e. time that that can be spent on study, education, entertainment, rest—is substantially shorter. Of this time approximately one hour and a half is taken up by TV viewing both in the towns and the villages. This large spread of television viewing, occurring equally in all social strata, is one of the most important changes which has occurred in the utilization of leisure time in the past twenty years. Beside it almost all other leisure activities have lost some ground. And since the time taken up by work is longest and has fallen least in the villages, the time available there for other educational activities at home, such as reading, and education outside the home (cinema, theatre, house of culture, etc.), and even for social meetings or entertainments is shortest there.

These time utilization data lead to the conclusion that—in apparent contrast to the modernization of the production relations and the social structure in the villages—many elements characteristic of the past have survived in the way of living of the village population: very long time spent on work, widespread small-scale production, and the relatively straightforward (although horizon widening) spending of leisure time. The explanation for this contradiction can be found in the development of income and living conditions.

Level of income and living conditions

According to data from the five-yearly family income surveys of the Central Statistical Office[8] the average monthly per capita level for village inhabitants gradually approached that of town dwellers.

	Per capita monthly income (Ft)			
	1962	1967	1972	1977
Villages	742	1,084	1,507	2,242
Budapest	1,097	1,355	1,867	2,619
Other towns	890	1,124	1,549	2,297
Weighted average	823	1,138	1,585	2,333

In 1977, the income per household was higher in the villages than in the towns. (But since village households were larger, the income was divided between more individuals.)

It must however not be forgotten when considering this favourable trend that a very substantial part of the income of village families (nearly one quarter, and in the families of agricultural manual workers over one-third) came from household and auxiliary farming:

	Monthly income per household, Ft	Amount derived from household and auxiliary farming	
		Forint	percentage
Villages	6,885	1,556	22.6
Budapest	6,682	33	0.5
Other towns	6,594	508	7.7
Weighted average	6,750	898	13.3

It is obvious that without the complementary income from self-employment (small-scale production) the level of incomes in villages would lag very considerably behind the average for towns, and even more behind that of the capital city and thus a very substantial part of the village population would live under rather adverse financial conditions. The village population, by very hard work, by additional work outside regular working hours, has raised its income level to approach that of town dwellers.

If we compare the entire income derived from household and auxiliary (as well as individual) farming (projected to the entire population) to the total working time spent on such farming (projected on the population of 15–69 years of age), we arrive at an estimate for 1977 of 15 forints per working hour spent on small commodity production. This is approximately of the same order of magnitude as the average hourly wage in the socialist sector of the economy in that year, and is certainly lower than the hourly income achievable by occasional work outside working hours. This shows that the rise in income in the villages derives not only from much additional work but from work which is not even very profitable.[9] Thus it is understandable why individual farming has lost ground in the same years. For an income of this magnitude it is certainly not worthwhile to abandon the benefits derived from working within the socialist sector: entitlement to monetary social allowances and, in general, the security of income and employment.

Why do village inhabitants nevertheless engage in small-scale production? We can only guess the reasons, but it seems very probable that the main explanation is that for the village population there are few other opportunities available to obtain an auxiliary income, especially in the broken (morning and evening) time—in addition to the weekend—usually available for small production. Nor should it be ignored that a considerable part of the family's food comes from this source; since retail supply in the villages is not as good as that in towns, it would be more difficult to obtain the food and, among other things, would add substantially to the time spent on shopping. Finally, it should be observed that villagers like to work on their own household plots or auxiliary farms. If this is so, there is some similarity between small-scale production in Hungary and small-scale farm production for the families' own provision, which has been spreading in Western Europe recently. In this sense small-scale production is not—or at least not only—a phenomenon which has survived from an earlier age, but may have also elements which point to the future.

Village families spend that part of their income left over after covering primary needs mainly on the construction and modernization of their homes,

the improvement of their utility equipment; and on durable consumer goods. Even those who only pass through a Hungarian village notice immediately the extent to which village homes and their equipment have changed. This is confirmed by the data from the 1980 census and the living conditions survey of 1978.

In 1980, 38 per cent of village dwellings were less than 20 years old, having been built since 1960, i.e. nearly two-fifths of the housing stock in villages have been changed since the collectivization of farming. As a result, today approximately one half are built of solid building materials, i.e. not of unfired bricks or adobe (21 per cent in 1949), 43 per cent have piped water (1 per cent in 1949), 32 per cent a water closet (less than 2 per cent in 1949), 97 per cent have electricity (25 per cent in 1949).

But in spite of these very beneficial changes—changes more rapid and more conspicuous than in towns—housing conditions in the villages are still behind those in towns. Although village dwellings—especially those built in the last 20 years—are somewhat larger than town dwellings, the proportion of very small (under 50 square metres) dwellings is lower and that of the larger (80 square metres and over) is higher than in the towns, a majority of village households lived in crowded conditions in 1978, or in dwellings the size of which did not correspond to the number and composition of those living in the household.[10]

	50 m^2 and under	81 m^2 and over	Habitation density over 2	Inadequate size
	percentage of households living in such dwellings			
Villages	25	32	23	29
Budapest	48	14	26	24
Other towns	32	18	15	22
Weighted average	32	24	19	26

The lag is even more pronounced in the conveniencies available: in 1978, there was a bathroom and a water closet in 23 per cent of village households, 64 per cent country-town households, and 71 per cent in Budapest households. The reason for this bigger discrepancy is not only the lower level of public utilities available (since a domestic well with a pump and a septic tank can also be installed in village houses), but also the smaller financial resources of the village families. The installation of a bathroom is

relatively costly, and a dwelling of adequate size is obviously a more fundamental need than a bathroom.

Acquiring a dwelling is much more of a financial burden to village families than to town dwellers. In the towns a not insignificant minority of families obtain a dwelling through state allocation of housing (council allocation, service flat, or inheritance of the tenancy of a rented flat), while in the villages this method of obtaining a dwelling is very rare: the majority buy or build their dwelling themselves.[11]

Methods of obtaining a dwelling in 1977

	Through state allocation	Building (percentage)	Purchase
Village households	6	40	23
Budapest households	24	11	12
Households in other towns	30	20	21

Household appliances are less costly than housing construction and conveniencies, and consequently there is a smaller difference here: the share of well-equipped households (refrigerator, washing machine with centrifuge or automatic washing machine) was in 1978, 41 per cent in the villages, 66 per cent in the country towns, and 63 per cent in Budapest.

The above figures show that the village population has, on the one hand, by great additional efforts, primarily out of an additional income obtained from household and auxiliary farming and the building of their own homes, reduced the gap between themselves and town dwellers in respect of living conditions; on the other, in most respects their living conditions—housing, durable consumer goods—are still worse than those of the town dwellers. It is therefore understandable that they mostly continue to opt for additional efforts than to fall further behind the national average. Obviously, the price of improving and modernizing their living conditions is very hard work, a way of living which can hardly be called modern.

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In this paper we have analysed a summary of the data for all the villages of the country. There are, however, obviously substantial differences be-

tween villages according to the size of population, availability of transport, the proximity of industrial work and towns. All these may determine the prosperity or stagnation of a village.

Some examples for what has been said. In the villages with a population of over ten thousand the migration balance is positive in total, and in those with 5–10 thousand inhabitants the natural increase has been higher than the loss through migration; the smaller the village, the higher the loss through migration, and the lower—mainly owing to the ageing of the population—the natural increase. The migration balance has been positive in the villages belonging to the Budapest agglomeration. The modernization of the social structure as well as the improvement of income and housing conditions would show similar differences from village type to type.

As we have seen, the improvement in the living conditions has been due primarily to the additional efforts made by village families. There are, however, elements in the living conditions which can hardly be influenced by the individual families, because they depend on central and local administrative and economic decisions, such as retail supply, transport conditions, educational and health institutions and facilities. In all these respects the villages in general, and especially the smaller villages, are substantially handicapped *vis-à-vis* towns. If we want to prevent a situation coming about where the majority of our villages will be characterized by "private welfare and public poverty," we must certainly devote greater attention and larger amounts of money to the improvement of these elements in the living conditions.

Otherwise it can hardly be expected that the village population of today and of the future, whose requirements and purposes in life are becoming closer and closer to those of town populations, will stay in their villages in the coming decades, accepting the burden of the more difficult farmwork, the additional work of small-scale production (or in other words, that the "increase in the population-retaining power of the villages" should be realized). However, changes which have occurred in the past ten years lead to the conclusion that it is possible to stop the gradual depopulation of the villages and to slow down the growth of towns. This can be done through "urbanization" of the majority of villages (i.e. changes in the social structure, the conditions and way of living in a direction characteristic of the towns).[12] There are, of course, the actual natural endowments and development trends. However the future development of the totality of villages and of the individual villages is strongly dependent on the settlement developmental, economic, and social policies applied.

NOTES

1. These changes were dealt with in our earlier works: Andorka, Rudolf: *A községi népesség társadalmi jellemzői* (Social characteristics of the village population). In: *Társadalmi Szemle*, No. 8–9, 1974. Andorka, Rudolf and Harcsa, István: *A községekben zajló társadalmi változások az elmúlt másfél évtizedben* (The social change in the villages in the past decade and a half). In: *Társadalmi Szemle* No. 5, 1979. Andorka, Rudolf: *A magyar községek társadalmának átalakulása* (Social change in Hungarian villages). Magvető Publishing House, "Gyorsuló idő" (Accelerating time) series, 1979.

2. Andorka, Rudolf, Falussy, Béla, and Harcsa, István: *Időmérleg* (Time budgets). Detailed Data I–II. Central Statistical Office. 1982. p. 795.

3. Lakatos, Mária, Nagy, Ilona, Újváry, József, Vajda, Ágnes, Varga, István, and Zelenay, Anna: *Életkörülmények, lakásviszonyok* (Living conditions, housing conditions). Central Statistical Office. 1982. 361 pp.

4. The farm cooperatives, which came about through the association of individual peasants, where the land is owned by the cooperative and by the members, and where the chairman of the cooperative is elected by the members, and 2. the state farms, where the means of production are owned by the state and which have an organizational form which is similar to that of industrial enterprises.

5. As we shall explain in detail, we have included the family members of the workers who help on the auxiliary farms whose households head belongs to the working class and not, as is usual, among the small commodity producers; consequently the working class proportion is higher by 1 per cent and that of small commodity producers lower by the same percentage than in the customary statistics.

6. Among these we include foremen and in the working class or their counterparts the cooperative peasantry.

7. See: Harcsa, István: *A társadalmi mobilitás alakulása a településtípusok és régiók szerint* (Social mobility according to types of settlement and regions). In: *Statisztikai Szemle*. No. 12, 1977.

8. See: *A családi jövedelmek színvonala és szóródása 1977-ben* (The level and dispersal of family incomes in 1977). Central Statistical Office. 1980. p. 215, and Zafir, Mihály: *A társadalmi osztályok és rétegek jövedelemkülönbségei* (Income differentiation between the social classes and strata). In: *Statisztikai Szemle*. No. 5, 1976.

9. It is, of course, very likely that behind the average income of 15 forints per hour there are very different interests, because this average derives from the working hours of young adult men at the peak of their strength and from the presumably much less intensive work done by those over 60.

10. In our view, those dwellings did not correspond to the given household where the density of inhabitation was over 2 persons per room, and where the members of the household could not be housed in the rooms in such a way that members of two generations (parent and child, grandparent and grandchild) did not have to live in one room.

11. Owing to the very low rents, in Hungary those who obtain a state-owned rented flat enjoy a considerable advantage over those who buy or build a dwelling.

12. We use the concept of urbanization here in the sense recommended by several writers on settlement studies and regional statistics. See e.g.: Kovács, Tibor: *Urbanizációs folyamatok és városstatisztika* (Urbanizational processes and urban statistics). In: *Területi Statisztika*. No. 1, 1975.

HUNGARIAN INDUSTRIAL POLICY IN THE EIGHTIES

by

BÉLA KÁDÁR

The unfavourable changes in the external and internal conditions of Hungary's socio-economic development have recently made it particularly imperative to increase the efficiency of Hungarian industry.

The problems deriving from relatively late industrialisation and the tasks in tackling those problems were recognized by the reform generation of more than a century and a half ago. They emphasized, in the words of Lajos Kossuth, that "a nation without industry is a one-armed giant." Because of this realization the extent of the industrial lag had lessened by the early years of the 20th century.

This closing-up process came to a halt in the period between the two world wars, and Hungary was unable to move from the agrarian-industrial nations to the group of highly industrialized countries. When looking at the historical roots of industrial development, however, various Hungarian features should not be ignored. Among these we can include high standards which Hungarian mining attained as early as the 18th century, the outstanding performance—even by international standards—of 19th-century Hungarian flour-milling, of the electrical industry and rolling-stock manufacturing, the establishment of an academy of mining and metallurgy (founded in the 18th century, and the second of its kind in the world), the high level of training for engineers attained in the 19th century, a considerable capacity for technical development and the success of Hungarian industry, especially in mechanical engineering, in exporting to Central Europe, the Near and Middle East, and Latin America.

The radical changes which took place after the Second World War opened new avenues and created new conditions for industrial growth in Hungary. Socialist industrialization from the late 1940s onwards was aimed at expanding production rapidly, at creating and modernizing structurally the material and technical basis of a socialist society, at guaranting do-

mestic supply on a broader basis, at ensuring full employment, at establishing an organization of large enterprises which would influence the political attitude of the working-class and cooperation with other socialist countries.

During the years following the Second World War industrial output in Hungary rose at a much faster rate than earlier, by about 7 per cent annually which was above the average even by international standards. Industrial production went up nearly ninefold, and the number of those employed in industry rose two and a half times, while the figures for industry between 1950 and 1980 increased from 32 per cent to 50 per cent in production and from 23 to 34 per cent of those in employment. Accelerated industrialization considerably transformed the structure of industry.

Within the structure of industry there was a particularly high rate of increase in the ratio of engineering, one which is also high by international comparison, as well as in that of the metallurgical and chemical industries, which can use a domestic base of raw materials only to a limited extent. Metallurgical output, which in the outside world is growing, if at all, at a very slow rate, increased by 45 per cent in Hungary even between 1970 and 1980. Yet bearing in mind favourable geographical conditions and traditions of production, the ratio of the food industry is low. Intersectoral changes accelerated considerably. Between 1960 and 1980 there was an increase within light industry; in the timber and timber processing industries (from 10.4 to 14.6 per cent); in homecrafts (from 3.9 to 6.8 per cent); within mechanical engineering; in transport manufacturing (from 27 to 28 per cent); in telecommunications product (from 6 to 16 per cent); and in precision engineering (from 5.5 to 9 per cent). In the paper industry there was a decline from 5.6 to 5.4 per cent.

In the long-range development of the structure of industry a decisive role was played by investment and the priority development programmes. Between 1960 and 1980 industry had a 36 per cent share of all Hungarian investment, as a result of which the fixed assets of industry rose almost fivefold. The most characteristic trait of the industrial investment structure is the nearly one-third ratio, very high by international standards, of investment in energy (coal mining, hydrocarbon extraction, crude oil processing, electricity generation, pipelines construction). At the same time, as a consequence of the rapid expansion of the energy-intensive sectors, there was an increase as well as a modification in the Hungarian economy's energy-intensity and in its import-sensitivity.

In the course of twenty years the proportion of hydrocarbons in energy consumption grew from 21 to 64 per cent and, in the consumption of imported energy from 26 to 53 per cent. The metallurgical industry received

The production structure of Hungarian industry (per cent)

	Gross value of production			Number of employed		
	1970	1980	1981	1970	1980	1981
Mining	5.4	6.3	6.8	8.3	7.1	7.2
Electric power generation	3.4	4.3	4.6	2.0	2.2	2.2
Metallurgy	10.4	10.3	9.0	5.8	6.0	5.9
Mechanical engineering including:	26.4	22.7	22.7	31.8	32.0	32.0
Metal mass products	4.0	2.5	2.4	4.7	3.7	3.6
Vehicles	6.9	6.5	6.3	7.3	6.5	6.4
Communications engineering	3.3	3.5	3.5	4.8	6.3	6.3
General engineering industry	6.8	4.9	5.1	8.8	8.0	8.1
Precision engineering	2.0	2.0	2.1	3.0	3.6	3.7
Building materials industry	3.2	3.3	3.3	4.7	4.9	4.8
Chemical industry including:	11.2	19.2	20.1	6.3	6.9	6.9
Pharmaceutical industry	2.2	2.4	2.3	1.3	1.5	1.5
Crude oil processing	2.0	7.3	8.0	0.4	0.4	0.4
Timber and timber processing industries	2.6	2.2	2.1	3.5	3.0	3.0
Textile industry	6.4	4.6	4.6	8.3	7.4	7.4
Leather, fur and footwear industry	2.9	2.3	2.3	3.9	3.7	3.8
Clothing industry	2.3	1.7	1.7	4.3	4.8	4.8
Food industry	20.4	18.4	18.4	10.0	12.2	12.4

Source: *Iparstatisztikai Évkönyv* (Yearbook of Industrial Statistics), 1981.

one-tenth of all industrial investment, the chemical industry one-sixth. The structure of Hungarian industry was greatly influenced by the fact that about 60 per cent of investment between 1960 and 1980 was in mining, energy andbasic material industries; at the same time investment in processing industries remained relatively modest. Thus, for example, on the average of the past twenty years mechanical engineering came in for a share of altogether 17 per cent, the food industry 12 per cent, and light industry only 10 per cent.

In the distribution of investment resources the decisive role was played by what are called central development programmes (energetics, aluminium, natural gas, petrochemistry, computer engineering). From the latter half of the 1960s onwards technical progress and the structural transformation of industry were most powerfully influenced by these central development programmes. The result was the establishment in Hungary of the manu-

facture of synthetics, chemicals, basic materials and chemical fibres, a huge increase in the production of buses, diesel engines, rear axles, computer engineering products and, a trebling of output in cold-rolled aluminium metallurgy. The priority development programmes introduced state-of-the-art technological processes, resulting in optimum large-scale production and improving productivity. The central development programmes were at the same time designed to satisfy the demands of the domestic and CMEA markets; on the other hand, their fulfilment as well as continuous production entailed a need for considerable imports far exceeding the collateral exports to convertible-currency countries.

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Industrial development over this period has also largely refashioned the structure of society. New industrial towns and industrial centres have emerged, the location of industries in the country has transformed the Hungarian provincial landscape, the living-conditions and the skills of rural dwellers (between 1960 and 1980 the ratio of skilled workers in industry increased from 23 to 47 per cent) and their consciousness; the significant historical difference in development between industrialized Greater Budapest and the less developed eastern part of the country has considerably diminished.

The structure of industry has changed also as regards the size of enterprises. In pre-Second World War Hungary, and related to the lateness of industrialization, the percentage of large enterprises employing more than 500 persons was high (40 per cent), while at the same time about one quarter of industrial workers were employed in small and handicraft industries. As a consequence of the vigorous amalgamation process following the Second World War five-sixths of those working in Hungarian industry were employed in large enterprises at the end of the 1970s. But the centralization process involving merging smaller enterprises, unfortunately, did not entail the concentration of the forces of production. Most large enterprises remained a conglomeration of minor industrial units, often encompassing whole industrial sectors on a quasi-monopolistic basis at home, while by international standards, they had no organizational concentration enabling them to enter the world-market with any hope of success.

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The expansion of Hungarian industry is reflected also in its external economic relations. In the twenty years after the Second World War in-

dustry still produced overwhelmingly for the domestic market, but its export-orientation became gradually more pronounced from the latter half of the 1960s on. In the past ten years the production exported by industry increased from 17 to 33 per cent, and at present about half of the output of mechanical engineering is sold on external markets. The 1970s signified a new phase in the foreign relations of industry in so far as industrial products overtook others not only when going to the CMEA countries and the developing world but also when going to the OECD countries.

On the threshold of the 1980s four-fifths of all Hungarian exports consisted of industrial products, and three-fifths of all import were used by industry in the form of materials, spare-parts and machinery. The situation of industry, its efficiency and expansion thus essentially determine the trend of Hungary's external economic relations and interests.

The composition of Hungarian foreign trade in industrial goods differs by major groups of countries. The leading sector in exportation, mechanical engineering, relies upon the comparative advantages due to the level of technical development of Hungarian exports to CMEA and developing countries and from the professional qualification of the labour force. On the other hand, the overwhelming majority of Hungarian exports to OECD countries reflects specialization in domestic natural resources. A greater ratio within industrial exports is made up of semi-finished goods produced by the chemical and metallurgical industries or products of light industry that require less skilled labour. The differing product composition or rather the compositional and technological characteristics of the central development programmes mapped out within the framework of CMEA co-operation are also a reason why the Hungarian exports to certain groups of countries are difficult to rearrange geographically.

Owing to the high proportion of the material and energy-intensive sectors, or rather to the scarce availability of natural resources, about three-fifths of Hungary's importing capacity must be used to make up for the natural resources we lack. The composition of imports determined by natural resources sets limits to technical progress in the Hungarian industry and to the opportunity of increasing imports of machinery of primary significance with a view to modernization and competitiveness. The volume of imports of manufactured consumer goods is modest and import competition is thus weak; accordingly, enterprises have had no motive for a market-oriented attitude or for the symptoms of a shortage economy at home to disappear.

There is no doubt that in the last thirty years or so Hungarian industry has achieved very remarkable results in quantitative development, in structural transformation and in the establishment of international economic

contacts. This rapid growth, however, has diverted attention from the fact that the quality, organization, effectiveness and international competitiveness of Hungarian industry have not kept abreast with its quantitative development. The new world-wide processes arriving in the 1970s suddenly revealed and emphasized dramatically the limitations of Hungarian industry's performance. For future development, therefore, it is of great interest to take a look at the major problems of Hungarian industrial development.

The nature of the limitations of performance

Some researchers into Hungarian industrial development were, even in the period of rapid growth, aware of the proliferation, observable in the long run, of problems arising from unevenness of development or from the standard of productivity and efficiency. In spite of large scale modernization the productivity of Hungarian industry is only between 40 to 70 per cent of the average recorded in the more industrialized OECD countries. In the first third of our century a few branches of Hungarian industry had risen effectively to the vanguard of international technical development, but in the last twenty years Hungarian industry have fallen further and further behind the international vanguard in the sectors most rapidly applying most scientific and technical innovations (for example, in electronics).

Since extensive industrial development aimed at quantitative growth, and because of the considerable importance of the investment-oriented basic materials industry, the financial and technological resources left for a systematic development of certain sectors, enterprises and productive activities are not sufficient. The technical standard and organization of our vertical combinations have by no means been all of a piece homogeneous. Backward technologies in processing or as complementary technologies have been superimposed on developed basic technologies; in other cases modern final technologies have not had adequate basic and intermediate technologies to be added to. Owing to the scarcity of resources, set-backs in industrial infra-structures, complementary investments, spare-part manufacturing, inter-factory material transport, packaging and, furthermore, a higher level than average for energy and material consumption as well as for forwarding expenses per product unit have become fairly general phenomena. The over-concentration of industrial organization and the predominance of large enterprises have also been instrumental in the fact that growth of output has been significant in the case of goods turned out in serial production.

As a consequence of the considerable disinterestedness of large enterprises in the manufacture of small quantities, of unique products, of spare-parts and part units, there has been an increase in shortage phenomena on the home markets. These shortage phenomena as well as inequalities in the production structure and the technological standard explain why the under-utilization of the assets of increased value of the Hungarian industry, of its productive capacities, has remained unfavourable by international standards.

The qualitative weaknesses in Hungary's industrial development have long been prevented from becoming apparent by the fact that, during the period of central plan directives, the cost-sensitivity of enterprises was extremely low; nor did this improve as it should have after the 1968 reform of economic management or, rather, in the economic situation that evolved in the 1970s. The consequences of low cost-sensitivity were eased from outside by the low price level of raw materials and energy sources, by favourable terms for their purchase.

In the period after the Second World War the qualitative demands of the population were still at a low level, a smaller part of the demands was for products technically more complex, and the ratio of the engineering-intensive sectors was lower also in the production structure. Parallel with the rise of developmental and income levels, however, demand from the population increasingly shifted towards products and services more unique in character and satisfying more specialized qualitative needs; there was thus a rapid increase in the production ratio of industry calling for technical development and an appropriate economic environment, and requiring harmonious cooperation between a large number of sectors and enterprises. The higher developmental level of the economy and its structural transformation, on the other hand, would have made it necessary to replace direct methods of macro-economic management with more indirect management mechanisms and, in the microsphere, to create styles of direction, managerial staffs, organizational forms and interest systems complying with the principles and requirements of modern management science.

The internal limitations of Hungarian industrial growth thus became more and more visible, paradoxically, in the wake of effective development and showed that the postwar revolution in science and technology, and the new forms adopted throughout the world, of scientifically established management and marketing methods brought their influence to domestic processs only after a considerable time lag and at a very low intensity. The undeniable social losses thus arising were made tolerable in the long run only by particular factors, the regrouping of resources: for example, by the low wage level of qualified labour, the curtailment of a considerable part of

the surplus value produced in agriculture during the twenty years after the Second World War the slowing down of infrastructural developments.

The change alone in the internal conditions of industrial expansion would have forced the tracing of a new path of growth, but this process could have taken place, in the absence of outside pressures, over a longer time and without minor tensions. During the past ten years, however, the external conditions of Hungarian industrial development have changed quite rapidly and most vigorously. After the Second World War Hungarian industry established international connections primarily within the framework of CMEA cooperation. Raw materials bought at favourable prices from the less industrialized CMEA countries and from the Soviet Union stimulated, for more than a quarter of a century, Hungarian industrialization which relied on regional industrial exports and on imported raw materials.

The conditions of the regional industrial division of labour began to change even during the 1960s. Because of industrialization in CMEA member-countries, there was less readiness to supply raw materials and efforts to balance trade in manufactured goods intensified. As a consequence of the change in prices internationally during the 1970s the rentability of the purchase and processing of raw materials changed. Problems of purchasing came up in the regional imports of raw materials and energy sources partly because of the physical limits of supply, and partly because of member-countries' ambition to obtain hard currencies and to the accompanying redirection of their funds for buying their export goods funds to other regions. On the other hand, cooperation in modern industrial sectors is made difficult by the fact that in particular CMEA countries similar industrial and technological structures have been built up through the efforts to achieve autarky over the past three decades. The inter-company relationships, competences in enterprise decision-making, technology transfer capacities and forms of interestedness indispensable to efficient cooperation in technology-intensive fields of activity are undeveloped. Under the given circumstances the dynamizing effect of the regional industrial division of labour is more unfavourable and is less able to stimulate the export of higher-quality and up-to-date products in keeping with technical progress, better suited to domestic realities and profitable also from the point of view of foreign-exchange policy, i.e. to promote technical and structural modernization.

The conditions of the industrial division of labour in relations with OECD countries have also considerably deteriorated from the viewpoint of Hungary. Hungarian industrial exports are made difficult by trade policy dis-preferences introduced in Western Europe, by the slow growth of

demand for manufactured products, the sharpening of marketing competition, the highest prices and the purchasing limitations of up-to-date technologies and financing resources. Industrialization of the developing countries restricts the buyers' market of Hungarian industrial articles exported earlier to the "third world" and has also sharpened competition on the buyers' markets of Western Europe as well, with regard to Hungary's traditional industrial products.

It has long been recognized in international economic relations that an ever growing part of the surplus value realized is shifting from production to the sphere of marketing in the broadest sense. Because of this steady sharpening of competition in marketing and with the growth in volume of sales of mechanical engineering products requiring extensive services and inputs (publicity, storing, servicing, supplementing, etc.), the price level of the "commercialization" is rising, the rates of profit from sales are higher and mounting faster. The effective or ineffective functioning of the marketing organization plays an increasingly larger part in forming relative market positions and terms of trade. For a third of a century Hungarian industrial policy has unfortunately not devoted sufficient care to building up a store of marketing methods, an organizational interest system.

Of great importance to the international environment of business management is the fact that, despite certain academic and political theories to the contrary in the early 1970s, the expansion of trans-national corporations has not stopped (especially in technology-intensive sectors) and cannot be brought under control by economic policy measures either. Owing to budget barriers between national states and to the restrictions on governments in the domestic economic scope for action, the efforts of governments to improve their external economic positions have to rely more than ever on co-operation with the large trans-national companies. External economic policy and external economic diplomacy, in addition to international, regional and inter-governmental co-operation, are gradually integrating their elements of cooperation with the sphere of large trans-national companies. To sell a growing number of products and groups of products (pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, aluminium, vehicles, control engineering, and so forth), it is now virtually a *sine qua non* to join oneself to the world of trans-national organizations and to build up an external market-economy organization of one's own for the majority of servicing-intensive mechanical engineering products.

World-market price relations have shifted particularly unfavourably for Hungarian industry. The enormous increase in prices of energy materials has adversely affected all countries, including Hungary, which are dependent

on energy-material imports and which have an industrial structure that is more energy-intensive than the average. At the same time structural crises and oversupply have appeared on the world-market in several groups of products which play a major part in what Hungarian industry produces and exports (heavy chemicals, metallurgy, light industry, household appliances, and so on). As a result of the lag that has occurred in the technically most advanced, research-intensive sectors over the past twenty years Hungary, unlike a number of highly industrialized countries, has been unable to export engineering products and thus make up for the losses due to increases in the cost of imports and to the relative fall in the prices of exports.

The unfavourable external economic efficiency of industry has ultimately aggravated the equilibrium problems of Hungarian economy. In retrospect the foreign trade turnover of Hungary, like that of almost all small countries which were late in industrializing, regularly showed a surplus of imports. The size of this deficit remained manageable up till the late 1970s. A cumulative consequence of the worsening of internal and external conditions, the foreign trade deficit was 60,000 million Ft in 1978; 27,000 million Ft in 1979; 19,000 million Ft in 1980; 15,000 million Ft in 1981; and 300 million Ft in 1982. Central to Hungary's economic policy in the past five years has been the reduction of external disequilibrium, accordingly the size of the deficit has decreased in a considerable degree. The decrease in the global deficit, however, obscures the circumstance that improving equilibrium has been made possible primarily by the agricultural sector and the food industry which had an export-surplus amouting to 34,000 million Ft in 1979; 38,000 million Ft in 180; 47,000 million Ft in 1981; and 58,000 million Ft in 1982. However, trade in industrial products (excluding the food processing industry) even in the last three years resulted in deficits of 57,000 million Ft, 62,000 million Ft, and 58,000 million Ft.

An analysis in more detail of the disequilibrium of Hungarian foreign trade in industrial goods throws light also upon the fact that the greater part of the deficit was not on trade accounted in roubles — although the energy price explosion made its effect felt there. About 60 per cent of the industrial deficit falls on non-rouble accounting trade, in spite of the fact that Hungary does not import energy materials from non-socialist countries. In trade between Hungary and the OECD countries whose transactions are overwhelmingly in industrial products, Hungary's terms of trade deteriorated by 6 per cent. This is also clearly indicative of the worsening of the positions held in the industrial division of labour. In trade in manufactured goods with non-rouble accounting countries the Hungarian light industries are producers of foreign exchange and the deficit in mechanical

engineering is insignificant. However, trade in materials, semi-finished products and spare-parts showed a deficit of 46,000 million Ft in 1980; and 47,000 million Ft in 1981. In this fact a role was certainly played by the higher than average material-intensity of Hungarian industry, by the deficiencies of spare-part manufacture.

It would not be reasonable to expect the industry of a small country to play the role of foreign exchange producer or stabilizer. In the long run most of the small countries of Europe display a structural deficit in their trade in industrial goods.* However, one should not forget either that most small countries specialize themselves to a much greater extent in exporting services, and the foreign-exchange earnings of service sector make it possible to finance the deficit of their trade in industrial goods. The exports of services on a world-trade average make up nearly 30 per cent of all exports, and in the case of some Western European small countries this ratio reaches even 40 to 50 per cent, while in Hungary it remains below 10 per cent.

Owing to the low dynamism of international trade in agricultural and food products, the Hungarian agricultural sector and food industry will in the future be able to improve only in a more modest degree their remarkable results in exchange earnings. In the years to come the dynamism and stability of Hungarian economy will thus primarily depend on how the efficiency and international competitiveness of Hungarian industry can be improved, and how the various conditions of participating more successfully in the international industrial division of labour can be created. In the 1980s, therefore, the charting of a new stage of development in Hungarian industry, the tracing of its path of growth, will not simply be an expedient but also a social necessity determined by the unfavourable change in the internal and external conditions.

Hungary's industrial strategy in the 1980s

It cannot be said that Hungarian industrial policy entirely misunderstood the character of the world economic changes that unfolded in the 1970s. As a result of the price adjustment carried out from the latter half of the 1970s onwards, internal price relations of Hungarian economy undoubtedly came closer to world-market price relations, the credit facilities designed to enlarge the funds of competitive export goods became more noticeable. There also appeared the outlines of a structural policy which aided an

* Béla Kádár: *Kis országok a világgazdaságban* (Small Countries in the World Economy). Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó, 1971.

accommodation to the changes taking place on the world-market: after 1978 the investment projects began to slow down, in 1980 the sectoral ministries for the direct guidance of industry were dissolved, and in 1981 excessive centralization of large industrial enterprises began to slacken.

The reappraisals of industrial policy in the past few years have helped check disequilibrium and running into debts. But the lessening of disequilibrium has had to be paid for dearly: in the early eighties the volume of industrial production grew hardly at all, the improvement of the balance of trade in industrial goods, especially in dollar relations, has been made possible not by increasing exports but, to a considerable degree, by reducing imports intended for investments—a factor which is by no means indifferent for future development. The improvement of efficiency can be observed first of all in the activities (light and food processing industries) and less so in mechanical engineering and in chemical industry. Thus the accomplishment of Hungarian industry in its accommodation is quite contradictory as there are not positive in character and they still pose questions regarding future development. The positive elements of the treatment so far applied are more closely connected to the extra-industrial spheres, to finance, or to the price policies of the external economy.

The political decision of July 1982 on the development strategy to be followed* formulated rather clearly that the new Hungarian path of growth will evolve within the scope of participating more in the international division of labour, giving preference to actual demand and relying more and more upon the qualitative factors of growth.

It cannot really be denied that the direction of the way out is clearly reflected in the strategic positions adopted by Hungary. Less reassuring are, on the other hand, our experiences in the speed of the system of decision-making and implementation functions with. Developments of the last decade indicate that external situations, market trends and processes of structural transformation change considerably faster than the responses coming from Hungarian economy. The gap in time between outside challenges and Hungarian responses is not substantially diminishing and slow reaction often causes Hungarian strategy to adapt itself to the consequences of yesterday and the day before yesterday; in these delays new and more complex problem correlations are cropping up. Thus, among the demands made on the strategy of industrial development: accelerating decision-making at all levels, strengthening the orientation towards the future and adapting to future requirements will be crucial.

* *Külgazdasági kapcsolataink alakulásáról, fejlesztésének feladatairól* (The Trend of Our External Economic Relations, the Tasks of Development). Kossuth Könyvkiadó, 1982.

Of course, the present writer cannot undertake to analyse all of the essential factors contributing to shaping Hungary's strategy for industrial development. There is a rich special literature available and the positions formulated with respect to policies of external economy and industrial development in the recent past do not even make it necessary. Further on, it will be proper to touch upon the more general correlations which influence the formulation of the Hungarian economic management system, of the production policy objectives and of the social environment.

A central point in the debates on the future practical course for Hungarian industry is the definition of the fundamental strategic aim. Management science has been brought into life by the scarcity of the available resources. The universal deterioration in the external and internal conditions of Hungarian industry and the consequent limited number of ways out prevent industry from rapidly expanding production, improving living-conditions, realizing full employment and restoring equilibrium all at the same time. Under the present international and internal circumstances these aims are partly in conflict and they should be put in a stricter rank of priority. For a long time the policy of industrial development had the priority of increasing continuously the volume of production, its share of the national income and of the the number of job openings. It is a lesson provided by world history, however, that the objectives of economic policy are age-specific. At a higher level of development, demand grows more rapidly for services in general and for productive services within industry. The improvement of living-conditions today is not related so closely to the quantitative rate of increase in production, to the growth of output. Now it is a different matter entirely whether it is expedient in the present production structure, to force an increase in production when the over-utilization of materials, energy and imports and the considerable unrealizable stocks held are taken into consideration. In this situation the practicable and feasible way to increase values is not through expanding production but through reducing capital outlay.

Full employment plays an important part from the viewpoint of social and political stability everywhere. In addition, it is a system-specific social value in socialist countries. Increasingly serious barriers to coordinating the requirements of employment and competitive efficiency, as well as symptoms of permament unemployment of a structural character, can be observed in a large number of countries today. The establishment of full employment or a socially acceptable employment level, however, is always and everywhere a task of the entire society and this task cannot be imposed on any single sector or enterprise. In highly industrialized countries 60 to

70 per cent of all employees are already working in the servicing sector. In the present stage of Hungarian economic development, internationally competitive and efficient production is a primary task of industry. On a broader plane, industry cannot assume any contrary role of social policy; indeed this is not even necessary as the Hungarian service sector is relatively underdeveloped and suffers labour shortages, and because infrastructural developments require the transfer of labour.

In small countries, where the dimensions of the national economy limit the extent of reliance on the domestic market, the external economic orientation of industry, especially of its modern sectors, is a long-range necessity. In the case of Hungary the situation arising from the deterioration of external and internal conditions fail to offer any reasonable alternative to more intensive connections with the international industrial division of labour. The priority of the aim of closing up to this division of labour does not imply a neglect of the internal market. In the early 1980s about 70 per cent of industrial output in Hungary has gone to the domestic market. A great deal of experience shows that, in the case of new exports, the level of production for domestic consumption is the most important form of recommendation for the foreign buyer. A poorly supplied and highly absorbent internal market usually draws off the commodity funds necessary for exporting. An approximate balance between the needs, conditions and supplies of external and internal markets is organic to export-oriented industrial development. Because of limitations to an expansion of domestic use (rationalization of productive utilization, reduction of domestic consumption and accumulation), the dynamism of industrial growth depends first of all on the export performances; thus the increment in production, on an average of the national economy, can be placed on the external markets.

The proper tendency and character of industrial policy, however, are determined not only by the conditions of geography and equilibrium, but also by the time-factor and the main points of product specialization. It must also be remembered that retirement age will be reached or closely approached by those groups of the population who may have been active participants or observers of the historical situations of the 1940s and 1950s in Hungary. These are those people who through their education and experience have been motivated by a greater measure of political or national commitment. A growing part of the active population is made up of age-groups who take a more indifferent attitude to social and national problems, are materially motivated and less aware of social and political hazards and the empiric background to different attitudes. This difference between generations places rigid limits on opportunities for that kind of economic

policy which, in the interest of a more favourable variety of long-range development, would impose greater and more lasting sacrifies on those who perform the historical present. The tasks of development policy and national security are thus closely connected with the time zones related to the formation of tolerance of the population. Thus there can be no preference given to policies which, by generating severer tensions, can bring into question, at a short or middle range the possibility of maintaining the social system through its internal forces. The indirect political risks involved in the raw-material and energy-material development programmes, which tie up a considerable amount of existing resources and promise compensation only in the long run, are not negligible either. Therefore, the time limits of socio-economic strategy, based on the strict observation of the limits of political tolerance, require us to close up more steadily, to keep step with international developments and to make decisions on economic policy which promise a swifter improvement to the situation.

The development strategy which gives preference to exploiting natural resources and practised up to the recent present is not to be disapproved of in itself but because of the given conditions, the pressures of tracing the path of growth, the limitations to accumulation and the other development tasks. The functional connections of the practicable path of growth seems to indicate that the prospects for long-range development of Hungarian industry are determined not so much by the natural resources as by the exploitation of the human reserves of growth. An expedient management of natural resources can be evolved accordingly.

Among industrial policy-makers and economists a long debated issue is the expediency of centrally defining the main points of production, the objectives of production policy. Since the early 1970s in Hungary a specific kind of what might be called structural-policy agnosticism has been growing stronger. Because of debatable selection of central development programmes and also because their realization fell short of expectations, this agnosticism in the present economic insecurity rejects a central appointment of the main directions of industrial development and expects the market mechanism to designate the main points of practicable specialization. Of course, in a period of changes of phase in the world and national economies the future constantly becomes less predictable while the elements of uncertainty and the hazards of decision-making are multiplying. In such a historical situation drawing up over-detailed central objectives in production policy makes it really difficult for particular economies to adapt. Certain principal courses and emphases on specialization, however, can be extrapolated from internal conditions and international connections even

in spite of the present-day world-wide uncertainties. Thus, it does not seem too risky to observe that improving the international efficiency of the processing industry is the most topical objective of the Hungarian economy and crucial to a long-term solution. The functioning of a market-oriented system of economic management and economic environment would bring out the comparative advantages and disadvantages of particular industrial products. By using a strategy of moving into gaps in the market, certain signals can be picked up. This can be done within the framework of engaging more intensively in international co-operation between enterprises. The signals this obtained can draw an appropriate profile of specialization without central interference where good opportunities for finance are available through self-generated resources or from banks, and this should apply to 60 to 70 per cent of the products of the processing industry.

Allowance should be made, however, for the fact that in the processing industries a certain amount of output is of great importance from the point of view of obligations concerning national security, supply guarantees, technical adaptation or exchange earnings; this may be unprofitable from the point of view of business management but it is kept up by central preferences in practically all countries. Permanent or temporary central preferences are also necessary in order to expand the research and development-intensive industries which produce mainly for export and which often prove profitable not to business management but to the national economy. In the case of Hungary we can regard as such in addition to the food processing industry but also the bio-engineering, pharmaceutical and telecommunication industries, vehicles manufacture, incandescent lamps, sanitary equipment and machine tools. It is not, however, practicable to extend the scope of centrally encouraged objectives of export-oriented specialization, that is to raise it above 20 to 25 per cent of industrial production.

Rearranging the main points of development strategy is inconceivable without development resources. Activities which promise well for the future can also be encouraged by existing resources if there is more regrouping of resources, or more withholding of them from inefficient spheres. The area of Hungarian economic policy that is perhaps the least developed and most backward by international standards is the policy of regressive development —it is entirely lacking. The minimization of the costs of structural obsolescence, the budget charges related to the prevention of sudden occurrences of enterprise or sectoral breakdowns in case of delay, the effective distribution of resources, the demand for resources by the exporting sectors, the requirements of industrial cooperation with the developing countries—are

all pressing for a rapid execution of centrally well-considered and well-ordered programmes of regressive development.

Existing Hungarian resources, however, are insufficient to finance structural transformations at an accelerated pace. A path of growth that demands innovation and technical improvement, a strengthening of competitiveness and developing the infrastructure usually requires very intensive investment. An internal economic prerequisite for this is to enhance the economy's ability to save, to encourage individual and enterprise savings, to decide on appropriate real rates of interest and real capital expenses. Since movements of capital and technologies are concurrent, the development of certain sectors requires direct, close co-operation with long-term foreign capital, the evolution of joint ownership, especially in sectors which are entering on the oligopolies of the international markets.

Finally, it is worth emphasizing the closeness of mutual relations between development strategy and the management system. Already the economic reform of 1968 drew up the requirements of creating a division of labour between planning and marketing and consequently establishing enterprise autonomy. The practice of the past fifteen years has remained considerably in debt for the fulfilment of earlier expectations. The management and organizational forms which promote the linking of individual, group and national interests were not introduced in industry, particularly in large-scale industry, as was the case in agriculture. The conditions and requirements of international industrial development in the 1980s, the elasticity inseparable from the pursuit of up-to-date production, the speed of decision-making, and inter-company relationships have brought still more into prominence the importance of independence in enterprise decision-making for industrial policy. A system of enterprises each of which has a direct interest in its own performance and operates independently with varied forms of ownership and different sizes of organization can define products, means of execution, a management mechanism and organizational structure of its own.

In macro-economic management of industry on the other hand, in parallel with escaping from the present storm, out of the emergency calling for extraordinary technical measures, those direct methods of management—almost directives—must be replaced by those whose management strategy is of an indirect, coordinating character. The functions of industrial development policy, in the strategic sense, are shifting away from direct management to the ownership role. These would include the regulation of the economic environment, the tasks of promoting technical development, national economic security, the development of activities or new enterprises to help the internal structural integration and to improve the infrastructure.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONTACTS OF HUNGARIAN STATISTICIANS

by

VERA NYITRAI

For Hungary—as for every country of small size with an open economy—it is of fundamental importance to be able to observe regularly, on the basis of reliable and comparable information, how one's position changes in the world. This need has brought forth as early as the end of the fifties, but especially since the beginning of the sixties the demand that Hungarian statistics should offer a thorough survey of social and economic progress, comparing it to the surrounding countries, analysing the similarities and the differences. This requirement has induced the statisticians to join all those international statistical organizations and institutions which make the comparison of corresponding series of data—on the basis of comparative methods—possible.

In fact, a dual link is involved:

— First, the contemporary progress of the country's society and economy requires regular statistical comparison, within a narrower range in the framework of the CMEA and, in a broader range, within the framework of the United Nations, and especially the European region.

— Second, statistics—with its armoury of means—induces the decision-makers to survey regularly the process of the realization of decisions also from the aspect of the extent if fits into the international economic and social processes, existing differences, and the extent to which these can be deduced from the particular endowments of the country, and the degree to which we are getting closer or perhaps further removed from the vanguard in respect of some concrete economic and social phenomena.

This dual link has determined the progress of Hungarian statistics in the past decades. In order to be able to offer a brief survey of the achievements, it seems advisable to examine first of all the international medium in which we work.

The world statistical network

The UN Statistical Commission was established soon after the foundation of the United Nations Organisation. This is an operative commission the tasks of which include the stimulation of the development of national statistics assuring their comparability to the greatest possible extent, coordination of the statistical work carried out in the specialized agencies of the United Nations, the establishment of a central statistical service within the United Nations, assistance to the various regional organizations of the United Nations in the collection, processing, interpretation and publication of data, and last but not least the development of universal and unified statistical methods. These tasks were formulated by a June 21, 1946 resolution of ECOSOC

(Economic and Social Council of the United Nations). The Statistical Commission has relied almost since the moment of its inception on regional units, on the continually growing statistical services of regions of differing degrees of development. It is obvious that the European region had a special importance already in this first period, as it includes the economically most advanced countries. For this reason, ECOSOC resolved that the European statistical organization should be established as soon as possible. This resolution involved three regional conferences of European statisticians, of which the third, which was held in June 1953, resolved the organization of a permament body under the name of Conference of European Statisticians. This body has since looked after the system of statistical information of the countries of the most advanced economic and social structure, including not only those of Europe, but also the United States of America and Canada.

Cooperation was, of course, close from the start between the Conference of European Statisticians and the UN Statistical Commission. The Conference (abbreviated CES) monitored statistics from two aspects right from the beginning: first from that of the producers of statistics, and second, from that of the users. This dual aspect differed from the fundamentally production orientation of the UN Statistical Commission. It was a considerable advantage of this dual aspect that, from the point of view of the user, the Conference also became its own critic, and this target-oriented solution in the development of statistical work became especially advantageous in Europe.

CES is a body composed of the heads of the national offices of statistics which holds its sessions regularly in June every year. Representatives of the specialized agencies of the United Nations as well as of the interested intergovernmental organizations participate. Leading statisticians of other regional organizations are also invited, including representatives of the Common Market, of the OECD, and of the CMEA. Since the heads of all national offices of statistics participate in the work of CES, the Conference has been outstandingly stable in the past three decades, not only in its composition but also as regards continuity and the succession of issues discussed. In the course of the years, the Conference began to deal not only with the fundamental questions but also numerous questions of detail, and this necessitated that in addition to the regular annual June plenary sessions a number of permanent and ad hoc committees should meet, in keeping with the directives and working programmes passed at the plenary sessions. The working method of this organization is that experts of the Secretariat or of a country, or entrusted reporters put forward proposals on the different methodological or analytical subjects, which the experts debate at meetings or in written form, and which are in the last resort approved by the annual plenary conference. In addition, the contacts are, of course, even closer, since the parties keep in touch through correspondence, informal meetings and bilateral meetings as well.

In the recent past, but especially in the past decade opportunities were considerably expanded for bilateral and multilateral comparisons of European countries in the most varied areas of the economy and society. CES always stimulated these kinds of comparisons, the countries usually obtained their results in the form of reports and mostly made good use of them.

The UN Statistical Commission and the CES

Since the UN Statistical Commission operates on the basis of representation, the various countries participate in it only in certain periods. The member countries elected for a three-year period represent on the basis of rotation the five regions of the world (Western Europe, the European socialist countries, America, Asia and the Afri-

can countries). This means also that the smaller countries get the opportunity to return to the UN Statistical Commission only after relatively long interruptions. Continuity over a longer period has been ensured by the continual presence of the representatives of the great powers (the most important countries as measured by their UN dues). However, this practice was interrupted at the last elections, when the rotation method was extended also to the largest countries, leaving first France, and in the next period the USA, out of the rotation.

The work programme of the UN Statistical Commission is linked closely to the statistical work programme of the different regions, and within this conspicuously to that of the European regions. Thus, in essence, Hungarian participation is not limited to those three-year periods when Hungary, on the basis of rotation (and in accordance with the country's interests), is elected to the Commission, but she contributes to the activities of the UN Statistical Commission also when she is not a member. This means that e.g. in the last decade it occured on numerous occasions that certain methods were experimentally tested in some countries, or their opinion was asked, and in such cases the opinion and observations of the Hungarian statisticians were almost always requested, and from time to time also their participation in the experimental work. A typical example is that Hungary participated in the elaboration of the UN energy balance even when she was not a member of the Statistical Commission, or—to mention another example—Hungarian experts participated from the first moment in the elaboration of the uniform nomenclature and classification systems of the United Nations. Some Hungarian experts are invited by the United Nations to attend conferences or to submit written opinions not as national representatives but as the experts on their subjects.

We participate in the work of the UN Statistical Commission in other ways too, since as Europeans we become acquainted within the CES with all those questions in which the Statistical Commission is engaged, and attempt also the domestic application of the latest methods. One example is environmental statistics, in which we participate also with inter-country comparisons, i.e. with the Scandinavian countries: Sweden and Finland.

At the present stage our participation in the UN Statistical Commission has become even closer, because we participate not only as commission members, but at the 22nd session I was elected for the next two years Chairman of the Statistical Commission. (It is for the first time that the Commission has a Hungarian chairperson, and also that this office is filled by a woman.)

Hungary has a close working relationship with the Conference of European Statisticians. The President of the Hungarian Central Office of Statistics has participated since 1954. Hungarian statisticians have made their marks almost everywhere on the colourful palette of the methodological and analytical work of European statisticians. Even a brief outline of this work would far surpass the limits of an article. However, recording the questions on which Hungarian statisticians have contributed to the essential and substantial development of European statistical work, and which had a fertilizing influence on Hungarian statistics makes it a manageable task.

Testing and utilization of European statistical methods

An inventory leads one to the interesting conclusion that we were able to contribute creatively to the development of European statistics on those subjects which were of outstanding importance also from the aspect of the progress of the Hungarian economy and society. It can consequently not be considered a coincidence that Hungarian statistics were already dealing with international

comparisons after the 6th plenary session of CES (June 1958). Among these the comparison made on the basis of household statistical censuses and the comparison of housing conditions have outstanding importance. Both subjects were regularly considered in Hungary over the past two decades and a half, Hungarians continually surveyed and compared their situation to those in countries on various standards of development.

Another extremely important action was the participation in the European programme of the agricultural census of 1960, and this too had a definitive importance over a long period. Hungarian agricultural statistics applies methods which correspond to the requirements of domestic socialist progress, but it has never lost sight of the important consideration that its methods should be comparable to those used in European capitalist and socialist countries which have an advanced agriculture.

It is also since the beginning of the sixties that we have participated regularly in the comparison of the national accounts and balances systems. At the beginning only few countries announced their interests, and these included Denmark, France, Holland, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary. The idea was raised at the 1960 plenary session of CES that if the similarities and differences between the national accounts and balances applied in the different countries were explored more in detail, this would facilitate the comparison of important data from the countries concerned. This leads directly to the present day as it was at that time that it was considered worth-while to put together the national balances in Hungary not only on the basis of the methods developed here, but also in accordance with UN recommendations, and this, in fact, was done later. In the last decade the researcher has been able to find figures for the Hungarian economy in the Hungarian Statistical Yearbook and the other important publications stated both in accordance with the national accounting and balance system and with the SNA (System of National Accounts) recommended by the United Nations. There are few countries in Europe which apply both methods, but for us this has the advantage that we are able to compare our data regularly—from the aspects of both the production and utilization of the national income—with that of countries in Europe the economies of which are more developed than ours. At the same time we are, of course, also able to compare our data in detail with those of the community of the socialist countries, since the application of the methods adopted in the CMEA also occurs regularly in Hungarian statistics. This is perhaps the most important element in international comparison, because any part of the economy can be examined through the national accounts and balances system on the basis of data recorded and published in several forms. In connection with this recording of data, together with the French National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) we have undertaken to bridge the national balance systems of the United Nations and the CMEA. Although it may not be of the same importance, nevertheless it is not immaterial that we have been able to supply data to researchers and users of the economy in both forms of compilation; thus, for example, we were able to participate in the supply of data to the World Bank and to the IMF without having to organize a large volume of new statistical information.

We have also been engaged for approximately two decades, within the framework of the CES, in the measurement of labour productivity, primarily in industry. Here too we have contributed creatively to the work of the CES, first by preparing a series of theoretical studies on the analysis of factors affecting the level of productivity, and second, by carrying out as early as 1962 bilateral comparisons of productivity in the whole of Hungarian industry and in its most important branches. Among these the

Austrian—Hungarian comparison of the level of productivity of industrial labour stood out, being the first comparison carried out by two countries of a different social and economic order; the methodological conclusions and results of this we put at the disposal of the CES. We can claim without bias that this work was of very great importance for those taking part in the experiment (namely the industrial statisticians of Austria and Hungary), and it was highly regarded by other European countries as well. It was no coincidence that the plenary session of the CES took the initiative of linking this work with the later French—Czechoslovak comparison of industrial productivity so as to prepare a quadrilateral international comparison of industrial productivity; in this the organization and preparation of the analysis was undertaken by Hungarian industrial statisticians. This work entered the annals of the CES as a multilateral international comparison of industrial productivity, and has so far unfortunately not been followed by further experiments on the part of other countries.

The contribution of Hungarian statisticians to statistical work in Europe has also been reflected in the solution of several technical questions: we have also participated from the beginning in the activities of the Working Party on Electronic Data Processing, which was formed in 1957. The activity of this working party was later arranged in such a way (very successfully) that in addition to its annual meetings, seminars have been regularly held every year since 1971, these being the ISIC (Integrated Statistical Information Systems) seminars. Both in the meetings of the working party and in the seminars the opportunity exists for data-processing experts from different countries to acquaint others with their most recent achievements and experiments, and to make recommendations on the application of new methods. In recent years this family of dataprocessing experts undertook a new and important task: the Statistical Computing Project, the purpose of which is to draw up recommendations for planning and developing automated statistical information systems, through a better use of computers. Hungarian statisticians share in the work and management of this project.

In the past decade new branches of European statistics have been developed: these include environmental statistics and several parts thereof. Hungarian statisticians have contributed to this work both as experts and within the working parties. Results from the trilateral Swedish—Finnish—Hungarian work are also submitted periodically for debate to the CES and its working parties.

Since Hungary is very interested in comparing her achievements with those of other countries on the basis of reliable and sufficiently detailed data, it is especially important that we should dispose of nomenclature and classification of activities which ensure comparability. We were consequently very pleased by the initiative which first aimed at integrating of foreign trade nomenclature and attemped to find ways between the UN and CMEA systems by grouping and—where necessary—breaking down nomenclature. We have had a share in this new work (together with our Austrian colleagues) from the beginning, and in more than one case one of our experts worked for months at the UN Secretariat in order to create bridges of the necessary precision between the two kinds of systems.

In the mid-seventies a further initiative was under way. The UN Statistical Office and the Statistical Office of the European Economic Community set up an expert working group in which the interested regional bodies and eight selected experts (one of these, from the outset, is a Hungarian) are active in order to establish in the not too distant future a uniform world sectoral classification and a product nomenclature in harmony with it. The latter should be in a breakdown which satisfies the requirement of recording production, foreign trade, domestic trade, and material

inputs. This is a rather ambitious endeavour, and when it got under way the idea was that at the beginning of the eighties this harmonized uniform system would be in operation. However, in view of our present knowledge and the rate at which preparatory work has gone it seems realistic to assume that the experimental stage may start after 1985. It will probably be possible at the beginning of the nineties for not only the offices of statistics but all interested UN institutions to work on the basis of a worldwide uniform industry and product classification system. I must emphasize that this is work of extreme importance and of gigantic proportions which demands that all the interested organs (for example, GATT) should subordinate their other special requirements to the system of uniform comparability. As is well known, there are already interests (in many cases financial interests) concerned, and progress will not be easy. For us participation in this work is very important, first because we can make our voice heard on the most important international statistical questions, and secondly when developing our methods we can bear in mind the uniform classification system which is expected to function in the not too distant future.

Of course, in addition to the work described here in rather a fragmentary way, Hungarian statisticians have cooperated and continue to cooperate in many other areas too in the compilation, harmonization and development of European methods.

There are certain sacrifices to be made so that we are able to participate in the development of statistical work in all the areas we are interested in. I consider it a sacrifice, for instance, that we sometimes have to put our best experts at the disposal of the United Nations or the European statisticians for several months at a time in order that they can work on some concrete task. This undoubtedly means a lot to the individuals concerned, since they are able to broaden their professional expertise in the course of this attachment; however, the Central Office of Statistics also profits since they return with more experience and wider horizons. Although their work had to be covered at home by somebody else, this disadvantage is compensated for many times over. In addition we, of course, also give our best experts the opportunities to spend from time to time a longer or shorter period in developing countries and to assist in the development of their statistical system or some important elements of the latter. This carries advantages for the individuals concerned only, but we must make this sacrifice too in order for Hungarian statistics to be in the bloodstream of the world statistical system.

Hungarian participation in the agencies of the United Nations

Very important statistical work is being done in the various agencies of the United Nations. For example, in the development and application of agricultural statistics does vital work FAO; in the development of international labour statistics it is the ILO that is concerned; similarly WHO in health statistics and in the development of social statistics; in industry UNIDO; in the areas of culture, education, the social and natural sciences and mass communication UNESCO. Although these agencies regularly harmonize their methodology through that recommended by the UN Statistical Commission and further developed and broadened in the European region, they very often themselves develop further details within these methods, since specialized requirements mean that in certain areas some questions need to be defined more sharply. Let it be mentioned by way of an example that FAO holds agricultural censuses at regular intervals; in these Hungary participates regularly through the recording of the data from both large and small farms. We consider it very important that the Hun-

garian Central Office of Statistics should join in this type of work. Let me survey a few examples:

Inspired by the UN, what are called longitudinal investigations are conducted in several countries. The data of those who had married in certain years are observed continuously over the years. Hungary has joined in such a longitudinal investigation by keeping track of couples married in 1966 and 1974. The basis of the observation is the questioning of the wife. This series which joins investigations of a similar type in other member countries, has called attention to numerous specifics which contain new information for domestic decisions. We observe, for instance, how lasting the marriages are, to what extent the acceptance of children motivates the lasting relationship, how many children are born, what factors motivate divorce (the latter is especially important in Hungary where the divorce rate has been for decades one of the highest in Europe).

Joining in the work of WHO we are investigating mortality and the factors influencing it; the basis is a uniform mortality nomenclature in the development of which Hungarian statisticians have also had a role. This is again one of those recording problems which are of great interest today, because on the one hand we have the favourable situation whereby average life span has increased considerably in the past three decades, while on the other we also come across a rather high mortality rate especially in the active age-groups, those in the 40–50 years age-group, and no longer only as regards men but also women. Consequently it is necessary to explore in the statistics of the causes of death—and also compare internationally—the causes and factors of the relatively high mortality rate.

We have statistics in a good many areas where the CES cooperates with the special committees in the European region. So, for instance, in the case of the engineering industry, metallurgy, transportation, the chemical industry this cooperation can be seen concretely in the publications emanating from it; the foundations were laid over a relatively long period spent on methodical reconciliation and the joint development of the information system. In statistics on the engineering industry a Hungarian expert has participated in the comparison over several years and in compiling a publication on comparing engineering data from the CMEA and the West European countries and the structure, standing and role of the European engineering industry, one of the consultant authors was Hungarian (the present author).

New paths in cooperation between statisticians

In recent years it has become a regular practice at the plenary sessions of the CES, and following this at the sessions of the UN Statistical Commission for the participants, the heads of the statistical office or chief statisticians of the various countries to discuss two or three important questions of principle. The method, which has been very successful in Europe, is that one country undertakes to report in detail on a given topic, and five or six (the number is not fixed) countries undertake to prepare complementary reports. On the basis of the main report and the complementary reports there is a broad debate in which usually almost all members of the Conference participate. This debate does not always end with a recommendation, in many cases the organized exchange of experience itself is the result which assists in the development of the domestic statistical system of the countries participating.

At the regular plenary Conference of European Statisticians the following topics were discussed in recent years:

— To what extent do the offices of statistics engage in analyses?

— What is the position of official or state statistics in the general information system of the countries?

— The human resources in statistical services.

— The determination and practical assertion of priorities in statistical work.

— Inclusion of modern data processing in the work of the statistical services.

— Measurement of the quality of statistics; quality versus timeliness.

— The dissemination of data.

— The substitution of sampling for the full collection of statistical data.

— The adaptation of statistics to the requirements of the users.

— The full or partial substitution of administrative records for population- and housing censuses.

The statistical community of the world, and primarily in Europe, is also beginning to experiment with a new method, the method of seminars. The first seminar of the heads of the offices of statistics of the most developed European and non-European countries was held in Washington in 1977, and this was followed by a seminar held in Moscow in 1981. At the seminars the key questions were also discussed through submitted papers and complementary reports in a broad debate. The questions included such problems which had already been discussed in several forms, as the advantages and disadvantages of the decentralized and the centralized statistical information system; the effect of the progress in data-processing on statistics, the relationship between statisticians and computer technicians; the situation and new tasks of the teaching of statistics with special regard to the development of statistical informatics, etc. The success of these two seminars (the materials of which are also published in the form of separate publications) also draw attention to the circumstance that it is worthwhile to hold also such less formal meetings every four or five years (not more frequently) concerning very concrete groups of questions, since these may stimulate the development of new methods.

Hungarian statisticians participate in all these contacts. The aim is to make the material available to the general public, and we publish much of it in Hungarian.

I mention last but not least the personal relations between the senior staff of the Hungarian Office of Statistics and those of other countries in and out of Europe, as well as of international organizations. These personal contacts often make it possible that we should become acquainted with new areas, that we should share in the elaboration of new methods already at the stage of conceptualization, and not least that we should also become known in the world. I believe that nowadays, when we are linked by a thousand ties of international cooperation to the United Nations and its member countries, statistics and the international contacts of statisticians may be considered one of these ties. This is why we are pleased to accept far from easy offices and tasks with which the international organizations entrust us, Hungarian statisticians. This is why we endeavour to develop contacts not only with the countries which have an advanced economy and statistics, but also with the developing world, becoming acquainted with the problems of statisticians working there and if possible assisting them. The nursing of international contacts is a duty in which we were initiated by our great forebears, such as Károly Keleti, the 150th anniversary of whose birth we celebrated this year. We transmit our experience to the next generation in order to promote our common cause, that is better understanding among the peoples of the world.

SÁNDOR CSOÓRI

POEMS

Translated by William Jay Smith

MEMORY OF SNOW

Winter sometimes changes its mind
and snow begins to fall
desperately, in thick flakes, as if winter
were afraid it might not last the night.
Best thing to do at such times is to disconnect the phone,
the doorbell, mull some wine on the stove,
pore over old letters,
and go back over your whole life also
as if it had never happened.
As if no gun barrel, no wanton eye had ever been fixed on you,
no ragged hand had reached out for yours,
and all that was politics, love, booming bells
awaited you again beyond an ocean.
Best thing to do at such times is to imagine
that you can still cry when you've lost your head,
and that the wind will blow lilac blooms
over beds with their torsos and rumpled pillows;
and that on Doomsday
you can stand in a light shirt, light jacket
beyond smoke, taverns, cemeteries,
staring down a country in grand decay,
your head filled with the memory of snow,
snow, snow falling like plaster silently peeling
from a cathedral wall.

LIKE SMOKING GRAVEDIGGERS

I awake,
open a window,
stare at length at the frozen Börzsöny hills,
at length at the Danube, that mirror laid out on the ground.
A gull hovers over it, crumpling,
as it swoops down. Or can it be that I don't see well
and it's your lost white head-scarf
that the wind found after long years in the bushes
and flung unexpectedly into the air?
Someone from the window
of the speeding train
gazes on this same floating,
crumpling whiteness,
and does not turn pale,
does not collapse,
does not pull the emergency brake,
and does not hear the frozen earth
thudding constantly on your coffin:

He just stands there in the speeding windowframe and stares:
a city with noisy towers, garden gates, awaits him;
he lights his cigarette, the smoke drifting from him,
indifference drifting with him;
he also leaves me alone with this hill,
just as smoke from the cigarettes of the gravediggers
left me with their yellow mound.

TAR SEAL

Christmas has gone, New Year has gone,
gone are those long wanton days
between Twelfth Night and Candlemas.
Feeble snowfalls put me in a blue funk.
All I did was sit and wait for the arrival of a poem, but my knees
like slag heaps kept crummbling down.
In the evening sometimes I put on a record of the gale

and listened to the howling of the poplars, the leaf-cries,
and came close to howling myself:
leave me alone, let me be, happy wind, truer than I,
you make an iron pail wobble around, whining through the air above my heart,
and I don't want it, don't want it.
But as if someone had put a tar seal to my mouth,
I just sat there, numb.

FOR OUR TENTH ANNIVERSARY

For É. K.

I had faith in you although your hands were empty.
I had faith in you although wherever you marched in with your
progenitrex hair, even the women would give a start;
they placed their long cigarettes in the ashtray
and walked on as if they walked with your legs.
Something of the full-blooded night always walked with you,
something of creation always walked behind you.
The city tasted of almonds where you had breathed upon it.
Once an old drunkard fell upon my neck
in sumac-scented Lujza Street, and said, sobbing,
"Such women don't exist any more, Sir,
they're extinct like the silky big game in the Carpathians,
they don't see you home through rain and slippery snow;
you must light a candle to honour that woman every night;
even I will light a match to her. Amen."

IT IS TO DIE THAT I KEEP WALKING NEAR YOU

Midnight. The delicate elderberry bushes
    go on growing in the dark
as I walk among them toward your cemetery,
a little drunk and down at heel
    like the poets of old.

In purple novels the Moon moves at such times
with a diamond violin
an bats sweep down, grazing:
I hear nothing but the whine of a sickly thrush
under the bushes
rambling in its dream.

I cry, mourning for you, stop and begin to sing.
I watch the stars race at break-neck speed,
and must think of you constantly, you
who became unthinkable
like the afternoon of the world and the wound of the air
around your mouth.

A word, a whisper, breaks through the dark: you were burning.
Another: that you are the memory of this dirt road
down which I stumble blindly
and that the irredeemable dust
will retain your wanton footprints.

Words, words. The heartbeats of nothingness
within me: words going to their death
just as I go to my death in the evenings
near you
down the path of the elderberries, through the heavy dust.

THE SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS

It's the Sunday before Christmas... What shall I buy you?
The sky is open, the shops are open.
A little more life, if that were possible,
pine-needle-scented, for Christmas is coming,
and the year's last few sunny days,
and then the heavy, unrelenting winter rain,
which would wash me back with you into the earth.
While alive, you made the chestnut foliage here
bob around my head,
death was no more—

And, oh, what that terrible change of place did to me!
You nowhere, and death circling round
even on the opaque cambers of green Mason jars;
crawling out of my books
like hungry ants from a breadcloth,
bringing darkness,
anger, shame,
crowding nothingness from stairway corners,
instead of your nightgown, your shroud—

Lord, I have just realized that everyone is mad—
everyone Death has touched,
twisting a strand of cold hair around the tongue.
You, too, you who make me talk to myself
all along Martyrs Road,
while alkaline melting snow drips on my forehead from the roofs,
drop after drop, as on one condemned.

THE LOOK-OUT TOWER

Up here above the city the wind will not
bring smoke
nor searing noise,
nor the squeak of the tram, nor time either.
The Balkan turtle-dove,
with its boat-shaped belly, flies more leisurely
above the look-out tower,
and seeks a parking place
on the disk of the rusted-out, wartime air-raid siren.
Our eyes meet like those of two expelled natives.
It keeps flexing its wings under the soft sky;
I keep flexing my blood-drained memories,
raising them up through the autumn air.

THE MEANING OF COMPARATIVE RESEARCH ON THE QUALITY OF LIFE

by

SÁNDOR SZALAI

Nobody seems to know who coined the term quality of life, which designates a concept that has lately achieved a remarkable popularity in public debate, small-talk, and scholarly discourse alike.

The term enjoys world-wide popularity: *Qualité de vie* is as much on everybody's lips in France as *Qualität des Lebens* in Germany, *katchestvo zhizni* in the Soviet Union, or *az élet minősége* in my own small country, Hungary. It recurs more and more often in complaints made by representatives of the developing countries in the United Nations about living conditions in their homelands.

Where does this somewhat curious term originate? Everything points to its fairly recent birth.

An inquiry among the participants of two symposia devoted to the discussion of various aspects of the quality of life at the Ninth World Congress of Sociology (Uppsala, 1978), and personal correspondence with a score of eminent scholars in this field, produced little to go on. Some of the older colleagues faintly remember having met the expression for the first time in the late 1950s or early 1960s—but not in a scholarly context, rather in popular discussions or general-purpose publications (magazines, newspapers, leaflets, etc.), mostly in connection with problems of environmental pollution, the deterioration of urban living conditions, and the like.

In sociological writings the term achieved currency only in the last ten or twelve years. The 17-volume International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, published in 1968, shows no trace of it either in its comprehensive index-volume, or anywhere in its articles and bibliographies on related issues.

In an examination of twenty major encyclopedias and dictionaries published in five world languages between 1968 and 1978, I could not find a single entry having quality of life as its subject or making a direct reference to it.

My sample included, of course, the latest editions of the Encyclopaedia Britannica (30 volumes, 1974), La Grande Encyclopédie Larousse (21 volumes, 1971–78), Bolshaya Sovietskaya Entsiclopediya (30 volumes, 1970–78), Meyers Enzyklopädisches Lexikon (25 volumes, 1971–79), Lessico Universale Italiano (20 volumes, 1968–78), The New Oxford Illustrated English Dictionary (2 volumes, 1976), and so forth.

To be precise, I found just one sole indirect reference to quality of life, buried in an article about pollution on pages 9638-9 of the great Larousse, where it is stated that the French Ministry of Environment has been renamed *Ministère de la Qualité de Vie* in 1974.

The semantics of the term

Even as a scholarly term, quality of life has as yet no clear-cut and generally accepted definition. Let us approach its meaning by observing some of the semantic and pragmatic peculiarities of its current usage.

a) Quality of life is not an antonym of quantity of life. The latter term is not used at all and it would be difficult to attribute any sort of meaning to it. Those who threw in 'quality of life' as a slogan in the early popular debates about environmental decline and urban decay may have tried to express by this formulation their opposition against the then widespread tendency to identify progress in human welfare and well-being with economic growth and the rise of its commonly used numerical indeces, such as per capita GNP, industrial output and consumption figures, etc. As of now, however, the word quality is understood in the given context in its first lexicographic sense: it refers, roughly speaking, to the more or less good or satisfactory character of people's life. As the Concise Oxford Dictionary puts it: "quality—1. Degree of excellence, relative nature or kind or character (e. g., of good, high, poor, etc. quality)..."

b) The word life is to be understood in the context of quality of life as referring to human life only. Our present concept of the quality of life is not readily applicable to the life of hummingbirds, crabgrass, or diphtheria bacilli. It is, however, admittedly difficult to specify exactly to what aspects or manifestations of human life we refer when we speak of its quality: what is called everyday life, the whole course of life or only a certain stretch of it, perhaps only its present state, or what? Much of this will depend on the concrete aim of the given study on quality of life, on its conceptual and methodological framework. (But isn't there a grey zone surrounding the meaning of the word life even in biology?)

c) The term quality of life—or, briefly, lifequality—is rarely if ever used in the plural. We may distinguish between high and low quality of life, between the quality of life in this or that country, in this or that social group, but it would require special explanation if somebody spoke in this connection of the quality of lives or the qualities of life.

d) The best approach is probably to accept quality of life as a single indivisible generic term and to attribute at first some vaguely circumscribed meaning to it that can be subsequently clarified and specified by more research and reflection. This is by no means an exceptional procedure. Venerable scientific terms like number, force, energy, or more recently evolution, national income, attitude, etc., have gone through the same process.

e) The whole current literature on quality of life bears evidence to the fact that no full agreement has been reached even among specialists in this field on the exact place that the study of life-quality occupies among related social studies. Quality of life forms part of a whole family of research concepts which all try to approach the quiddity of human welfare and well-being. But whatever the research on the quality of life may have in common with related work on social indeces, standards of living, ways of life, and the like, it has nowadays developed into a specific line or direction of social studies that has its own ways to ask questions and to seek for answers, its own angle of attack on the general problem, and—as we will now try to show—even a birthright of its own.

How are you?

When two people meet who have not seen each other for a while, their conversation will be almost invariably introduced by some such question as 'How are you?', 'How goes it?', 'How is life?'

This is, of course, not a custom. English lexicographers document the history of 'How are you?' with ample quotations going back to the fourteenth century, which include also such now obsolete variants as 'How fare you?' They point out that 'How do you do?' came up as a 'phrase inquiring after the health or welfare of the person addressed' in the first half of the sixteenth century but subsequently lost its meaning as a question and was transformed into a 'mere greeting or salution' (Oxford English Dictionary, vol. V: 428–9).

Giving some thought to it, it does not appear to be all that natural and self-explanatory that people who meet should introduce their conversation

by inquiring about each other's health and welfare, still less that they greet each other with a phrase that originally represented a question of this kind. Nevertheless, this seems to happen almost all the time and nearly everywhere.

The French and the Germans, in the same situational context, ask *'Comment ça va?'* and *'Wie geht es?'* (both expressions literally mean 'How goes it?') The Italians modify it a little: *'Come sta?'* ('How you stand?'). The Russians ask: *'Kak vy pozhivaete?'* ('How do you live along?'). The Czechs give a slightly different turn to the question: *'Jak ce mas?'* ('How do you have yourself?').

Beyond the Indo-European languages, the Hungarians ask, just like the English, *'Hogy van?'* ('How are you?'). The Chinese use the formula *'Hao pu hao?'* ('good—not good?'). The Mongolians ask *'Shain bano?'* ('Are you well?') but nowadays expect no other answer than the repetition of the same phrase —very much like the English in the case of 'How do yo do?'

In ancient Babylonian inscriptions the term 'sha'alu shulmu' relates to the ritualistic question by which diplomatic envoys inquired into the welfare and well-being of the Prince before delivering their message to him.

Even the modern word salutation refers back to the Roman goddess Salus, the goddess of health, welfare, and prosperity, probably the closest approximation to the ideal of a good quality of life of which the Romans could conceive.

Taken in its literal sense, such a how-are-you type of question seems to be rather too personal and too indiscreet to serve as an introduction to a friendly conversation, or as a sort of greeting. It is by no means an innocuous question: 'How are you?' goes right to the jugular of the person to whom it is addressed.

It is difficult to imagine a more direct way to grill a person about his most private business—his own existence, the state of his affairs, the kind of life he lives, how he is faring in life, and last but not least how he views and evaluates all that—than by throwing the question, 'how are you?' in his face.

Admittedly, this question is not as deeply inquisitive in its customary daily application. It serves in such a situational context only as a more or less formal expression of friendly interest and sympathy, of a possible readiness to help, etc. Still, even in such an application the question has some depth and requires some kind of an answer.

The truly amazing thing is that people are in general capable and willing to answer this kind of question.

There is a nearly endless variety of brief but rather well-nuanced expres-

sion at their disposal for this purpose: from the short and often insipid 'fine' and 'okay' up to the jubilant 'I feel great' and 'it's a joy to live'; from a pensive and pondered 'so-so' or 'tolerably well' down to the art-stirring 'I feel rotten' or 'it's a hell of a life'; and so forth. Various sorts of expressive grunts and gestures can complement or sometimes even replace verbal answers. It sometimes happens that people refuse to reply by returning the question, by remaining silent, or by talking about something else. In other cases they may become quite talkative, recount what is good and what is bad in their life, brag about their successes, and lament about their failures and sorrows.

The answer people give to the 'How are you?' question may be sincere, dissimulative, or even deliberately misleading in some cases. Nevertheless, it gives proof of the cability of human beings to keep in evidence the life they are living, the conditions of their existence, and—what is still more remarkable!—to form an integral judgment about their life. They are able to qualify their life as a whole along a scale that extends from delightful to terrible, from enjoyable to miserable, from easy to hard, from full to empty.

The initiated reader will certainly have noted that I did not inadvertently quote the antonyms recounted in the previous sentence. These are effectively the extremes of scales which researchers are wont to use when they let people point out how they feel about their life, or about life in general.

There are of course many other ways to find out how people see and qualify their life than asking them direct questions or letting them put their finger on some point of a scale. Contemporary research on quality of life has developed a whole arsenal of rather ingenious and sophisticated research tools and methods for that very purpose.

My argument here is simply that the age-old and ubiquitous how-are-you type of question has as its vaguely defined object the expression of an interest in the health, welfare and prosperity, in the goodness of life, or as we may say it the quality of life, of the person addressed.

If the question 'How are you?' is addressed to a gravely ill person, then it is obviously expressing a specific interest in his or her health. Addressed to a man whom we visit for the first time in his new home, or after having been appointed to a higher position, etc., the question may be understood as being primarily directed at the person's welfare and prosperity. All this may vary depending on the concrete situation in which the question is posed.

What is so peculiar about his 'How are you?' question, and what makes it so remarkable, is its general adaptability, its multi-faceted character, its comprehensiveness. Although it may refer in one case more or less speci-

fically to health, in other cases to unspecified conditions of living, satisfaction with the environment, happiness in marriage, financial, prosperity or anything else, its general meaning and its semantic aura is that of a question about well-being, and about any fact or factor that has an influence on a person's well-being. To put it briefly, 'How are you?' and all its variants ('How goes it?', 'How is life?', *'Comment ça va?'*, *'Kak vy pozhivaete?'*, *'Hao pu hao?'*, etc.) are essentially questions about people's quality of life.

Somebody may ask at this point: do animals also have a quality of life?

Allow me not to extend the discussion to plants or bacteria, though in one of G. B. Shaw's famous plays a bacillus sitting on the bedside of a sick person discusses at length how his own life is made miserable by the patient's fight against the infection.

At least as far as higher animals are concerned, they certainly not only show reactions to various pleasant and unpleasant stimuli but are also able to display moods that express integrally how they feel about their actual situation.

Although a man may answer the 'How are you?' question sometimes with a mere grunt that does not express much more than a state of 'animal well-being' (temper or distemper), the how-are-you type of question normally seeks for far more complex information.

'How are you?', 'How goes it?', 'How is life?', and all similar existential questions wish to find out not only factually how a person fares in life, how his living conditions are, how his affairs shape up, and so forth. Willy-nilly, just being put in the form of a personal query, these questions elicit also information on the addressed person's perception, view, or judgement of his own life, his existential state, the sort of life in which he is involved.

The how-are-you type of question is by its very nature a double-edged one: it cuts objectively into the life of a person, and its cuts subjectively into the person's mind or mental state who lives and perceives that life.

This is the main justification for saying that the age-old and ubiquitous 'How are you?' question is essentially directed at people's quality of life. No matter how we try to define the quality of people's life, we cannot get around the fact that a person's existential state, well-being, satisfaction with life, or whatever is determined on the one hand by the exogenous (objective) facts and factors of his life, and on the other hand by the endogenous (subjective) perception and assessment he has of these facts and factors, of life, and of himself.

Human beings have the unique faculty not only of being aware of their own existence but also of being able to qualify it, in parts or as a whole,

and to give a global assessment of it. Moreover, they seem to feel some urge to communicate with other human beings about all that, i.e., to ask and to answer pertinent questions.

This explains, at least to some extent, why people are cable and willing to reply to such questions as 'How are you?' and 'How is life?'. And this may perhaps serve also as a partial explanation of the strange custom, that people have asked and are asking how-are-you type of questions almost all the time and nearly everywhere.

Modern research on the quality of life embodies in some sense the aboriginal curiosity of man about how his fellow man lives and grasps his life, or life-in-general, for that matter.

As se have already pointed out, there are many other related lines of social research which converge on people's welfare and well-being, their living conditions, their style or way of life, their living standards, etc. There is even a new branch of socioeconomic investigations, called the study of social indicator systems, which tries to set up and integrate a whole series of numerical indicators in order to determine how well certain social groups or strata, even whole societies and nations, live. Many important applications have made these investigations more or less indispensable to social and economic planning, public policy decision-making, even marketing research, etc.

The core of research on the quality of life differs from all these related directions of research by its special effort to measure the combined effect that both the facts and people's perception and assessment of the very same facts have on human well-being. It is the interaction of the objective and subjective that determines the quality of human life; or, as an old adage has it in less high-faluting terms: feeling miserable about life can make life as miserable as being miserable in life.

Thus, the concept of the quality of life has the same dialectical double-edge as the venerably old, maybe even primal, but still very actual and omnipresent 'How are you?' question.

It is this double-edgedness, this unique feature of interactive objectivity and subjectivity, that sets apart quality of life from other concepts of human welfare and well-being. It is also what connects this topic of research with the primeval curiosity of man about his fellow man's life and about the way in which this one perceives and assesses life.

This is the main reason why I maintain that research on the quality of life represents a distinct direction of social research which has its own specifics and even a birthright of its own—in fact, a much older one than the relatively recent use of quality of life as a scholarly term might suggest.

One possible way to study quality of life is to ask people how they feel about their present life, or maybe about the whole course of their life. After having elicited only some such overall answers like 'tolerably well', 'fairly miserable', or 'I feel quite happy', the interviewer may proceed further by asking why the individual respondents feel the way they say.

Some people will need more or less help from the interviewer to answer the why question, but others may quite spontaneously enumerate their personal reasons for being content or discontent with life. They will perhaps also express in some way the relative weight or priority they attribute personally to one or another factor that plays a role in their life: good or bad health; satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their job, or with their financial situation; success or failure in marriage; quiet family life or trouble with children and relatives; pleasant or unpleasant neighborhood; the state of business, the general political situation, and so on.

Such an enumeration will never be complete. Neither are people conscious of all factors that influence their feeling or judgment about life; nor are they willing to speak about everything they may have on their mind. Much will depend on the skill of the interviewer.

But is it at all sensible to speak about completeness in the enumeration of factors that may influence a given person's quality of life? Obviously, each individual's life is determined by an infinite set of facts and factors that makes it unique in every moment of his existence.

One might even say that the true quality of an individual cannot even de discribed in scientific terms, and is certainly not a topic of social research. Biographers, writers, and poets may make an attempt to describe it, like James Joyce in *Ulysses*, perhaps Marcel Proust in *À la recherche du temps perdu*, or Shakespeare in Hamlet's soliloquy which sets up a whole list of factors that can make a man's life miserable ('. . . the whips and scorns of time, The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely, The pangs of dispriz'd love, the law's delay, The insolence of office, and the spurns, That patient merit of the unworthy takes', etc.).

Neither Hamlet's quality of life nor that of Diogenes, who lived in a tub and enjoyed it very much, nor that of St Simeon Stylite, who spent his life standing on the top of a column, can be rated by social research in respect to its high or low level, and the same applies to the life quality of more ordinary individuals like Mr John Doe or Ms Jane Doe.

I do not know of a sociologist who might have tried to measure the quality of life of an individual person. To be sure, individuals are often inter-

viewed by social researchers about their perception of life, about their view or judgment on their own life or the lives of other people. But the data gathered this way are used by researchers of life quality only to evaluate the life quality of that social group, stratum, age cohort, society, or nation to which the respondent belongs.

Thus, in its actual application as a social research concept, quality of life is a collective attribute that adheres to groups or categories of people, not to individuals. Mr John Doe or Ms Jane Doe, taken as individuals, have no mortality rate, or per capita, GNP no number of cars per 1,000 inhabitants, and also no quality of life, at least none that could be individually determined, measured, evaluated, or interpreted by social researchers.

But isn't then any measure or indicator of the quality of life to be regarded as a social indicator, very much like other social indicators we have just mentioned?

The answer to this question is affirmative—with some qualifications.

Measures or indicators of quality of life are social indicators inasmuch as they characterize (mostly in quantified terms) the well-being of certain groups or categories of people. Traditional social indicators are ordinarily understood as referring to objectively observable facts and conditions of social life, without regard to people's own perception and assessment of these facts and conditions. In contrast to these traditional social indicators, the indicators of life quality are a new and special kind of social indicator that are based both on objectively observable facts and conditions of life in society, and on people's own subjective perception and assessment of the life they live under the given circumstances.

There is little doubt that human well-being, and maybe even the welfare of society in the usual sense, are affected by both the objective and subjective aspects of people's lives.

And here we may get lost again in the quagmire of objectivity—subjectivity arguments.

It has become a persistent nuisance in research on life quality that serious scholars lead endless discussions about the moot question whether objective quality of life should not be distinguished from subjective quality of life; whether objective or subjective factors are preponderant in determing people's well-being; whether subjective indicators could not be reduced to, or replaced by, objective indicators, and so on.

Consider a headache: there are few people who would doubt that persistent headaches can make life pretty miserable, and most people would grant that no headache can exist without the objective presence of a head and the subjective presence of an ache.

Similarly, we may point to the fact that anybody who wants to use such massively objective socioeconomic indicators as income data or housing indices for the determination of people's well-being will have to rely (in the absence of research on life quality) on such entirely subjective estimates in respect to the relative amount that a certain rise of the income level, or some additional living space, contributes to people's welfare. Similarly, the entirely subjective confession of a man whom we have interviewed that he dislikes children can hardly be evaluated with regard to its impact on that person's well-being without finding out quite objectively whether the respondent has children of his own, or never had children in his life, and none are even around in the place where he lives. The analysis of grossly aggregated objective socioeconomic data has, in fact, contributed as much to the study of the quality of life as the sophisticated evaluation of interviews reaching into profoundly subjective depths of people's attitude to life.

We owe the bulk of our present knowledge about quality of life to survey research on public welfare, on people's needs and need-satisfaction, on human concerns, on well-being and happiness. Much of this research was done by scholars before anybody thought of quality of life. Nowadays, however, research on the quality of life occupies a broad sector of current survey work carried out by a vast interdisciplinary array of social scientists.

Some reflections on comparability

Groucho Marx once overheard a man complaining, 'Life is difficult!' He immediately turned to the man and asked, 'Compared to what?'

This witty remark by the great comedian is a good question to which some thought ought to be given.

The life of an individual is, of course, unique and incomparable in a certain sense. It is his irreplaceable property which he cannot exchange for anything else. He can change it to some extent, make it perhaps less difficult after a while. But then this less difficult life will be as much part of his life as his earlier more difficult life was. And then again the question can be posed: 'This at first more difficult and later less difficult life was more or less difficult compared to what?' There seems to be no way out of Groucho's vicious, or rather witty, circle.

Nevertheless, the study of the quality of life does compare lives in some sense: maybe not individual lives that are, one by one, unique in their individuality, but it certainly compares the quality of life that characterizes various groups or categories of people.

Research on the quality of life selects certain measurable parameters, dimensions, or indicators of life quality, and rates the life quality of various groups and categories of people by this method. Economists compare in a similar way the wealth of nations or the standards of living in various countries and regions.

But is the life quality of different groups or categories of people comparable? After all, life is so different in this places and that.

Let me answer this question for a start by simply affirming that practically all things that one might think of are comparable in some respect. The problem is always only in what respect they ought to be compared, and whether it would be worthwile to compare them in any given respect? For instance, are three orchids, a hockey stick, and a pair of blue jeans comparable?

Of course they are comparable, and in more than just one respect. They can be compared in respect of their price, and it is even worthwhile to compare them in this respect before you chose three orchids, or a hockey stick, or a pair of blue jeans as a gift for somebody. They can be compared in respect of their weight, and this might have to be considered when the gift must be airmailed to its recipient. They can be compared also in respect of their chemical composition, or—being all made out of organic materials—in respect of their relative carbon content, though I have at present not the slightest idea what useful purpose such a chemical analysis may serve. But who knows?

The question whether the life quality of different groups or categories is comparable does not even make much sense in this form. After all, we have seen that the whole notion of quality of life has been developed by social scientists in order to establish some standards for the well-being of people, for the goodness of their life as they experience it, perceive it, and assess it.

The quality of life as a scientific concept or construct is thus per se a comparative one. This does not mean that it is very easy to make good use of this concept in comparative social research.

Purposes of comparative research on the quality of life

The social researcher makes comparisons almost all the time. Social data are tabulated mostly for the purpose of making comparisons among the various rows and columns of the table, or maybe among some of its single cells. Similarities and differences are the daily bread of social science.

However, when we speak of comparative social research as a speciality,

we do not have in mind this generally comparative character of social studies. We think then of comparisons made among whole social entities of some sort: countries, cultures, societies, for example, or the state of affairs in a single society but at different points in time.

It is in this sense that we speak nowadays of cross-national or cross-cultural types of comparative social research, time-series comparisons in comparative social research, etc.

The beginnings of comparative social research reach very far back in time. Aristotle may have been the first to engage in such studies. As we know, he collected the constitutions of one hundred and fifty-eight Greek city-states in order to make a comparative study of them. Alas, most parts of this great work are lost. In 1890, good fortune brought to light a papyrus in Egypt containing just a single part or chapter of his comparative study, 'The Constitution of Athens' *(Athenaion Politeia)*. This fine essay, which any modern comparatist might envy, combines a document-based investigation of the Athenian polity with a structural and functional analysis of the workings of the Athenian political system, founded on Aristotle's own methodical observation of contemporary political institutions and procedures in Athens.

Casting a glance at later developments, we may observe that the term statics itself meant originally the comparison of states in respect to their population and various other natural and socioeconomic resources—mainly in order to assess quantitatively their war potential.

In its modern development, comparative social research became associated with more peaceful purposes. One of these was of course the enrichment of knowledge about the evergrowing social world, about the ways in which people live, behave, feel and think all over the globe, or at least in the accessible parts of it. Another purpose of comparative social research that attained great importance was the testing of the validity of social theories or hypotheses on a far wider basis than the one on which they were originally established.

But quite apart from serving such intra-scientific interest, comparative social research became also part of a real movement in social science which set as its aim the improvement of social reality by learning more about it.

An ever-growing part of comparative social research is concentrated on the study of human welfare, on factors that contribute in different places or at different times to the raising or lowering of wellbeing.

Comparative research on the quality of life fits into this movement. Indeed, this has proved to be the greatest driving force of its contemporary development.

Comparative research on the quality of life has turned into an undertaking of especially great import since global socioeconomic development arose as a world political issue in its present form. Abysmal differences in welfare, and even in the satisfaction of the most elementary human needs, gape between the less and least developed countries and what is called the developed world. In addition, there appears to be massive evidence to support the view that the differences cannot be adequately described by the kind of socioeconomic indicator to which we have become accustomed in the study of Western civilization, nor can really efficient assistance be devised and given to those in the direst need if only that kind of indicator is used for guidance. Perceptions of life and ideals of a good or at least somewhat satisfactory life seem to differ radically over such enormous distances.

Comparative research on the quality of life has an important mission in the clarification of this situation. It may have something to contribute to the improvement of the lot of mankind. And perhaps our whole concept of the quality of life and of the various levels and forms of well-being will have to be changed, revised, or reconstructed in the course of the accomplishment of this mission.

ANDRÁS FODOR

POEMS

Translated by Daniel Hoffman

LITHOGRAPH

To insert once more
between the stone slabs of the years
something squeezed from pain and living,
as evidence that I exist.

There still remain those for whom
I have to answer to fate.
Here's my report: Choice
and room for manoeuvre are continuously shrinking.
After many leave-takings
the steps of those who survive
are more and more difficult.

They say it is the fighters
who everywhere perish.
The confessors of values, the obsessed
partisans of the mind
will be confined to museums before long.

Wherever I look, the enthusiast,
who still puts on the garments
of other peoples' causes,
is forced to develop
his responsibility into an institution—
in the end only around a hospital bed
can he, for a short time, cordon off
his personal independence, for
neither lindens nor hedges any longer
guard his fruitful solitude.
It is true, what was said:
'Machines will crawl over our souls. . .'

There is no road, only the posted
prohibitions, lost time's
set of teeth grinding on the asphalt.

So those who stand aside
can find some consolation,
they don't need
to live to see
how desolate the world will be.

Or is our continuous existence also
only eternal self-deception?
During adaptation's relay-race
how can we foresee
how posterity will look back on us?

Perhaps they too will say
there was once a time
when the grass beside the motorways still was scythed.
Sometimes one could sense, above the concrete strip,
fragrance of the hay.
And from beyond the lots, the smell of marshland.

Perhaps even our grandchildren
will tell their sons:
. . . the earth once felt like our home.

Or will they?

FIASCO

On the tracks near Balatonberény
two eight-year-old boys
attempted suicide

They had scarcely got it when
they wanted to throw it away!
How much protest crammed
in two 20-kilo bodies that could bring

on the open track 905 tons
to a dead stop.

Of the symptoms what has the child psychologist,
the doctor, teacher, parent, the expert
on their growth's magical acceleration to say,
what answer has the sociologist?

Have we acquired beforehand
the new norm of world fashion
not
as shamefully late as
the production of jeans?

It will be written down in the minutes
  at such-and-such curved section of the track
  the 98-axle express
  carrying live freight
  braked within the permissible
  650 meters
  as prescribed by regulations.
  No railway property
  broken, nothing damaged.

The engineer will receive
  a commendation
and he can wonder: the chances
  of what lives had he in his hands
when he could scarcely tear
the twisted bodies
  from the rails.

BENT TIME

In the snowy desert at the outskirts of town
under a violet sky the houses
rose up like crags.
We went in somewhere and
in the cramped apartment
joy blazed.

Three strange women
delightedly welcomed me
like a long-lost cousin.
I had to drink in place of everyone,
had to talk for everyone,
I was afraid they'd knock the doorpost down
to bring in another
overladen table.

Was there ever a greater folly
than escaping from love?

It must have been two in the morning, when
I rang you up.
  Over an immensity of kilometers,
a chaos of jumbled hours,
your voice came through so clear it seemed unreal.
  Not asleep, you said, but ironing,
as usual, beside the clothes-chest.

And I am down again on the dead streets.

What is it I still have to find?
It was around here, once, the warmth
of the nape of a neck with pinned-up hair
nestled in the palm of my hand.
And from the row of houses opposite
resounded the mocking cry:
  —And now you believe she loves you?

No, I don't believe—
  I just watch
from the riverbank the game of dominoes
of the skyscrapers high above:
how they keep putting their bright
glowing cards into the sky.
I can feel two undelivered letters
burning the drawer at the hotel reception.

Time bent like a horseshoe,
your two poles at once attract and repel me.
There's no escape from you,
and no returning.

RANSOM

The sun has turned over and shines aslant,
a butterfly teeters through the boxwood.
The message of things is silent.
On the twig of Judas-tree in the blue vase
the coins don't stir.

Only the carousels of brooding
keep on whirling crazily.
Each one bound by his own worry,
so many faces!
I hardly know
how it is I still exist
in the freedom of this
stolen, artificial solitude,
torn form the fate of others, distant,
when we don't meet.

Maybe, the rifts of self-oblivion
will close for good,
that's why I pull
on the bridle
of deceptive time,
to make me return among you.

The fugitive will never have
a worthier ransom than
the impatient message:
—Come, the prisoners await you!

THE FUNERAL

(Short story)

by

PÉTER HAJNÓCZY

When he entered the flat he fancied that there was a smell. "He's been dead for two hours." He glanced at his watch automatically, for something to do, anything. "How long does it take for them to smell anyway?" But there couldn't have been a smell: the body of his father, the Old Man, lay in the bedroom on the cherrywood bed beside his mother's bed; and between the bedroom and the vestibule where he now stood uncertainly, lay the long, dark hall and the dining-room cluttered with enormous, heavy furniture.

He imagined walking up to his father's bed—an unavoidable obligation that had to be met sooner or later—but he felt neither pain nor sorrow; the flat itself was alien, unfamiliar to him, as if he had never seen it before; the rooms seemed too big, the baroque furniture old and shabby. He fumbled in his pockets, took out his cigarettes and a box of matches. He wondered briefly whether it was proper to smoke in such circumstances, then lit his cigarette anyway; he would smoke it here, in the vestibule, he decided, "naturally he would not smoke in there." The strong, acrid smell of tobacco reassuringly dispelled that other smell from inside.

Then he heard the telephone ring, and the muffled, weepy voice. "Mother." He puffed at his cigarette and flicked the ash into the small copper ashtray on the table under the mirror. "She's rung up the whole town." He found his mother's preparations—wholly understandable from a practical point of view—somehow improper, a form of betrayal against his dead father and the dignity of bereavement. But then hadn't he had three glasses of cherry brandy since they notified him at work of the "unexpected and dreadful blow" that has befallen them, the family that evoked a strange and obsolete way of life... And now, instead of joining his mother—after which he must go to the bedroom—here he is standing idly, passively smoking his cigarette. "Well then, what should he do, in fact?" The answer

seemed clear and definite: he has come to be beside his mother in this "hour of need." At the same time he knew that his mother needed real help, true support—money and practical advice, above all, on matters of her future; she did not need his irresolute, reluctant presence, he who had left the parental home at the age of seventeen and has been living with a "taxi dancer" for eighteen months. Mari will be here soon, the "taxi dancer," he thought, glancing at his watch, and she'll find her feet as soon as she arrives: she'll traipse around, organizing things, making arrangements, will receive the friends and acquaintances coming to offer their sympathies tactfully, unobtrusively, and will serve them coffee and drinks; in other words, she'll be a natural participant in all that happens without "forgetting her place" for a moment.

At all events: she at least shall have a place, something to do...

"Son... your father is gone." He held the receiver in his hand and heard her sobs break. "The alarm went at a quarter to six. He sat up in bed all of a sudden, clutched at his heart and fell back on the bed. He was dead." He sensed from his mother's voice that she had acquired a certain proficiency in the recounting of these events: so he, the only child, now the only male member of the U. family, had not only not been the first, but not even among the first to be told the sad news.

"So now: is this the most important, is this what comes first?" He had to admit that it was not he himself, not his sentiments that merited particular attention, no, not by a long shot.

"Father, perhaps."

At all costs he wanted to find a "point of reference" which would determine his own position and his role. The body covered with an eiderdown, the hand that weighed heavily on the bed, then the still, pale, unshaven face, the closed eyes, the slack mouth which—he had heard—would be expertly and unnoticeably tied up by those whose job it is to prepare the dead for burial. Though all the arrangements seemed to be centred around the thing that his father had become and which every visitor would inspect, heads bowed, in the bedroom, the boy felt that his father had nothing to do with the thing that lay in there.

Suddenly, intrusively, his father's carefully polished and treed shoes appeared before him; these shoes and he were of approximately the same age. They were heavy-soled, old-fashioned box-calf shoes made to measure; there is undoubtedly a pair of them standing on the small square of carpet by the bed, set there with loving care the night before. Close by stands a chair, a yellow, pure silk shirt, a grey silk discreetly patterned tie and clean underpants hung on its back, "he changed his linen every day," the boy thought,

seized with a feeling akin to pride, as though he had come upon a new piece of evidence of his father's neatness. "He shaved every morning." No, if he expected visitors, or intended to go out himself of an evening, he changed his shirt and shaved for a second time.

He looked into the vestibule mirror: his face was bristly, his hair long, matted, unkempt. He was ashamed of himself and decided on the spur of the moment to have a shave and a hair-cut before going into the bedroom. As if, all at once, he wanted to acquire at least a semblance of neatness—he had never given a thought to such things before—as if he had always needed the orderliness that his father realized in the smallest, most insignificant-seeming gestures, such as in the cleaning of his shoes in the bathroom... He had separate cloths for "dusting," putting on the polish and shining his shoes; the cloths, brushes, and tins of polish were arranged in perfect order in a wooden box which had an appointed place under one of the white-coated chairs. The polishing of shoes was a ritual just as shaving, washing, getting dressed, eating, and smoking were rituals in themselves.

"He wasn't even a real smoker."

He undoubtedly is, though he does not smoke cigarettes through a heavy ivory holder as his father used to—the holder could be screwed apart and a ball of cotton wool placed in its body for the purpose of filtering out the tar from the smoke—his father, who smoked only after meals, only on occasions when he could smoke unhurriedly, with deliberation, leaning comfortably back in his chair, perhaps a glass of wine at hand...

He crushed out his cigarette in the copper ashtray. A sudden, fierce craving for a drink assailed him, beads of alcoholic perspiration stood out on his forehead. "He was drunk yesterday." And then: "There's brandy in the liquor cabinet." To gain access to the liqueur cabinet he must first cross the hall to the dining-room where his mother is on the phone; she may be sitting with her back to the liqueur cabinet and if so he can perhaps have a tot unobserved, no, a swig out of the bottle would be better, that way he can avoid the tell-tale tinkling of glasses. Finally he decided he would not go into the room but would "have a look-see in the kitchen and the larder." There was nothing in the kitchen. But in the "larder"—where he expected to find sour cherries in rum or green walnuts in alcohol, potted in September—he found a three-decilitre bottle of Diana embrocation alcohol which was almost full. He sniffed the bottle suspiciously as though expecting to find that it held vinegar, but the bottle did not contain vinegar. The boy lifted the bottle to his lips and, nostrils flared, drank.

"But—did father guzzle like this?"

Hiding the remains of the bottle behind pots of apricot jam standing on

one of the shelves he remembered that his father has used the stuff to clean his ivory cigarette-holder. And besides—though he may not have drunk the stuff he was not averse to fine wine and four times a year he got truly soused. Once—at night on the Margit Bridge—he fell out of the tram and landing on his back broke the ten-litre demijohn of "real Somló" that he was carrying in a rucksack. But he had to admit that even when drunk his father never lost contact with the order he had established for himself, conferring an almost moral significance to the tiniest detail that formed part of his ritual—for example he always cleaned his shoes, hung his coat on a hanger and folded his trousers with the crease just so, even if he could hardly stand on his feet.

"I'll go down to the barber's and have my face and my hair seen to."

He tiptoed out of the larder, lit a cigarette and went into the toilet. While he urinated he inspected the consoles of the cistern; the stay-plates were fixed to the wall with three screws and formed two mischievous, impish little faces: two screws for the eyes, one for the mouth, the long pixie-nose being the console itself, and the little face was laughing at him, questioning and passing judgement upon his vain attempt to achieve that semblance of neatness—going to the barber's. In any event the Diana spirits of salt had proved beneficial: his face had become slightly flushed, his eyes bright, and even the smell had gone when he stepped out of the toilet into the vestibule. He glanced at his watch.

"Mari will be here soon."

Which means he can't put off going in to his mother much longer—and offering sympathy with his breath held to keep her from smelling the tell-tale fumes, then with his head bowed and his hands clasped in front of him he must go into the bedroom. Suddenly he remembered that he must go to the barber's first.

"And if he were to shave here?"

But he knew that his father shaved with a straight razor that he did not know how to use; and there were no razor blades in the house. His conscience pricked: why hadn't he learned to use a straight razor? His father had wanted to teach him but he had kept putting it off and though he never openly admitted it, thought that only "gentlemen of the old school" like his father used straight razors; young men of seventeen used razor blades or electric razors.

"We're going to Abyssinia to hunt lions."

It was as if his father had spoken. He was eleven again and sitting beside the "Old Man" in bed, listening to him round-eyed. In a couple of years—he'll be *grown* then—he'll be going up to Oxford, and during the summer

holidays they'll be going to Abyssinia to hunt lions... His father's voice was low, a little throaty from the cigarettes, and he spoke of Oxford and Abyssinia as if he were speaking about the most everyday things like how they were going to get through the winter with the ten hundred weight of coal they had in the cellar, or how they were going to get their chamber-sized rooms "thoroughly warm." But he knew his father would find some sort of solution, things would "sort themselves out sooner or later," and they would not be cold in winter. He knew—from experience—that this was so, and the strange, unfamiliar, and aristocratic-sounding Oxford and Abyssinia may very well be real and within reach.

"First you must graduate."

But he had not felt like studying. According to his teachers he had been "clever but lazy;" he was not really "lazy," but instead of swotting he was always busy with more *important* things. He read Verne, Karl May, and Cooper, played with his toy fortress, lead indians and cannon—there was a spring in the copper barrels of the cannon and you could shoot at the soldiers defending the fortress—and tarred and polished the players of his button football team.

A sense of loss overwhelmed him—not the probable loss of Oxford and Abyssinia but the ultimate, definitive loss of a foundering, apparently desirable way of life that wouldn't have been a bad thing to try one's hand at. Above all he grieved for the loss of those women whom a young man in a dinner jacket would have beckoned to his side in the dance-hall, redolent of fine tobacco and perfumes, of an exclusive brothel—young girls and mature, ample-breasted women; he had to renounce the parties and tennis and riding on autumn mornings, had to forego cards and tables laid with Herend porcelain, lighted with candles and attended by waiters who served dry Martini with ice and olives as an apéritif... He believed his father had once lived *thus*; the morning coat and dress-suit covered by a protective layer of linen hanging in the wardrobe, the top hat in its sheath of yellow silk in a cardboard box on one of its shelves, the gold cuff-links and the seventeen Malacca canes placed in a shabby claret-coloured metal cylinder—umbrella-stand—in the hall all testified to it...

"But: there is no lack of taxi-dancers and there is the spirits of salt."

After all Mari is a beautiful girl and in the course of their strange nightly revels he has had occasion to come into closer contact with some of her friends. But at the same time he had to admit that these "risky" evening gatherings which normally began with several rounds of drinks, continued on his orange-upholstered settee or Mari's double-bed until the small hours of the morning or the next night and ended with the departure of pale,

heavy-eyed, tottering ladies after they had been sick in the basin or the tub could not compete with the Old Man's past way of life. He suddenly remembered that somehow the Old Man had got to know of these outings and on one occasion, instead of reproaching or condemning him, he had asked a couple of timid, childishly curious questions concerning the *details*... All this happened in the company of a bottle of "Somló" which his father had bought and, treating him as an adult perhaps for the first time in his life, poured into two cut-glass wine-glasses.

"Was it possible that the Old Man envied him his way of life?"

The boy could not answer the question. His father's curiosity may perhaps have been due to his wish to discover at all costs some kind of exceptional, out-of-the-common talent in his son, who had successively neglected all other duties. Was it possible that his father felt something akin to respect at the thought that his son is some sort of an out and out lady-killer?

He remembered that four years ago it had seemed he really might become "somebody" through swimming. He was the star of a small swimming club at the 50 and 100-metre breast-stroke; he took a good place in the national championships, his medals and certificates were displayed in the glass cabinet in the hall, tangible proofs and mementos of a contestant of "uncommon talent." But the career that seemed set for success was broken off when he reached sixteen; he began to frequent horse-races, pubs, and finally Mari, the "taxi-dancer," who was seven years older than himself and his main reason for leaving home... What's more he left school and became a "help" to central heating-fitters, then carpenters and stonemasons. And on top of it all Mari was not simply his mistress—which his father could make some allowance for—but his fiancée, a fact that horrified his family, dreading the day he would marry "that person." He could give no account of how it came about that his father deigned to speak to Mari at all and even received her into their home.

"Oh... you... you... fabulous little rabbit of mine!"

He could see it all before him: Mari standing in front of the full-length mirror and getting dressed. She has just come out of the bathroom and is wearing only high-heeled shoes, stockings the colour of onion-skin and suspenders. He is on the double bed, propped up on his elbows, reading the newspaper, then he looks up at Mari, gets up off the bed, goes to the girl, kneels down before her and presses his face against her thighs. "Oh... you... you... fabulous little rabbit of mine!," he hears her say in her throaty voice, and lifts his head for a second to look at her face; her moist mouth is half-open, her tongue pressed to her upper teeth. And suddenly

a most incongruous thought crosses his mind: he feels that he is doing a most reprehensible thing, he should be studying at home, in the corner of the dining-room, in his "nook," yes, he should be sitting at his desk, working out maths problems: in other words, should be occupied with tasks that befit a young lad of his age. But the sense of duty that struck him in that strange moment passed as soon as it had come. He lay beside Mari on the double bed and they kissed—he had already "come" once—and he felt that he would soon want her again, and would want her a third time, and a fourth, and neither of them would want to do anything that day except make love: then with trembling legs and heavy eyes would go out into the kitchen to get something to eat but would want each other a final time and would end up sitting on the edge of the bed, pale, sweaty, each smelling of the other, drinking a big glass of brandy.

"Would she have gone to bed with the Old Man too?!"

Not likely, but possible, he thought. At any rate she had somehow swept his father off his feet, if not literally... It is more probable that the Old Man, since his only son had confronted him with a *fait accompli*, had simply accepted the facts, no doubt in the surreptitious hope that this youthfully ardourous passion, fired only by carnal desire, would not prove to be long-lived. He probably suspected that Mari was the first big love of his life and thought that the consequences, especially a leaving of home that was almost an escape, had been due to his failure as a father. He remembered that the first time he had stayed out all night—he had spent *the whole of the following Sunday* with Mari and got in sometime around midnight—his father was waiting up for him, reading in bed, and when he stepped into the room he said: "You could have come home for lunch, son." His voice was not reproachful, just tired and sad. "You'll find your food in the fridge, heat it up." He shut the book—it was by Saint Thomas Aquinas—and placed it on the wine-red eiderdown. He stood at the foot of the bed, hands clasped behind his back, eyes downcast. On the other bed his mother lay asleep. The boy was sincerely ashamed of himself; not for staying out but because by doing so he had caused his father pain; at the same time he was glad of this intimacy, pleased that they were together, just the two of them, and that the Old Man had—he felt—shared his pain and sorrow with him, a feeling that shall one day become his unalienable heritage and property.

"He must go down to the barber's."

But shall he have another swig at the spirits of salt, or shall he keep it in reserve and have a beer and a brandy at the Rózsafa? He lit a cigarette and seemed to hear his father's voice: "No ace, bank!," and the slap of cards on the table; it was Christmas Eve—his mother had gone to bed and was

asleep—and they were drinking walnut brandy and playing twenty-one until five o'clock in the morning. Around two o'clock they ran out of brandy and the Old Man found a one-litre bottle of a 96 per cent solution of pure alcohol and they drank that, laced with water, from pale-green brandy glasses. It was the first time his father had offered him a drink or cigarettes; until then he had only had a furtive glass or two of wine in the kitchen or the larder, and at home smoked solely in the toilet.

He puffed at his cigarette and flicked the ash into the copper ashtray. He thought of his duties, of the work that awaited him when he got back from the barber's, and had made that particular journey to his father's bed. His mother had probably called the local panel doctor to give notice of the "tragedy that smote down upon her, and upon her only;" the doctor will come to examine the deceased and establish—officially and definitively—that the Old Man is dead. He will draw up his final report on the basis of which the registry office of the borough council will issue the death certificate; it will be his job to deliver his father's identity card and the final report of the panel doctor to the registry office, because only then shall he receive the death certificate which he must hand over to the official in charge at the National Undertaker's in order to get his father buried. They must decide on the day and the hour of the funeral, must decide whether it shall be first, second, or third class; must come to decisions concerning the text of the death notice, the number of notices to be printed, and the posting of these to friends and acquaintances. Flowers and wreaths must be ordered, tips must be given to the undertaker's men and last but not least he must find some suitable clothes to present himself in at the funeral; the trouble is he has neither a grey nor a black suit, all he has is what he is wearing: a shabby, discoloured, one-time brick-red sweater worn at the elbows, a pair of yellow corduroy pants baggy at the knees, and a threadbare, filthy trench-coat. Very soon now his father's three sisters will arrive; they may come before Mari does and will surely take the poor widow in mourning "under their protective wings;" one of them will go out into the kitchen to make an omelette for his mother who shall not want to hear of eating "in these terrible moments when she has hardly had time to realize the blow that the infinite and inscrutable will of God has seen fit to afflict her with." But finally she will eat the omelette, made from six eggs, with shreds of bacon in it, and she will leave only the last few mouthfuls on the edge of her plate because she really thinks that by eating she is desecrating the memory of her husband, that God will catch her in the act and will list this sin alongside her other sins.

In the end he will go down to the barber's and have something to drink

before and after getting shaved. Unexpectedly he began to chuckle to himself and, though he tried to stifle his laughter—knowing full well how improper it was to laugh in the place where his father's body had hardly had time to get cold—his chuckles became louder and louder, his shoulders shook rhythmically, and his eyes brimmed with tears. He remembered the couple he had seen a few days ago standing in front of the toilets of the Rózsafa: the woman was one of those curvy, full-busted blondes in a tight skirt that outlined her panties; she took a mirror from her handbag and began to pat her hair into place. The ladies' and the mens' are side by side in the Rózsafa and face the bar. The man stood close beside the woman,—he was wearing a wedding-ring, same as the woman—and fumbled with his tie and cleared his throat as he got near. Then he embraced the woman, they kissed each other on the mouth, and went into the toilets.

"They said good-bye before t h a t."

But shouldn't he be thinking of his father, lying motionless on the bed after the heart-attack that took him; or at least about the bronze nightlamp standing on a small circular marble pedestal on the bedside table, to which a bronze clown is propped, legs straddled, hands in his pockets, staring at his father's face? Slowly his laughter died. The Old Man himself did not always behave in a "fitting" manner, he thought, and this seemed to exonerate him somehow for his improper fit of laughter. . . To be sure his father had sometimes bawled at his mother, like when certain questions were put to him concerning his Sunday afternoon walks. (All the boy knew was that his mother was jealous of a red-haired woman with whom, according to her, his father was conducting a "filthy, disgusting relationship unworthy of a family man.") It happened every now and again that his father broke a chair in the bathroom and turning his back on his sobbing wife, went for a walk with his son in the neighbourhood of Zugliget: the boy gathered horse-chestnuts from the piles of leaves swept beside the pavement into the leather bag he carried on his shoulder while the Old Man walked silently behind him. They usually got back from these "outings" late at night and the Old Man never said a word to his mother during supper; sometimes he did not speak to her for days and when this happened his mother would have crying fits; to placate her husband somehow she would cook his favourite dishes and made the maid who lived in the servants' room off the kitchen clean every inch of the flat. Otherwise his mother was always tired and ill. She was afflicted with a permanent disorder of the bladder, among other things; as the Old Man used to say, "she peed as much as a tigress defending her lair and her blear-eyed young." Apart from this she suffered from migraine, bilious colic, cardiac failure, gripe, articular

disease, and a hundred other ailments, and in answer to his father's inquiry as to why one could not get a decent meal in the house, why the cutlery was filthy, or wasn't it about time she dusted the furniture, she always alleged her ill-health or the laziness of the maid and her face assumed the expression of profound suffering proper to the unjustly accused and defamed. She spent whole afternoons lying down in the darkened room with a cold compress on her head or a bag of hot salt on her stomach, and if one of her friends came to call, after being summoned on the telephone by that faint, expiring voice, she used to say: "I know the Dear Lord shall be summoning me soon," or "I shall soon be meeting my dearest mother and feeling the infinite gentleness of her blessed hands," or "When I am no more my husband and son will learn that my every thought and deed was designed for their good."

"Yes, he will by all means go down to the barber's." This decision filled him with a gratifying tranquillity, as if he had performed his duty in the face of somewhat chaotic conditions.

He saw the open grave in the cemetery of Farkasrét, relatives and friends dressed in black, hands clasped, heads bowed, the men standing on the yellow, glutinous clay with their heads bared, the women holding tiny, scented handkerchiefs to their eyes. He saw the priest deliver the funeral address, the gravediggers fill in the pit, and finally the mourners placing their flowers and wreaths on the grave. He saw them going into the Drop of Comfort, where other men and women dressed in black were eating and drinking at the tables. They too would sit down, the men order wine, the women "something sweet." He would sit between Mari and his mother. It will have been decided that Mari would spend that night at the flat, "they can't leave Mother alone in the state she's in;" and as for him, the Old Man's only child, he'd be fairly drunk by then, watching the faces shining from drink and heat as if from a long way off, a stranger. They would go home, the three of them, and buy a bottle of cherry brandy for the night. Mari would prepare a hasty meal and they'd eat it silently, then Mari would give Mother some sleeping pills and help make the beds (Mother would sleep in the bedroom, beside the Old Man's empty bed, they'd sleep in the hall) the she'd "put Mother to bed." At the signal of his mother's even breathing and gentle snores they too will undress and nestle up to each other, naked. They'll kiss, then he'll light a cigarette and listen to his heart's hammering after they had "been together."

He looked into the mirror, passed his hand over his face, and crushed out the cigarette in the ashtray that stood on the little table.

Translated by Eszter Molnár

INTERVIEW

BIOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN SZEGED

Talking Lajos Alföldi

Some of the most promising research in Hungary today is taking place at the Szeged Biological Research Centre of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Rumour has it that the scientists work here in an atmosphere which is more than agreeable for this reason. I was naturally more interested in the atmosphere research is carried out in than in the research itself. My questions were answered by Dr. Lajos Alföldi, Director General of the Centre, with and by the participation of Gabriella Lázár, scientific secretary of the institution.

What led up to the establishment of the research centre here? In Hungary, most cultural and scientific life is concentrated in the capital. What lay behind the decision to locate this institution in Szeged?

In the fifties biology as a science took off all over the world. I can mention some of the revolutionary discoveries: the role of DNA molecules in carrying genetic information became obvious. The structure of these molecules as well as the mechanics of genetic information became known. Exploring the regulatory functioning of the genes also became possible. The knowledge derived from this revolution called molecular biology reached Hungary too, but it took a long time for decisions and plans to come out—the mid-sixties in fact. At that time government policy was to decentralize industry and research. Szeged had an advantage over other country towns: the only Hungarian Nobel prize winner—out of so many—who received his prize for work which he did in Hungary itself, Albert Szent-Györgyi, did his research into biological oxydation and later on into the functioning of the muscles here in Szeged. (Incidentally, he was present at the opening of the Centre.)

Szeged has a good background in medical biological research, and there was a tradition in classical biology in the Szeged University of Sciences. Szeged is a university town with first-class medical facilities and clinics: so it could be expected that some of the research staff would be available here, as well as new generations of researchers. Of course, it would have been impossible to acquire all the researchers who today work here, from Szeged alone. About one half of our 130 research staff are graduates of Szeged University, approximately 20 come from Budapest, and the others moved here from other parts of the country. From the beginning, we had 120 flats, which made it possible to accommodate visiting researchers.

Earlier you mentioned the new school of biology. Tell us some more about it.

New biology is interested primarily in the structure of genetic information, how it manifests itself and in its regulatory mechanism. This covers in essence all aspects of the functioning of cells, from metabolism

through cell-division, the process of differentiation to the functioning of the nervous system.

It is hardly likely that all this can be undertaken in a single research institute. What is the Szeged Biological Centre primarily engaged in?

The Szeged Biological Centre consists of the Biochemstry, the Biophysics, the Enzymology, the Genetics and the Plant Physiology Institutes.

Our function is to conduct basic research whose results can be applied in agricultural and pharmaceutical research.* Certain problems of regulation are dealt with in all five research institutes. The regulatory problems that interest us are those in the manifestation of genetic information, in the functioning of protein on the molecular level, and in the whole cell.

What is the standing of this work among research institutions in the world?

The problems I have just described are problems which are also dealt with at the top of the profession internationally. We publish our achievements in periodicals which represent a powerful filter, as it were, a measure of value. We also observe the reception of our publications. I believe that we are already being taken notice of, but this is far from meaning that we are at the top internationally.

Can a sort of sudden arrival at the top be imagined bearing in mind that you start with a much narrower financial base and far fewer professional traditions?

It is possible but not probable that a Hungarian researcher could achieve some outstanding result of worldwide importance. Even today, in the era of research teams, luck still plays a great role. But where do the breakthroughs occur? Where research has a considerable tradition. Many of us publish in leading foreign periodicals. But our background is still narrow. The biology textbooks of the world would certainly not change if our achievements were omitted. But we have obtained one or two results which are cited very frequently. — Biologists expected, but had not yet succeeded in confirming experimentally what was first proved in our Centre: if we change the genetic substance of a somatic cell of the plant in a test-tube, and bring up a plant out of it, not only every somatic cell of the new plant will be mutant, but its pollen too. The somatic mutation has proved to be transferable to the germ line, which has proved that the genetic information referring to the entire plant is present in the somatic cells too, that is, not only in the gamogenetic cells. Another thing which attracted great attention was that one of our research teams proved that it is possible to bring about a hybrid of the carrot and of the human cell, and that this even shows symptoms of life for some time! It was found that there was no fundamental incompatability between the building stones of the two organisms. This achievement of ours is one of the telling proofs of the partial compatibility of living organisms on the cell level. In the new biology living materials of a higher or of a lower order do not exist.*

What sort of finances are available to the centre, bearing in mind tremendous costs of research?

* See *NHQ* 86, 89, 90, 92 (In Focus)

* The most frequently cited publications emanating from the centre are:

Maliga, P., Breznovits, A., Márton, L.: Streptomycin resistant plants from callus culture of haploid tobacco. Nature New Biol. 244: 29–30 (1970).

Dudits, D., Raskó, L., Hadlaczky, Gy., Lima-de-Faria, A.: Fusion of human cells with carrot protoplasts induced by polyethylene glycol. Hereditas 82: 121–124 (1976).

Fodor, K., Alföldi, L.: Fusion of protoplasts of Bacillus megaterium Proc. Nat. Acad. Sci. USA 73: 2147–2150 (1976).

Kondorosi, Á., Kiss, Gy. B., Forrai, T., Vincze, É., Bánfalvi, Zs.: Circular linkage map of Rhizobium meliloti chromosome. Nature 268: 525–527 (1977). Boros, I., Kiss, A., Venetianer, P.: Physical map of the seven ribosomal RNA genes of E. coli. Nucleic Acids Res. 6: 1817–1830 (1979).

At the start we obtained considerable financial assistance from the United Nations Development Programme, but the foundations for our work are provided by the state budget. In addition to this we have support from various sources (primarily from the National Technical Development Board) which is directed at particular research topics. Another important source of funds is our income from contract work which we mainly carry out for industrial and agricultural enterprises.

Our institute's equipment is up to contemporary requirements, and our funding is adequate for our work. However since the forint is not freely convertible, there is no disguising the fact that purchasing instruments, equipment and material from Western sources is a serious burden. Despite the limited amounts available to us, we still manage to run an international post-graduate course, where we are able to cover the living costs of fifteen to twenty young foreign graduates annually and they mainly come from the developing countries.

People engaged in research tend to gravitate to the most developed countries. Have you lost any of your research staff in this way?

Well, our actions over twelve years prove that we have set ourselves the goal of making foreign travel possible to the largest possible number of our researchers. At the moment we support 200 trips annually, and only once in twelve years have we not provided support for a research trip abroad. Most of our researchers go abroad with their families, and out of 1500 research trips only five people did not return. I believe that of the same number of people going from, say, Western Europe to the USA, at least the same number, if not more, would not return. Most of these trips are for a long period. When they are abroad our researchers work and publish. Out of our researchers 28 are at present on study trips abroad involving a stay of one year or longer.

Let me turn the question around this time: what does the foreign research gain from a Hungarian visitor?

The host professor may give one of his problems to the young Hungarian to solve. Our foreign partner is sure to obtain a good collaborator, a reliable and highly trained research worker. I might also add that he obtains these services much more cheaply than he would for a collaborator of the same quality of his own nationality.

The elder statesmen of international science travel a lot. Are you ever visited by any of these famous foreign scientists?

In the last three weeks alone we had the following visitors: the Nobel Prize winner Sir Andrew Huxley, who is also President of the Royal Society, Sir Arnold Burgen, the Foreign Secretary of the Royal Society; and Dr. Ronald Keay, Secretary General of the Royal Society. We also received a delegation from the Swedish Royal Academy which included Professor Caspersson, Professor Scheler, President of the Academy of Sciences of the German Democratic Republic was here as well. And a delegation from the Soviet Academy of Sciences gave us the opportunity of welcoming Academician Baev, one of the truly great figures in biotechnology.

Even when we were setting up the Centre we all were of the opinion that Central European, or more exactly the Hungarian tradition in science, is one of strict hierarchy. It is Professor Bruno F. Straub who has done most for the Centre since its foundation, first as Director General, and today as the Director of the Enzymological Institute, to ensure that this was a tradition we did *not* follow. In the international field, competitive research cannot be done with that attitude and organizational principle! Consequently it was our aim to avoid this organizational structure, one which used to characterize Hungarian research establishments and indeed is still characteristic of some of them.

The most important person at our Centre is not the director but the researcher. It is

not the directors but the heads of the individual research teams who select their collaborators and allocate the money available. Every year, on the 24th April, anybody may leave his or her research group without having to give any reason, join another research team, or start independent research. It can happen that in this way a research team becomes depleted or ceases to exist within a few years. Its head may be an excellent scientist, but he has not treated his collaborators well.

Another way of avoiding ossification is that here nobody has a permanent job, everybody is under contract. This goes for the position of Director General too—the five directors of our five institutes fill the position of Director General in turn.

Our library is perhaps the only one in Hungary where the stock is completely accessible and can be used at any time, day or night.

Those who leave us find that the style of work to which they have become accustomed here, the frank speech, use of first names by everyone in the centre and so on creates something of a shock elsewhere, and leads to antagonism. Those whom we ourselves ask to leave, are given sometimes three four or even five years to find another job. They are not bad researchers either, but—speaking figuratively—we have decided they will not make finals of the World Cup. But they have every chance of working very successfully and happily with some other institution.

In our Centre we do respect one form of hierarchy: from time to time we prepare and put into our library the ranking list of the citations of publications by our researchers, on the basis of the scientometric citation indices. A good position in this order may be the strongest argument for somebody to obtain more money for his research.

That the Centre was able to start something new in Hungarian science since it opened in 1970 —this could have something to do with the fact that it is far from the majority of research institutes concentrated in Budapest. But I am certain that being in the country sometimes has its drawbacks.

Of course we must accept the fact that in Hungary everything continues to be centred in the capital. That is where we must make most of our purchases, where the superior authorities reside, and where all sorts of conferences are usually held. This also means that heads of teams and the senior researchers often spend an entire day in Budapest on affairs and participating at conferences which take up only one or two hours of the time of those who work in Budapest itself.

Hungarian science is under the central direction of the official and scientific bodies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. How can this central direction be reconciled with your work which is based on a free spirit and individual initiative?

Yes, we too must draw up five-year plans. The director of each of our institutes draws up a broad programme and strategy for his area of research. The research teams try to set themselves concrete tasks which are both attractive to them and can be fitted into the broad programme. Here experts have to argue with experts. They convince each other, they reach agreement: this is how the programmes of the working teams are prepared. But these too represent only a tendency. Having put the plans together appropriately, we send them to the official and scientific bodies of the Academy, who in turn give us their opinion on them. If one of the bodies opposes some detail of the submitted plan, a heated debate follows, in which usually the expert wins. But in this case the expert bears the entire risk and responsibility. As far as individual initiative is concerned, we in our institution have a single criterion: success. I can safely say that everybody works on what obsesses him—provided that this obsession proves to be successful. If it is not successful, it can nevertheless be continued but with minimal institutional support. In an organization

oriented towards achievement, as ours is, one can only proceed in accordance with the biblical saying: unto those who have it—support shall be given, and from those who have not—success—it shall be taken away!

Do you think that the very considerable expectations aroused by modern biology have been fulfilled?

I believe that they have, yes. The revolution in biology in the fifties has been carried on in the past quarter of a century. And in an unexpected direction, towards genetic engineering. This has made possible the achievements and approaches to problems which could not even be imagined at the time. For instance, the DNA "thread" can today be cut up at will by biochemical methods, or the pieces can be stuck together, pieces can be introduced into other organisms, and we can even have information expressed there. For instance, the production of human insulin can today be entrusted to bacteria. Since January 1983 human insulin produced by Ely Lilly through bacteria has been distributed in the United States.

But for some time worried voices have been raised about the possible dangers in this tremendous development.

I do not want to play this down but remember that a tremendous fire can be caused by a match. Many biologists do indeed think—and I believe justly so—that their responsibility towards society demands that they should also investigate the consequences of their experiments. This is why they proposed when work began on genetic engineering that a voluntary moratorium should be held, and the risks of these experiments be investigated. They thought, for instance, that building the genetic substance of a tumor-causing virus into a bacterium was extremely dangerous and might have unforeseeable circumstances if such a bacterium escaped from the laboratory.

However, it was soon found out that these fears were exaggerated and most experiments could be continued without any danger, if only because the expression of genetic information is more complicated than the reasoning behind the books written about the dangers of the biological revolution. In the case of most implantations thought to be dangerous, the universal characteristic of the artificially produced cells asserted is that they are not viable by themselves, in other words they need special endeavours to keep them alive. Far from causing any trouble, they simply perish if they get out of tho test-tube. Remember that the product of a chicken factory, the battery chicken cannot be kept in a poultry yard either, it is viable only in artificial circumstances. I believe that the sounding of the alarm bells was on the whole exaggerated.

Let us imagine that biological research stops. Is not the knowledge we have accumulated sufficient?

Sufficient is a relative notion. As an expert I believe that what we know about the living organism is still less by orders of magnitude than what we do not know.

The aim of research is to know the unknown. Everybody accepts this argument until it affects his pocket. But where would mankind stand today if man had not used the grey matter of his brain? Science is necessary just as any other form of human self-expression is. I believe that civilization does less damage to society than the improvements it adds to it. Sometimes it has to repair the damage it causes. A hoe sometimes removes a useful plant, yet hoeing is worthwhile. But the most important reserve to our power may be the not altogether consoling observation of Monod's—the world is not for man, but for itself; man is but a fortunate mutant in the living world. In certain areas he is competitive with other species, but he is also a detestable being, because the condition for his success has been up to now his aggression, his destructivity even when it makes no biological sense. The task is clear though difficult to carry out: he must survive successfully while ceasing his destruction.

Lately there has been some scepticism on science. There is no longer as much hope and trust in the power of science than there was earlier, even ten years ago. Why do you think this is?

Armies would more surely deserve mankind's distrust and yet there is more talk about the disillusionment caused by the sciences (I am not talking of disillusionment on the part of the scientists but of the public. I imagine that one of the reasons for this antagonism to science is that researchers do not play sufficient attention to their image in public opinion). Science has no organization which looks after its public relations. Everybody is occupied with his own reputation, but science as a whole does need some advertising, some publicity in the good sense of the word. The situation is made all the worse for the current bad economic conditions. The funds devoted to science are reduced sooner than those to other areas. As basic researchers we can say that our research will certainly bring success, but we always and only can use the future tense when we say this. The authority of science was romantically high world-wide, and perhaps this is a reason why ideas on science have changed, its authority has diminished. I see no tragedy in this. Let us accept the fact that science has no cure for all ills, and especially not immediately. I do not even expect public opinion to place trust in science. I desire only that it should accept science as a necessary occupation—just as it does coal-mining or the theatrical arts.

MIKLÓS HERNÁDI

FROM OUR NEXT ISSUES

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FROM THE PRESS

THE MARTINOVICS MODEL

Ignác Martinovics, the leader of the Hungarian Jacobine conspiracy, was executed in 1795. He has since been labelled adventurer, anarchist, reformer, revolutionary, monster, giant, traitor, a martyr to freedom, a bourgeois intellectual, lunatic, socialist, and patriot. Today he seems to be in vogue.

Where does all this confusion derive from? Let us look at the facts of his life first (without attempting to interpret for the moment his various about-faces). He was born a commoner in the firmly feudal Hungary which had for two centuries been part of the Habsburg empire. At the age of sixteen he joined the Franciscan order. He took up philosophy and the natural sciences and became a teacher in the order's schools. Then he tried to leave the order and, thanks to his connections with the military, he became an army chaplain. As a friend of Count Ignacy Potocki, who was later a minister in the Polish revolution of 1794, he made a tour of Europe. Later he became a professor at Lemberg University. He quit the religious order; his treatises bear evidence that even at that time he was a materialist and atheist.

Having left the university, he acted as an informer in the pay of the Imperial secret police. When the police no longer wanted his services, he still continued writing his reports. In the spring of 1793 he was dispatched to Hungary to spy upon the malcontents. He won great prestige in revolutionary circles. While he was denouncing them, his radical pamphlets were contributing to the increase in strength of the Hungarian resistance. After dismissal from the Imperial Court's service, he took the leading role in the Jacobine movement. After a few months of organizing he was arrested. Not much later he made a full confession in which he informed against the other leaders of the movement. Nevertheless he was divested of holy orders and clerical privileges and decapitated. The last words he wrote were: "Long live humanity! Long live the fatherland! Long live the misled monarch!"

In recent years what was perhaps a most sensational essay on Martinovics was written by the socio-psychologist Ágnes Hankiss ("Ignác Martinovics: The structure of a conflict with fate." *Valóság*, December 1978). The author states that Martinovics as a type throws also light upon contemporary intellectuals' life and their conflict with fate. This type is, in both of today's systems, "a creative intellectual [...] who, whether he agrees with the political structure he lives in or is in opposition to it, cannot live without playing a political role in public life; but he is someone who cannot identify himself with any political role

other than that where he is sovereign and internally controlled [...]. There is hardly any bureaucratic organization that would be neutral *vis-à-vis* such behaviour. It makes almost no difference whether an intellectual of this type is an adherent or an opponent of the bureaucratic organization; he is bound in any case to make the organization display both interest and aversion at the same time, a demand that they produce a close watch on him as well as order him to 'get out of here'."

Ágnes Hankiss explains Martinovics's about-faces by the conflicting relationship between a restless talent and bureaucratic organization, by his attempts to reconcile the conflicts and the failures that ensued. First of all, his failure at independence. The young friar realized that he had chosen a career without proper consideration, he felt disappointment in the institutions and deas behind his vocation, he asked to be released from his vows and discharged from the order. The provincial of the order praised Martinovics's abilities and erudition and persuaded him to change his mind. What is more, Martinovics signed a declaration saying that he had merely submitted to a momentary mood of despair and would henceforth always observe his vows faithfully.

Hankiss explains this first strange decision of Martinovics thus: the young man is driven equally by a basic need for self-identity, to behave according to his own norms and principles and by a lack of self-assertion. It is the former that prompted him to the radical and somewhat idealistic solution of making the breach. In the given situation the Church was interested in retaining him, but over and above this: "every bureaucratic organization stands in awe of the idealist (especially an idealist who has broken his bonds) and tries to disarm him and make him harmless; in the past it did so with fire and sword and does now through a multi-stage strategy based on the security of the innervation of a thousand years." From the praise and from the apparently benevolent understanding heaped upon him "young Martinovics infers that the ecclesiastical organization respects his independence, his liberty of opinion, and that it accepts his entire irregular formula as an inevitable cost of his extraordinary abilities. [...] He believes in the possibility of tacit agreement and does not see that he has been duped." From that time on, however many professorships he applied for, he was to find himself every time "praised in word and punished in deed"; in general he was appreciated, but somehow he always met with hidden resistance. He was deprived of advancement. He suspected misunderstandings, tried to justify himself in different ways and finally gave up the hopeless struggle; for the time being he renounced all opportunities of asserting himself; in the hope of acquiring a self-identity he obtained a post as an army chaplain.

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In 1780 Joseph II ascended the throne.

There then followed a brief period in which Martinovics achieved his zenith, at least from his personal viewpoint. He was at last able to occupy a professor's chair and do his scientific work as he pleased; soon, however, the cut-back mechanism of the bureaucracy again came into action. "Namely the historically given bureaucratic organization is basically averse to the talented, ambitious, and sovereign-minded man (one whose behaviour is under internal control), or rather it will not assume the risk involved in him for the sake of the profit implied in him." To an intellectual of the Martinovics type it gradually becomes evident that "his plan of cooperation, which he builds upon the compatibility of aims, is thwarted by the incompatibility of habits." For this essay, the organization functions by the principle of minimal risk. "It builds upon mediocre men and agrees

to a prospectively small risk in exchange for a prospectively small profit." In fact, Martinovics's ideas went far beyond Joseph II's reform programme; he did actually know that his ideas could not be realized in the given social and historical situation, so he endeavoured to accommodate himself to these given conditions and worked out a minimal programme for himself. The tension between the two programmes, however, tormented him incessantly: if he acts according to one, he violated the other, and vice versa. It amounted to nothing other than the failure of cooperation.

Even after the death of Joseph II he persisted in double-dealing. He believed he could find the way to advancement through joining the Court's secret service "probably with the determination of serving the cause of progress and reform by providing concocted and tendentious misinformation in his reports."

He attempted to convince the new monarch, Leopold II, that "the only passable way is to continue the policies of Joseph and to carry out the appropriate social reforms." He exaggerated enormously the dangers involved in the operation of secret societies, and at the same time pointed to "incalculable" consequences and warned the emperor against any kind of aggressive intervention. But the boss demanded more and more, something more concrete, and Martinovics was gradually compelled to lay information against certain individuals, at first including some of his opponents, the Jesuits, then later the *illuminati* who constituted the radical wing of the Freemasons. Ágnes Hankiss describes this as the "failure of infiltration": Martinovics realized the impossibility of benevolent cooperation but, unable to relinquish his social commitment and active ambition, and "relying upon his self-discipline and play-acting abilities, he chooses the way of infiltration, the way of mimicking in the interest of the cause. [...] To have his role confirmed, to win and keep the confidence necessary for action, he must give more and more until the concessions made in respect of the means have eventually done away with the original ends." It is not impossible in principle for an intellectual of the Martinovics type even in this situation to retain his integrity or at least to keep the balance between honesty and determination, but at a point the whetted ambition and accumulated grievances of Martinovics change into "the increasingly unreal idea of winning the day in spite of everything." All this leads to a perversion of personality and to the loss of moral ground: "Also in Martinovics's life there came a time when—we can say with some exaggeration—neither he himself nor his employer knew any longer for whom and why exactly he was working." He was no longer good enough (morally, in his own person) to represent and serve effectively and unswervingly the cause of social progress; but because of his talent, his concept he was still "too good" for the organization. At a certain juncture he lost patience and asked for leave to retire. His request was granted immediately. But he could not tolerate this defeat for long, he asked for permission to return, and was then appointed court chemist and abbot of Szászvár. The government took Martinovics to be a nuisance, an "inevitable nuisance," which also meant that it refrained from taking open steps against him. This took place from 1792, under the reign of Francis II, a resolutely reactionary emperor. A frequently referred to and characteristic act of Martinovics was that, on hearing of Leopold II's death, he took a letter addressed to the old monarch with a denunciation of ten leading *illuminati*, and resealed it in a new envelope and sent it to Emperor Francis.

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For a while he was still not able to imagine his own role outside the absolutist organization; but he was obliged to recognize

that "infiltrating reformism" was without prospect. Through his radical manifestations, particularly through a pamphlet, "The Situation of the Hungarian State in 1792," he definitively cut his road to advancement; but there set in the conditions for complete self-identity, for sedition. The rest we know.

"To attain an active position within the bounds of moral conformity; to remain outside and to get inside at the same time—this is a permanent desire of every committed but sovereign intellectual." This is Ágnes Hankiss's final conclusion. Through this very perceptive essay that has found a wide response which, unfortunately, we have only been able to describe very briefly, she has drawn intellectual public opinion to the "Martinovics problem."

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More than two years later a TV play did much the same and invited a still greater response. The "Investigation in the case of Abbot Ignác Martinovics of Szászvár and his Confederates" was based on original documents. It deals with the period which Ágnes Hankiss discusses concisely: the months from the arrest of Martinovics up to his execution. A prominent historian of that era, Kálmán Benda, acted as historical adviser to the production. (In 1957 he published the papers of the Hungarian Jacobins in three volumes, in whose preface he drew up an interpretation accepted to this day on the movement and its leader.) György Gábor Józsa interviewed him for a daily paper ("Martinovics in History." *Magyar Nemzet*, January 28, 1982). As the interviewer remarks in his introduction, "unexpectedly, the film was a surprise to many; several people questioned the accuracy of its data, the words of the actors, and the authenticity of its character analysis, and they thought the film to demonstrate the wave of denigration so much in vogue today and so very harmful. This is indeed strange because the history of the Hungarian Jacobins [...] has for over fifteen years been treated by the textbooks in a manner consistent with the treatment in the film; in other words, the background can be considered as known in principle." The historiographer has several times changed his views on the Martinovics conspiracy; this in itself would be worth a separate essay, but it is sufficient to state here that the textbooks of fifteen years ago still described Martinovics distinctly as a hero, while those of forty years ago plainly described him as a miscreant; thus both the preceding generations were presented with extremist images of Martinovics.

Kálmán Benda sums up Martinovics as: "A man with a restless mind and exceptional talents, who has acquired very great proficiency in a number of sciences. Two basic features of his nature—ambition and conceit, coupled with contempt of others and the will to lord it over everybody—make his environment inimical to him everywhere. [...] Elsewhere, too, in transitional, revolutionary periods there emerge adventurers of a similar type who are talented and of great erudition, who under proper conditions can usefully serve their homeland, but who lack the strength of character and are ready to cast away their convictions if this is the price to pay for power, advancement, and wealth."

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The old and present contradictions in the Martinovics model are discussed in a series of articles by the writer and literary historian Sándor Fekete in *Új Tükör* (1982, Nos. 8, 9, 10). Mainly following Kálmán Benda's version, he writes, "it has become possible to analyse the various characters upon their merits, and to demonstrate convincingly that the moral faults of a single man do not compromise the heroic

efforts of the Hungarian Jacobins in enthusiastic response to the French example!" Although certain results were attained, "there was a counter-current which continued to whirl around the soul of Martinovics and thus somehow served to discredit the Jacobinic movement." According to Sándor Fekete the TV play rather drifted with the "counter-current." He thinks that "strange tendencies have for some years been observed in our intellectual life": there are those who disparage progression in the name of "objectivity" and "improve" the figures of capitulators and counter-revolutionaries. The "great workshops of culture," the mass media, must not be confined "to giving free play to interesting attempts at reinterpretation or to uninteresting intellectual exercises, but have to devote their artistic, scientific, 'mass communications' energy to fulfilling certain fundamental national—yes, national!—duties. And so much the more energy as there is the danger of the rising generations becoming utterly disappointed."

Sándor Fekete recognizes the merits of the essay by Ágnes Hankiss, but he points out that—although the author protests against this description—it nevertheless implies an allegorical model meant for the present day. Ágnes Hankiss has declared that she refuses to accept an interpretation to the effect that "the bureaucratic organization" mentioned in connection with Martinovics "is an embodiment of the general model of power." To Sándor Fekete, however, this is contradicted by the fact that "the essay itself consistently speaks of the 'organization' as a perpetual and immutable institution." Whereas "it does make some difference whether the bureaucracy serves Emperor Joseph or Emperor Francis, or perhaps Robespierre, whether the bureaucracy is fascist or whether it is an attribute of a bourgeois democratic state, etc. Just as it is of particular importance to me whether it has its seat in Vienna or in Pest. And I cannot concede at all," writes Fekete, "that 'bureaucracy' is a kind of force controlled according to some wonderful plan with the purpose of bringing to heel the sovereign intelligentsia." He adds that "the fashionable notion of sovereign mind is impossible for me to manage: what is internal is not necessarily to be approved from a higher point of view, for example, from that of a class, of a people, or of mankind. Caligula and Nero were doubtless sovereign in their action, but why should I respect them on this account?" In short, the story of Martinovics implies lessons to the intellectual, but it is not suited to acting as a model for the relationship of "power" and "intelligentsia."

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To the image of Martinovics have been added further interesting new findings and hypotheses by the historian Éva Ring ("Martinovics and his time." *Valóság*, 1978, No. 6). Although it appears from the TV play that "our history has been enriched with one more 'lunatic', "we must not forget that Martinovics was a philosopher who belonged to the most radical wing of the Enlightenment, mechanical materialism. And it is a commonplace "that the materialist philosophers, precisely because they presupposed that man's own experiences make him such as he is, overestimated the power of 'reason', of persuasion, and education. The most zealous supporters of enlightened absolutism as the ideal form of government were no other than Holbach and Helvetius. Robespierre was right to say of them that 'they expect the tyrant to put an end to tyranny'." Martinovics also believed that the road to the establishment of the "state of reason" led through persuading the monarch. Most suited to this end were the secret societies. His anticlerical conviction, his hatred for the privileges of nobility urged him to enter into the monarch's service, into the

secret police. He was not the only intellectual to have chosen this "career" practically out of necessity. Polish and French sources—which Kálmán Benda had not been able to look into before 1957—show that it is at least probable that close cooperation existed between the Polish and the Hungarian Jacobins. Thus it is just possible that the "foreign aid" (from France or Poland) referred to by Martinovics during the conspiracy was not a figment of his imagination. "There are many things to indicate that after December 1792 Martinovics failed to break with the secret police because this was how he thought it most possible, in a monarchy teeming with informers, to carry on serving a great cause, that of the establishment of an East Central European confederation." The fact that Martinovics was ultimately unable to choose the means is inseparable from the social, political, and moral conditions of the era. As Éva Ring puts it, "modern civilization—as with everything new in history so far—was born in blood and dirt." Martinovics—model or no model—was a child of his time.

JÁNOS SZÉKY

FROM OUR NEXT ISSUES

THE DYNAMICS OF THE REPRODUCTION OF SOCIAL RELATIONS
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HISTORY

OSZKÁR JÁSZI, A DANUBIAN PATRIOT IN AMERICA

Oszkár Jászi had been a pioneer in sociology, political science, and the democratic transformation of Hungary; he was later the Minister for Minorities in Count Mihály Károlyi's government of 1918 and had had to emigrate for these activities. When he was granted U.S. citizenship in 1931, he made a speech that was, unusually for him, personal in tone as well as revealing. The speech, "On becoming an American Citizen,"[1] was delivered at Oberlin College, Ohio, where he had been Professor of Political Science since 1925. This in itself shows that he took the event very seriously and felt it a turning-point in his life.

"In the summer of 1919 I became a man without a country," he opened his speech, referring to the victory of the counter-revolution in Hungary. "I was without a passport, dependent on the hospitality of the Austrian Republic... The gates of the United States were open to me (in 1925) in my capacity as a guest-citizen of Rumania." (He was born in that part of Hungary—Transylvania—which was later awarded to Rumania by the Trianon Peace Treaty after the Great War.) He admitted that for him, who had arrived in the New World at the age of fifty, "the first years here were very hard... This adaptation of oneself to a different civilization in one's mature years is a curious psychological process." He then compared American life and civilization with those in Europe, emphasizing many favourable features of life in America, but not avoiding the reverse side either.

"You are a benevolent people, inclined to kindly emotions; at the same time a sincere people. Your optimism is thrilling and amazing after the general pessimism of Europe... I admire your system of democratic education, which tries to give equal opportunity to all; your universities are not only institutions for instruction, but also, in a sense, moral and social organisms. How fortunate you are that your class differences have remained, up to now, purely economic differences, unaccompanied by the poisoned class hatred... I think, too, that you enjoy a greater amount of personal liberty than any country in the world with the exception of England... Your higher intellectuals accept more self-criticism and unfriendly comment by foreigners than those of any other nations. ... Finally let me stress the genuine and profound aspiration towards Peace which might become something really great if this avalanche of good will could be coupled with more intelligent clear-mindedness and a deeper sense of reality."

To this mixture of criticism and acknowledgement he then added the other negative features of American life: excess effort, mechanistic attitudes, lack of solid traditional values. "At the same time you are

amazingly and terribly scientific. The average American firmly believes in the measurability of all things, and in the non-existence of things that cannot be measured... And finally I would mention the lack of great political ideas which, combined with the spoils system, makes the political arena dark and gloomy."

Meanwhile, as he himself remarked, he—even as a newly registered citizen—referred to Americans as *you* and not as *we*, and he did so to the very last. "This desultory outline of my impressions will show you," he concluded, "that I shall be unable to submit passively to the melting pot. Though I believe in the validity of the melting pot hypothesis, I think that this melting pot should become something more dynamic; not only should the content be changed, but the pot as well, so as to give us a broader, finer, more variegated American culture." And finally he thanked his good fortune that he had been able to start life afresh on this island of peace, at this long-established college, "in which, remote from the millionaires and the racketeers of the great cities, I could study, if not American realities, at least American ideals, and where I learned to know, if not what America is, at least what America ought to be."

This fine speech, whose sincerity is authenticated by Jászi's letters of that time, reflects his relationship to America, not only in that early period but in the quarter of a century that was to come.

The exiled scholar and statesman was grateful to America for giving him a safe home, intellectual independence, and a decent living (although his pension, due to his comparatively few years of service, turned out to be miserably low). The enthusiastic teacher felt profound satisfaction at being again in a position to teach young people, at seeing a sudden increase, after his arrival in Oberlin, in the number of students enrolled in political science courses. In the beginning the students looked with some amazement on the grey-haired Old Testament prophet who had come from afar and who sermonized passionately in his outlandish accent, thundering against dangers unknown to them, censuring atrocities committed in far-away places. But more and more of them came to understand him and to warm to his character that was generous even in his own gloom; all sources agree that he enjoyed an enduring intellectual and moral prestige among his students. "We are wiser and better for knowing him. He has enlightened our minds, he has fortified our souls," said one of them, John D. Lewis who later became his colleague and collaborator, in the address recommending Jászi for an Honorary Doctorate of Laws in 1953.[2] When he retired on pension, biennial Jászi Lectures were arranged in his honour, and one of those lectures was delivered by James Reston. In this way the College showed its great regard for him, its pride in his far-reaching influence and prestige. As Dean Carl F. Wittke put it: "A thorough democrat and defender of a new institutional order, Dr. Jászi exercises an influence on America far beyond the borders of Oberlin College."[3]

Double attachment

Indeed, Jászi belonged to that American liberal intellectual élite composed in no small part of immigrants. His name was well known to the great universities and large periodicals, he was often asked to give lectures, write articles, and in academic circles, he was rated as a top authority on Central European matters. The editor of the *Journal of Central European Affairs*, Professor S. Harrison Thomson, wrote after Jászi's death: "The figure of Oscar Jászi has always and everywhere commanded respect and admiration, and, from those who knew him, deep affection. He seemed a rock of courage and conviction in a day when these were rare qualities. He had been with us so long, had lived through and reflected upon so many crises in international affairs, that we had

come to regard him as a living symbol of the gospel of temporal optimism."[4]

Jászi could thus be basically satisfied with his position in America, he regarded it as definitive, his connection with the country remained correct and loyal all the while. Yet it was always a little cool in comparison with the "passionate relationship" that bound him to the "old country," Hungary, and beyond it to the neighbouring countries along the Danube which he called Danubia. But to him, and this is the most important thing, the double attachment implied no kind of contradiction. Furthermore, he was able to integrate the two, and do so not only in his emotions but also in his ideas and his policy. And even though, here and there, he was unable to achieve his object, the example, the conception, and the effort are so monumental that it is worth recalling some aspects of them, briefly at least.

In January 1926, a few months after emigrating, he first rose to speak before a Hungarian community at Lorain, and went right to the heart of the matter, "speaking about a problem of a great political and moral significance," and asking "how it would be possible to reconciliate the loyalty to the new Fatherland with the fidelity to the old one." What are the choices? "Americanization or an artificial seclusion cherishing the memories of the old country?" And he replied that he thought this dilemma was entirely superficial, because after serious consideration the two kinds of loyalty were in no way antagonistic. "On the contrary, I am of the opinion that the more thoroughgoingly your process of Americanization will be carried on, the more you can become active and powerful supporters of the Hungarian cause and of the Hungarian people. For by a morbid backward-looking sentimentalism you would lose only all touch both with American and Hungarian reality. But if you succeed in understanding the spirit, the institutions, the moral atmosphere of this American commonwealth, you will get a treasure of political and social ideas by the help of which you will understand far better the real conditions at home in the basin of the Danube and the Tisza... In certain aspects the example of the United States shows to Hungary the only way to liberate herself from her present wretched and awkward conditions."[5]

Barely a few months later, however, in an Armistice Day address to an American audience, the students of Oberlin College, he pointed to the other side of the problem, to the importance of utilizing in America the experience of Central and Eastern Europe. "Perhaps my personal experiences and observations will help you to see certain aspects of the problem of peace and war more clearly, and to facilitate the best efforts of all righteous Americans in outlawing war and in the building up of a peaceful world-wide commonwealth."[6]

This is the keynote that runs through Jászi's entire academic and political activity in America; it suffuses all his writings and lectures. He feels his chief mission is to inform American public opinion, as best he can, of European and especially Danubian conditions, and of all the important developments and modifications therein. This is done with the twofold purpose of enabling American society, social science, and politics to utilize this experience and information, not only at home but, breaking down the traditions of isolationism, using their great strength and influence, on the European scene, to help change the conditions prevailing there and channel them in the direction of democracy and federalism which was considered so desirable by him.

In so doing, however, he transgressed against one of the leading commands of official Hungarian—and not only Hungarian—patriotism. "It is an old feudal doctrine in Europe which prohibits entire sincerity for a patriot in discussing internal matters before a foreign audience," he said in a lecture he gave in Washington. "I regard this dogma as one of the most pernicious ones from the point of view of true

international solidarity."[7] This principle, he declared, is incompatible with the idea of international organization and with the struggle against war. "I am of the opinion that don't lie is not only the first command of private morality, but it must also become the chief rule of all true international morality." It can be said of Jászi that throughout his long life he consciously set himself against the compulsory lie in defence of the supposed interests of one's country: for this he had been called a traitor to his country even in the early years of the century, before and during the Great War; for this he had been officially declared a traitor under the counter-revolutionary Horthy régime between the two wars; and finally, for this reason too he was described as an "enemy of people's democracy" in the Rákosi era.

A peaceful settlement of nationality problems

From 1925, the time he settled in America, he gave up practical politics, and it was only in the war years that he suspended this resolve of his. Between 1919 and 1925, as virtual leader of the democratic exiles who were adherents of Mihály Károlyi, and editor-in-chief of the *Bécsi Magyar Újság*, he devoted all his energy to unmasking, isolating and, if possible, crushing Hungary's counter-revolutionary régime both before Europe and—during a propaganda tour of three months—before America. When, however, Prime Minister István Bethlen managed the external and internal consolidation of the country, and Hungary obtained a considerable loan from the League of Nations without the democratic guarantees demanded by Károlyi and Jászi. Inevitably the democratic exiles split. Károlyi himself moved closer to the Communists. Not surprisingly, Jászi found it futile and hopeless to continue his role in practical politics, but of course he did not renege on the object of his life and struggle. Nor would he have satisfied his conscience and energy if, besides his educational and academic work in America, he had been content with rallying, through a huge correspondence over many years, his old friends and comrades-in-arms, and with acting as an *éminence grise*—from afar, by surface mail, of course—the intellectual and propaganda activity of the small group of his followers who had remained in Hungary.

The indications are that the aim he had set himself was more ambitious. Where all the Hungarian democratic exiles active in the countries of the Little Entente, supported in part also by their governments, did not succeed, Jászi now tried to by himself through different means in a more indirect manner and at a higher level. He endeavoured to create a climate of public opinion in America through academic methods—thereby to influence American foreign policy—in favour of a democratic confederation, a Danubian federation of states, and ultimately in support of the idea of a United States of Europe. He directed his immense energy towards this great aim, that of disclosing the danger of war entailed in the non-settlement of nationality problems. During the increasingly oppressive decade and a half that preceded the outbreak of the Second World War, he produced books and many lecture series, articles and essays, memoranda and letters, a review of which even in outline would go far beyond the scope of this article. One can only be astonished at the abundance, high quality, moral and emotional richness of this heritage of printed and manuscript papers. Indeed one is forced to ask whether it would not be right to make a major selection from the archives and periodicals accessible to English and Hungarian readers, if only to demonstrate the enlightening failure of a heroic and noble effort.

After a vigorous and encouraging start in the latter half of the twenties, Jászi was eventually unable to win any wider audience than that represented by professors of sociology and political sciences at American uni-

versities, by a regular reading public composed mainly of liberal intellectuals and the contributors of *The Nation*, *The New Republic*, *Foreign Affairs*, and other journals. His ideas, suggestions, and warnings did not reach the public at large—although *The New York Times* was always ready to publish a letter from him, as a rule government quarters did not take heed.

The causes of this relative failure can only be guessed. It is certain that Jászi did not manage to became a university teacher of unquestioned national and international authority in America. The linguistic problem might also have been a contributing factor. His manner of English speech and expression was clumsy and outlandish from beginning to end. This is probably the most plausible explanation for the relative lack of success of his best-known work, *The Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy* (also an argument for the great idea of a democratic federation). Chicago University Press omitted to edit it for style and, in spite of two successive editions, it failed to have the success it rightly deserved. And yet, to quote *The Manchester Guardian Weekly:* "There have been many books on the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, but there is none which goes so deeply into the causes as does Dr. Jászi's... in this pitiless yet pitiful analysis, rigorously buttressed with statistics, the tragedy is described without bitterness but with deep feeling."[8] Harold Laski was also of the opinion that "Jászi's book will remain for many years the classical discussion of its theme."[9] A. J. P. Taylor, on the other hand, who did not sympathize with Jászi's ideas, disposed of the work with this casual remark: "...this book would be most valuable if it were not unreadable."[10]

Against the tide

There was, however, a more important factor which necessarily hindered Jászi's intellectual influence. The new, growing intellectual and political currents of the twenties and particularly the thirties were in no way favourable to the reception of almost traditionally democratic, or, as he put it, liberal socialist ideas. He himself saw this most clearly of all. "The times are against me, I know it very well, and sometimes I painfully feel my loneliness in this world going bolshevist and fascist," he wrote to Károlyi in the summer of 1932.[11]

The comment is not surprising. It comes from a man who reacted to the first appearance in Hungary of the catchword of proletarian dictatorship, towards the end of 1918, in these terms: "On principle I am against any dictatorship because every dictatorship implies the negation of both moral autonomy and the spirit of genuine democracy. Not one individual and not one class of society can be entitled to exercise dictatorship over the others."[12]

He abided by this principled position to the very last, feeling again and again, across forty years, the need to draw a demarcation line both to the right and to the left. It never occurred to him, however, to treat as simply equal rightist and leftist dictatorships, or Fascism and Bolshevism. He considered Fascism quite simply as a cancer, a tumour to be excised, and could in no way be tolerant of the intellectuals who were in sympathy with it or who even became reconciled to it. He also classified as such in a politically meaningful way, the Hungarian counter-revolutionary régime that had set out with such a cruel terror, but would keep on warning Western Europe and America of the dangers of the seats of revanchism and militarism. In the middle of the 1920s, when many in the West* sympathized with Mussolini's innovations, Jászi in a Washington commemorative address at Oberlin warned the youth of America: "I must say that if this trend of Fascist enthusiasm persists, if the spirit of imperialistic expansion continues to thrive, if great masses of this country

will honor at the same time a Washington and a Mussolini, who can know what will be the destiny of American democracy and whether the country will not be pushed into a serious adventure destroying democratic institutions?"[13]

Naturally he held that German Nazism and its appeasement were still more dangerous. Immediately after Hitler's accession to power, in a vitriolic article "The Hitler Myth—a Forecast" published in *The Nation* in the spring of 1933, Jászi predicted with a frightening precision, referring to the Hungarian and Italian experience, how politicians and academics of Western Europe and America, the Pope and certain leading figures in intellectual life, would try to make themselves and the world believe that Hitler could be made tractable and, moreover, was a real statesman with whom it was possible to reach an agreement—and how they would thereby contribute to the outbreak of war.[14] From that time on he took it for certain that war was imminent. He warned of this also in his articles "War Germs in the Danube Basin",[15] in which he summed up the experience of his tour of Central Europe during his sabbatical year of 1934. "Travelling through Central Europe, I had a ghastly feeling that the long forgotten ages of servitude, tyranny, and massacres have returned. Political rights confiscated, liberty of press and speech ignored, the co-operative life of centuries crushed, even religious liberty invaded again, no possibility for criticism and discussion..." In his articles of that time, in which he strove to convince vacillating public opinion in Hungary and America of the need to resist Fascism stoutly, he stressed also that what would bring the democracies to ruin was not too much freedom but the inability to enforce reforms![16]

Different and more complex was Jászi's relationship to communism and the Soviet system, to which he had been opposed in principle from the outset, but whose evolution he had also from the start followed with great interest. He saw in that system the great experiment of the century although he neither believed nor trusted in its success. His reasoning was that effective functioning of an economy with no competition and no market was impossible, that state-controlled centralization was undesirable and the methods of proletarian dictatorship to be rejected. Yet, as a sociologist and a leftist politician who cherished socialist ideas, he felt it was an important duty of his to study the matter. And since he was of the opinion that serious results—owing to the magnitude of the experiment and the size of the country—could be produced only by a collective effort, in 1925 he proposed in a memorandum to a number of American sociological societies the institution and organization of this kind of inquiry. "The ascent of Mt. Everest in its social and economic consequences would be without doubt a trifling episode compared with the almost incalculable significance of the eruption of the Russian volcano. And yet the heroic explorers of the Asiatic mountain range have found repeatedly the necessary financial and moral support in their undertaking, but a really scientific investigation into the causes, the conditions, and the consequences of the Russian upheaval has no supporters and explorers... The younger generation stands without any serious guide concerning these startling events which stir its imagination and make its conscience tremble."[17]

He must have seen in the following decade how strong an attraction the Soviet Union had for the left-wing intelligentsia of Europe and America, particularly on the younger generation. He knew that highly instrumental in this was the threat of the Fascist peril, the only effective antidote to which many seemed to discover in the Soviet Union and in the international communist movement; Jászi was nevertheless filled with despair when he saw that even "the best brains," indeed many of his old friends and students, were deserting democracy that seemed to be beyond help and incurable and giving up the old scale of

values based on liberalism, rationalism, and humanism.

That was his grudge against György Lukács with whom he had been able to work well in Hungary before 1918, but whom he now considered to be one of the chief depravers of youth. That is why he argued with one of his former students, Karl Mannheim, who had become a leading Western sociologist and in whose ideas he thought he discovered a dangerous relativism. It was also because of this that it came to a painful political parting with his great friend and comrade-in-arms, Mihály Károlyi, who, by the time he was at last able to go on a lecture tour of America in 1930, after ten years of effort, no longer stood for their former, purely democratic programme but "a Socialism which would stand midway between McDonald and Lenin." Jászi stated in *The New Republic* and in Hungarian papers in America: "I believe that he fatally misunderstands the driving forces of our period, the main tendencies of our economic evolution and the deepest foundations of our Western culture. But his great, almost tragic error does not affect his human qualities. Károlyi, the statesman, may fail but Károlyi, the legend, will remain untouched in the minds of many suffering millions."[18]

Bread and liberty

His mind, reared on the ideas of the nineteenth century, was totally engaged with the new phenomena of new times, with the problems of state-imposed violence and hysterical mass movements, of anti-democratic majority and irrationalism; all these he could perceive but was no longer able to grasp with the old sureness. For this reason he was delighted to come upon thoughts and anxieties similar to his in Walter Lippmann's series of articles in *Atlantic Monthly* in 1936. He at once congratulated the author and told him: "It was my hope when I came into this country to be able to publish my views (about Marxian Communism and non-Marxian Socialism) in a comprehensive form. Yet Fate ordered it differently... It is a great satisfaction for me to see that somebody will accomplish the work better than I could have ever done." They exchanged several letters expressing agreement with the importance of finding and tracing a "third road." Lippmann admitted: "I have been increasingly dismayed in the past two or three years to see how naïvely, but thoroughly, the intellectual world has been impregnated by collectivist assumptions. It is going to be a long struggle, I think, to change it." Jászi, on the other hand, found it proper to warn him: "I feel you could make your tactical position much stronger by differentiating yourself more sharply from the Capitalistic System."[19]

The fact is that Jászi, as a follower of liberal socialism, was always against capitalism, especially against its modern, monopolistic form. In an address bearing the title "Bread and Liberty" he delivered at Oberlin in 1939, he had this to say: "A new moral, social, and economic synthesis is needed. It is up to you to elaborate a new, creative system of thought and action. If America cannot do it, no other nation of the world will bring the new message."[20]

It can be said therefore that he was opposed to all significant, existing systems and political trends of his age: capitalism, fascism, communism, and social democracy. But even in his hopelessly isolated position he felt himself bound to warn the public, time after time, of the dangers coming from the "principal enemy," the totalitarian state, to caution against intellectual submission to it, and to point to the apparently devalued moral and democratic assets. "It may be that this generation will simply ridicule me," ran the message he sent the Hungarian young through the periodical *Századunk* in 1930. "And yet you will still wail in tears for the 'old-fashioned' basic freedoms..."[21] His prediction proved to be right.

But Jászi was not, even in this time,

absorbed in sterile moralizing. Although the continued leftward shift of the Left that was close to him plainly pained him, he was able to distinguish between dangers coming from the Left and the Right. If one has to make a choice between them, he wrote to a friend, he would choose communism which may be the purgatory towards a better world rather than fascism which is hell itself.[22]

When war broke out he interrupted his retirement. When the Nazis invaded Western Europe he made it his most urgent duty to rescue his old Danubian friends who were trapped in France and exposed to danger, among them the historian Friedrich Wilhelm Fœrster and the economist Franz Oppenheimer. For their admission to the United States he entered into extensive correspondence with various officials and authorities and universities, and appealed even to President Roosevelt himself and Secretary of State Cordell Hull. He succeeded in saving many lives by his actions. At the same time he offered the government organs of belligerent America his own services, the use of his experience of Central Europe.[23]

When the Hungarians of America started vigorously on anti-Fascist organization, Jászi was elected chairman of the American Federation of Democratic Hungarians. In this capacity he was finally given, in 1943, an opportunity to speak to the Hungarian people by radio, calling on them to break with and turn against Hitler. "I can talk today for the first time after a quarter of a century to the Hungarian people," he began his address. "I do this as an American citizen whose loyalty to the United States is final and unconditional. It is this active and intimate participation of mine in the great culture of America which gives me strength to tell you all that is close to my heart..."

Closest to his heart was even at that time the future of the entire Danubian region as can be seen from the conclusion of his radio address: "Without the active and cheerful cooperation of the Hungarian people real, creative, and peaceful life cannot be built in the Danubian Basin. Without such Danubian cooperation only new sufferings, new misery, and a third world war can follow. The zero hour is at hand: take your choice!"[24]

He knew full well, however, that future cooperation did not depend on the Hungarians alone, and that they were paralysed most of all by fear of territorial loss. Making use of his long-standing connections with leaders of the neighbouring Danubian peoples, he turned to the exiled President Beneš of Czechoslovakia, to the Rumanian Iuliu Maniu, and the Yugoslav Ivan Šubašić. The victory of the Allies, he wrote them, will spell disaster for Hungary. The Hungarian people must not be penalized for the crimes of their masters. He asked them to convey a message to the Hungarian peasants, workers, and intellectuals, because an honest and encouraging message would expedite the victory of democracy and the organization of the popular forces sympathizing with them.[25] This was an idea worthy of the apostle of Danubian solidarity, but it had of course no practical effect either on Hungary's neighbours' attitude towards her or on promoting the Hungarian anti-Fascist movement.

Einstein, Thomas Mann, Salvemini

As the conclusion of war approached, the American and Danubian patriot looked into the more distant future with growing anxiety. In 1942/43 his principal concern was with Anglo-American policies towards Hungarian emigrant movements. He saw that the State Department, just as the Foreign Office in London, viewed the Hungarian government, though actively participating in the war against the Soviet Union, was toying with the idea of dropping out of the war and making approaches to the Western Allies, a victim of Hitler rather than his accomplice. Consequently, the American and British sup-

port was of all the Hungarian émigré organizations, for the Movement for an Independent Hungary headed by Tibor Eckhardt, a former Horthyite politician, while they did not even deign to speak with the American Federation of Democratic Hungarians or with Professor Vámbéry's Free Hungary Movement which rallied to itself the most recent and stateless Hungarian exiles. Jászi endorsed the programme of a broad United Front that had also officially been announced by the Allies. He found it natural that he should go along with the Communists and, even though distrustfully, he would have been ready to join forces with ex-Horthyites turning against Hitler. But it was just as natural for him to see the aim of the struggle not merely as a military victory but as a revived Central Europe after the war and as the establishment of a democratic Hungary in it. To him and his comrades, therefore, the anti-Hitler struggle was also an anti-Horthy struggle.

Indeed how could he have abandoned his deepest convictions and rejected a twenty-year struggle just when his prediction that the counter-revolutionary régime would plunge the country into a catastrophe was being fulfilled? On the eve of the war and during the war he had over and over again called to this the attention of American public opinion in articles such as "Feudal Agrarianism in Hungary,"[26] "The Future of Danubia,"[27] "Hungary and her Quislings."[28] In the latter he wrote: "... the future of Hungarian democracy will depend on the support that Great Britain, the United States, and (though from other motives) Soviet Russia will give it."

As early as 1942, however, he was disappointed to learn that the State Department was unwilling to give an entry permit to Mihály Károlyi, who was in fact "the only man who would be apt to organize and lead the democratic Hungarians of the United States." In vain did Jászi pester the American authorities, in vain did he resort to the publicity of the press and request support from Harold J. Laski of the British Labour Party, he could not counteract the influence of conservative elements in the State Department and of the Habsburg-Eckhardt coalition they backed.[29]

Even after that he could imagine the establishment of an anti-Fascist United Front only by keeping his principles concerning the future. In an article in Hungarian he proposed: "Complete unity on the front of war, and polite discussion on the front of peace: a United Front of this kind would perhaps be feasible. But this is not up to us. *Que messieurs les assassins commencent!*"[30]

It became known, however, that the State Department did not approve of this either and wanted to force the nationality and émigré groups, in the interest of unity, to set aside their internal differences for the duration of the war. Jászi was, of course, unwilling to do so, and in a letter to Under-Secretary of State Sumner Welles he energetically protested against the absurd allegation that his criticism of the Horthy régime, which had declared war on the United States, would "impair the war effort."[31] Since he was fully aware that this was not only a Hungarian affair, he suggested first to Gætano Salvemini, the outstanding Italian historian and democrat teaching at Harvard University, and then, after his approval, to influential émigré representatives from other Central and South European nations, too, that they should produce a joint German, Italian, Czech, Yougoslav, Hungarian, etc. public memorandum in defence of the future interests of their old countries.[32]

Under the title "The Dangers of the United Front" Jászi himself prepared the text of the declaration early in 1943. "The democratic emigration," he emphasized, "realized that their gagging would mean the unrestricted secret agitation of the Fascists and other reactionaries for a peace which would restore, as far as possible, the old order in Europe... the United Front should not be interpreted in such a way as to make the discussion of the war aims taboo among

the nationality or émigré groups... What kind of real enthusiasm may be expected from people who do not know for what aims they are fighting?... It is our deep conviction that the real democratization of Europe and the radical extirpation of all Fascist–Nazi systems, or their possible substitutes, is of a fundamental interest for the United States. Without achieving this supreme war aim, the old story will repeat itself and again hundreds of thousands of Americans will die on account of a tension created by absolutist dictatorial or plutocratic powers. American public opinion does not clearly see these dangers. Who are more entitled to draw attention to them than those, or the descendents of those, who became victim of that cursed system? Suppressing their voices of warning the door will be wide open for the exponents and secret emissaries of that system. Without such a voice Tibor Eckhardt would already be the favored candidate of a semi-Horthy system, Otto Habsburg would have already formed his provisional government, and de Gaulle would have been repudiated. Therefore the real meaning of the United Front theory should be unequivocally restated."

The action, however, failed at the very outset, because the necessary number of important signatories could not be collected, although publication of the declaration was favoured by Albert Einstein,[33] Thomas Mann and his son-in-law, G. A. Borghese, as well as by G. Salvemini, La Piana, Professor Tillich, and others. Representatives of certain nations, however, were unwilling to join and finally, as Jászi wrote, "the German group felt that they could not pronounce judgement on a Hungarian episode the details of which are not familiar to them."[34] In any case Jászi saw the cause of the fiasco in German *Gründlichkeit* and in fear of the State Department. He tried to publish the warning in the form of an article, but according to all indications he succeeded neither in this undertaking nor in the trip to Washington.[35] What the Allied were occupied with at the time were not yet the problems of the post-war settlement but, naturally, the speeding up of military action; this they expected to carry out by turning the satellites, Horthy among them, against Hitler. But they did not want to frighten away Horthy by supporting his arch-enemies, Károlyi and Jászi. Thus the most distinguished Hungarian emigrant in America was neither then nor later able to influence the policy of the United States towards Hungary. From beginning to end he constituted a point of conflict rather than a connecting link between his old and his new country.

During the closing stage of the war Jászi's earlier worries on the future of Central Europe and Danubia were in part dispelled and in part modified. In the abruptly enhanced role of the Soviet Union he saw a guarantee that the vestiges of feudalism and Fascism would be removed from the countries of the region. He was, however, all the more worried about the position of those countries lying between the victorious great powers, between East and West, and their mutual relations in the future. "Central Europe and Russia" was the title of an article[36] he published early in 1945 in which, setting aside the old ideological differences, he sized up the new situation very realistically: "... the Russian influence in that territory, whether we like it or not, will be preponderant. Russia will come out of this war as the greatest continental power of Europe." "... it seams not an overstrained optimism to assume that for the next twenty years or so Russia would loyally accept the new equilibrium, would not interfere with the cultural and national independence of Central European countries and would abstain from any action which would disturb her cooperation with the democracies. *Qui habet tempus, habet vitam.* It will depend on the statesmanship of the democracies to make out of the armistice a real peace, to give fresh courage and democratic self-confidence to the small states, and to convince Russia

of the seriousness and loyalty of our intentions."

He entirely approved of President Roosevelt's "grand design," the intention of putting an end to the isolation of the Soviet Union and developing cooperation with what country. Jászi trusted in the democratization of a Soviet society which had grown in consciousness, and at the same time also in the strengthening of the socialist tendencies of the West; in this he found hope for a mutual rapprochement. For he saw the guarantee of enduring peace only in such sincere cooperation, and not in the Great Power politics of spheres of interest and of military and territorial concessions. He did not approve, for example, of the divisions of Germany.[37] He could imagine also the future of "Danubia" only in its unity, in its progress towards a democratic confederation open to both East and West, if the region was not to relapse into the self-destroying discord of old. "The interests of the Danubian countries are solidary, provided they can get rid of certain nationalistic and class prejudices," he wrote in the same article.

It was precisely on this point that he met with the first serious disappointment in the autumn of 1945, when the reborn Republic of Czechoslovakia, on the principle of collective responsibility, decided on the mass eviction of the German and Hungarian national minorities. This unjust and short-sighted decision was practically a personal blow to Jászi as a Hungarian patriot, as a loyal and recognized friend of democratic Czechoslovakia since 1919; he had in 1938 categorically condemned the Munich Agreement and Hungary's role in the destruction of the democratic bulwark of Central Europe and, naturally, as an apostle of Danubian appeasement. In September 1945 he wrote, jointly with Professor Vámbéry, a long personal letter to President Beneš, an old acquaintance, "to express our anxiety about the fate of the Magyar minority in Slovakia." They said in plain terms that "any undiscriminating collective responsibility seems to be contrary to the democratic principles, to the fairness and justice of which Czechoslovakia was the outstanding example in Central Europe... Respectfully suggesting the reconsideration of the treatment of the Magyar minority we are aware of the identity of the interests of Czechoslovakia and Hungary."[38] When this discreet intervention proved to be of no avail, Jászi begged also the good offices of Harold Laski and Wickham Steed;[39] finally he did not hesitate to denounce this dangerous nationalistic policy, before the American and the international public, in the columns of *The New York Times*.[40]

Danubia — old and new

How did his relationship to his homeland proper work out to the old country having undergone a radical change after the war, the country which in the spring of 1945 proceeded with democratic transformation, land reform, and the establishment of the new political system, from the point where Károlyi, Jászi, and their associates had left off in the spring of 1919? The natural thing would have been to call them home at once, to put their experience, their prestige in and outside their homeland, at the service of their country in its difficulties. This, however, was done only belatedly, ambiguously, and temporarily, for a short time even in the case of Károlyi, Vámbéry, and a few others, but in the case of Jászi it was not done at all. Jászi received neither the official political invitation nor the honorary seat in the new Parliament that the first-mentioned did. Of course some difficulty would have been created by his American citizenship, which he himself regarded as definitive. Yet it was his feeling, as he wrote a friend of his, that "I should provisionally have my place at home, I could promote your efforts from the background as an observer and adviser."[41] But he soon

realized that he was undesirable at home—by right and left alike—because those at the helm were afraid of his intransigence, of a character which refused to compromise. In their judgement they were soon proved right. The relative optimism he still expressed in a 1946 article "Choices in Hungary"[42] was clouded by 1947; after Béla Kovács had been arrested and then Prime Minister Ferenc Nagy had been forced to resign, he felt it necessary to retract, in a letter to *The New York Times*, his earlier "cautious hopes, that... Hungary may develop a real parliamentarian democracy with safeguarding individual liberty and spontaneous cooperation between peasants, workers, and creative intellectuals. Recent events leave these hopes at a low ebb."[43]

Under such circumstances he himself found it better to pay only a short farewell visit to his homeland and its neighbouring countries, to greet his friends and pay his respects to the dead, and once more to look round the Danubian regions dear to his heart. In the autumn of 1947, with the financial support of the Social Science Research Council and the American Philosophical Society, he made a tour of nearly three months of Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. He summed up the tour in two lectures given at Oberlin and in a paper entitled "Danubia: Old and New," based on that summary and published in the spring of 1949. He came to the conclusion that not even the new Danubian states would be able to solve the old-standing problems of liberty and national coexistence. He was especially stunned by the revival of nationalism. "This new doctrine of nationalism soon found the support of some influential theorists who are always inclined to give their blessings to the *faits accomplis* of power politics. Even our leaders of Western democracies (Mr. Churchill included) acquiesced in those solutions as so-called historical necessities, with the hypocritical proviso that the operation should be performed in a 'humanitarian way'... Just forty years ago R. W. Seton-Watson, the eminent English historian, published his book on *Racial Problems in Hungary*, in which he denounced the sins of Hungarian feudalism against the national minorities of the country. This book became one of the strongest arguments for the dismemberment of Hungary in 1918. And one must acknowledge that Seton-Watson was right in condemning the mistakes and abuses... I publicly declared my solid agreement with his arguments. But what happens now in Czechoslovakia and several other countries are not mistakes or abuses of chauvinism, but a policy which intends the final annihilation for minorities which are regarded as hindrances in the building of new nation states. But today one hears only the feeble voice of the persecuted which is easily silenced. No book is written today by an influential foreign authority on 'Racial problems in Czechoslovakia'. And the United Nations does not care for such small episodes..."[44]

It was with this bitter conclusion that Jászi in his old age took his leave of Danubia 35 years ago. He intended to write another book on his travels, but he only managed to make an outline for it. Its title would have been "The Exile Cannot Return!" Although he lived almost a further ten years, the hardening division of the world and his own hardening views cut off his way home. When moribund, in 1956, it is said that he believed he was in his native town and he saw a cloud in the sky drawing the outlines of Hungary.

GYÖRGY LITVÁN

NOTES

This paper is based on the collection of Oszkár Jászi's manuscripts and letters, in the Manuscripts and Special Collections, Butler Library, Columbia University, New York. In further references: Jászi Papers.

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3 Oberlin, Ohio, March 30, 1946.

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HUNGARIAN PEASANT ECONOMY IN THE 19th–20th CENTURIES

Exhibition in the Hungarian Ethnographic Museum

To mark the 8th World Economic History Congress in Budapest, the Ethnographic Museum organized a large exhibition "The Message of the Plough-Lands—Technical Innovations in Hungarian Peasant Agriculture in the 19th–20th Century". The exhibition provided an excellent opportunity for the Museum to display its recent work to social scientists, historians specializing in agriculture and the public. A further aim was to make accessible several hundred representative objects, drawn from Hungarian agriculture.

Two approaches to the topic were evident. There is a survey of the types of peasant economies in Hungarian villages and market towns in the hundred and fifty years to 1961, the year of collectivization. Secondly there is a treatment of the characteristic forms during different periods, their relation to European, East-Central European, and the national economy and their links with local markets. The different villages and homesteads tried to meet the economic challenge from within their systems in various ways which depended upon both their local ecology and traditions. Their role in the division of labour took on different forms. The exhibition also shows the technical conditions and work processes in different types of peasant economies and their different modes of production. When a peasant economy started to produce for the market, the modernization of the means and processes of production to some extent followed. Industrial civilization, and growing capitalist manufacturing industry overwhelmed the peasantry with a wide assortment of new tools but industry did not always produce a real change in peasant husbandry. The exhibition also raises the question whether the market really penetrated all parts of the country.

One of the chief entities of peasant husbandry was the independent unit which existed in two versions. The first, mixed farming, was characteristic of the nineteenth century. Although mixed farming could not be fully isolated from the market, it tried to be self-sufficient and to produce everything needed for production and consumption. The second version was specialized farming which, although it had existed for several centuries, became the characteristic form after the second half of the nineteenth century when the growth of industrialization and urbanization created an important market for food.

Periods, tendencies

Since the middle of the eighteenth century economic processes in Europe, largely known as the industrial revolution, had created a demand for agricultural products which resulted in closer links between Hungarian agriculture and more developed regions. Earlier Hungary had exported wine and fat cattle; in this period wool and cereals became important. Gradually the Austrian and Bohemian industrial regions of the Habsburg empire became the chief markets for Hungarian agricultural products. In the nineteenth century the development of shipping and the arrival of the railways added to transport facilities so that after the 1860s the fertile plains also took part in these export activities. From 1740 to the 1870s, Hungarian agriculture, with the exception of short periods, enjoyed a continuous boom. Exports increased in the 1860s and by the 1870s Hungary was an important grain exporting country.

It was the boom of the Napoleonic Wars

István Vincze

Fields-system, Zsére (Northern Hungary)

Harrowing in a corn-producing area. Great Plain. 1930s

Tibor Gyerkó

Scythes from a mixed farming area. Váralja, Transdanubia. 193

Tibor Gyerkó

Manual threshing, Cserszegtomaj,
Transdanubia. 1904
Photo: Károly Stegmüller

Tibor Gyerkó

Using horses for threshing. Hódmezővásárhely, Transdanubia
Photo: József Plóhm, 1907

A threshing-machine on the Great Plains. Photo: József Plóhm, 1907

Tibor Gyerkó

Paprika-processing. Neighbourhood of Szeged, Great Plain 1930s

Tibor G

Cabbage growers at Pécs market, 1957

y in festive dress expressing his standing at school. Photo Kálmán Kóris, Mezőkövesd, 1905

Boy in an adolescent's dress. Photo Rilly Weisbach, Mezőkövesd, between 1910–17

Lad in festive dress Photo Rilly Weisbach, Mezőkövesd, 1910

Peasant lad in uniform. One hand on the bible, the other on his side-arm: symbol of taking the oath

Family group in everyday clothes
Photo Kálmán Kóris, Mezőkövesd, 1904

Mari Pénztárnok on her bicycle between
1910–20, Mezőkövesd

Father and children with a bullock-drawn plough. Unknown photographer, Pányok, 1910

ding photograph from Mezőkövesd by Rilly Weisbach, ut 1910–1920. The bridegroom has his right on his s shoulder, holding an unlit cigarette to show his status

Soldier with his wife, Miskolc, 1917

ife and children in festive dress. The photo was taken to be sent to the father who worked in the US. Mezőkövesd, 1912

The father who sent his photo taken in the US, to his family. 1912

Courtesy Herman Ottó Múzeum, Miskolc

Harvesters in working dress. The photo was taken in Mád, in a studio

Standing around a stationary threshing engine

which, after earlier sporadic action really got going the draining of marshlands and soil reclamation. In this the state played the role of pioneer. After the 1850s, the regulation of the river Tisza freed wast areas from periodic flooding; these lands promptly came under the plough. Between 1850 and 1870 the amount of arable land increased by 1.5 to 2 million acres, a yearly average of between 0.4 and 0.7 per cent. By 1870 some 37 per cent of the country was under the plough and in some regions, especially east of the Tisza, this proportion was as high as 70 per cent.

Contemporary sources show that in the first half of the nineteenth century wine growing spread on the sandy soil of the plains. The good market for wool stimulated the breeding of merino sheep which give finer and more wool. In pig-breeding the fat *Mangalica* pigs pushed out the traditional mast-fed types. However, despite many small improvements and innovations, peasant economies remained essentially within the framework of traditional agriculture.

Under these conditions the primary means of raising agricultural production remained manpower, the acquisition of more land and increasing the proportion of those forms of production which required more labour. In Hungary it was grain crops that became by far the most important.

In the last third of the nineteenth century fundamental changes began in Hungary: the industrialisation of the country progressed and so did urbanisation. In the first phase (1870–1890) a modern infrastructure was developed, agriculture growth accelerated, and after 1890, when the industrial revolution had established itself, modern, self-maintaining economic growth started to emerge. The Great War and the changes in the political map of the Danube Basin which followed, effectively the disintegration of historical Hungary, slowed down these processes. Later still the world-wide depression in 1932 made the transformation even more difficult. Ultimately it was completed by the sixties in changed political and economic conditions.

Grain exports remained a basic factor in Hungarian agricultural growth in the last third of the nineteenth century but foreign trade had to cope with worsening conditions. Prices declined on the world market and Hungarian production costs were high; serious problems ensued which became worse still after 1918 with the loss of the protected market of the Habsburg Monarchy. As for those products where marketing conditions remained favourable (animal products, vegetables, fruits) progress remained slow.

Urbanisation as a consequence of industrialization—Budapest becoming a metropolis, the rapidly growing industrial towns and centres—produced a boom in the domestic market. One of the effects thus created was the opportunity for some regions to specialize production to satisfy the needs of the cities.

Self-sufficiency versus specialization

The serf-peasants practised a type of almost wholly self-sufficient mixed farming. Those who had enough land in villeinage (whole or half-plot) endeavoured to produce the necessary food for their family and fodder for their livestock, they also produced most of their own implements and clothing, built their own houses and outbuildings. They consumed most of their products and sold only what they needed to cover taxes to state and landlord; goods emanating from outside their own farm figured minimally in their consumption. Crop and animal husbandry acted in unison to create the cycle for leaving fallow and the fixed ratios between the two determined the balance of consumption.

Serfs sowed in the autumn to produce bread-grain and in the spring for livestock feed, planted maize and potatoes, pulses, vegetables and fruit, made wine and distilled brandy, bred livestock, used horses and cattle as draught animals, made cheese

and butter, obtained meat, wool, and down from pigs, sheep and poultry. They made their own implements in the intervals of agricultural work, made their clothes and embroidered the ornaments of their home. They also collected the fruits of woods and water; the serf-peasants fished, trapped game, gathered mushrooms and berries.

This form of production and farming naturally produced its system of values and traditions; the rules of the community also hindered selfs in innovation. They marketed their products only occasionally, as when they tried to sell the surplus of good years.

It was very difficult for serfs to increase the amount of land they used within the framework of the system of crop rotation and the feudal system of land-owning. In some places they could clear some woodland and plough it, sometimes they could buy vineyards but basically they were unable to adjust to the changing demands of the market.

Both the state and the squires tried to ensure security for the serfs who had completely self-sufficient farms and prevented the division of plots. Landless peasants became field hands or seasonal workers on the estate or on other peasant farms, or tried to find some other occupation (handicrafts, haulage, forestry and so on). In places where peasants did not prevent the sub-division of land into small plots, the growing number of owners of minute plots also had to find supplementary sources of income.

After the abolition of serfdom (1848) the serfs obtained the plots which they had been farming; the commons (woods and pastures) were divided between the village and the squire. Especially after 1880, large and small holdings gradually specialized in forms of agriculture requiring more labour. Small holdings were more viable in hoe and garden crops, and intensive animal husbandry; larger farms proved more suitable for extensive corn production.

These changes in the conditions of industrialisation and urbanisation transformed also the peasant farming called general or mixed. The basically closed, self-sufficient type of farming survived, and even gained ground in some regions or periods (for example on the scattered homesteads of the Great Plain, or during the 1929–32 economic crisis). Naturally the degree of autarky decreased throughout the entire period and the role of the market increased—but some closed peasant communities preserved the traditional modes of production even in the first half of the twentieth century.

The dominance of the market economy

The growing demands of the market and favourable geographical position enabled the peasants of some regions even in the first half of the nineteenth century to more or less preserve the mixed character of their farming and attempt to maintain self-sufficiency. But at the same time they did produce certain goods for the market: fat cattle, young cattle, vegetables, tobacco, etc. In the 19th century the cattle of villages and market towns were driven out to pasture. Individual farmers had fewer animals and cultivation remained important. Their cattle were out in the open in herds all the year round; these animals were neither milked nor put to the yoke. Fattened cattle were sold to merchants who drove them mainly to Austrian and Bohemian markets. These farms developed especially in the Great Plain and in Transdanubia, along the river Drava and proved to be profitable until the middle of the nineteenth century; later pastures were reclaimed everywhere and the peasants switched to wheat growing.

The rearing and sale of draught animals lasted much longer than the type of cattle-breeding mentioned above; in some districts it remained general until the 1930s when West European breeds finally replaced the Hungarian grey cattle. Hungarian grey bullocks became draught animals at the age of four: they were sold in trained pairs. Several

villages engaged in producing them in a local division of labour. The peasants of the Hajdúság region used to drive their animals to the northern counties.

A more intensive type of cattle-breeding —there are countless examples of this in smaller regions—took the form of raising animals to a determined age and then selling them to the peasants of the region. Some farms bred calve and sold them as heifers, reared bulls and so forth. The most profitable form of livestock breeding was dairy farming, using cattle-sheds. However, in the absence of suitable markets, this type of production developed only in the last third of the nineteenth century, first in Western Transdanubia and around Budapest at the turn of the century; in the later industrialised provinces this happened several decades latter.

In pig-breeding, a distinct division of labour developed within settlements of some smaller regions. In some communities almost all farms bred sows, elsewhere they only reared porkers or fat pigs.

Peasant sheep-breeding turned into commodity production only in the Great Plain where profits came mainly from wool. Its importance has declined since the seventies of the nineteenth century.

The regional division of labour favoured specialization in crops; the challenge of the domestic and foreign market also contributed to the emergence of specialization. From around 1800 grain producing regions came into being: they mainly produced wheat for sale but rye was also important. The surplus went to markets abroad. In the Great Plain, large-scale grain production developed only after the middle of the nineteenth century after the pastures had been reclaimed. At that time they were still cutting down the forests in the hilly areas and thus gaining new ploughland.

Villages took advantage of local climatic and soil conditions and participated in the regional division of labour through extensive production of special products such as cabbage, wine, hemp, or fruit. These products were mostly sold on the domestic market. Until the end of the nineteenth century these commodities had been used only in commodity exchange: they became saleable products only with the emergence of an effective domestic market.

The production of specialized commodities in incomplete types of farms is characterized by the inability of the economy to produce the necessary consumer goods. Such farming depends on the market where it sells its products and makes up for its shortages. The economy is independent because, within its closed system, equilibrium is maintained through the exchange of commodities. People do not have to go and work outside their farms; indeed in the case of most of these forms of production there are no such peak work-times as exist in grain-producing mixed economies—the farm provides work steadily from spring to late autumn. Traditional commodity producers are communities which engaged in this form of obtaining a livelihood already during the feudal period. Hungarian wine appeared on the European market as early as the fifteenth and sixteenth century, produced mainly by the serf-pesant vineyards. In wine-growing regions, individual peasant farms had more vineyards and orchards then ploughland and they did not breed much livestock. Eventually new regions, especially the plain between the rivers Duna and Tisza, took up wine growing on sandy soil. Apart from the historical wine regions, still famous today, other regions had also joined in, and wine growing and extensive trading flourished until phylloxera at the end of the nineteenth century. Then the valleys of the rivers Hernád, Bódva, and Sajó, and the southern slopes of the Bükk lost their significance.

The importance of specialized commodity production increased in the last third of the nineteenth century with the strengthening of the domestic market. Intensive market-gardening, vegetable-producing economies were created mainly by smallholders

and landless poor peasants on leased land. The challenge of the market and the difficult situation of the entrepreneurs stimulated their development—they had to earn a living on small plots. In Makó the speciality became onions, in Szeged and Kalocsa paprika, and in the Nyírség (and since the 1920s in Somogy), potatoes. In the neighbourhood of the cities cabbages are grown for *Sauerkraut* in Vecsés and Soroksár near Budapest and in Fehérvárcsurgó near Székesfehérvár; near Ózd in Hét and Sajóvelezd the specialities are tomatoes and green paprika. The number of such farms increased with the growth of towns.

We know of backward regions, in the nineteenth century, where the peasants made articles for sale. The populations of villages in poor soil hilly regions specialized in the making of pitchforks, rakes, wooden dishes, timber chests, pottery, and other goods.

In view of the fact that a growing number of peasant families were not independent units of husbandry, had no land or merely a very small plot and no draught animals, different forms of livelihood developed in the twentieth century. In general these people hired themselves out to landowners or well-to-do peasants for shorter or longer periods. But these domestic servants, fields-hands, journeymen, haulers, or members of harvesting and threshing gangs, as six-month contract workers or navvies remained more or less peasants; as far as possible they maintained their own smallholdings, which ensured a minimum of self-sufficiency (vegetable garden, poultry, a pig, etc.).

Innovations

It should be pointed out that the changes in the types of farming are themselves innovations; other innovations appear in crop growing, livestock breeding methods, vehicle traction, means of production, working processes and methods. The peasants followed the example of big estates and large-scale agricultural units from the beginning of the nineteenth century. Specialist publication made known what was happening in Western European, and especially English, agriculture and industry. However, the closed economies of serf-peasants and peasants which had set self-sufficiency as their norm and thus remained strongly traditional did not react quickly and introduced changes very slowly. They were essentially suspicious and if and when changes happened, they were mostly brought about by necessity and not as a result of rational thinking.

In the populated regions apart from the Great Plain the generally dominant system in the nineteenth century was the three-field system including fallow lands. This was compulsory in the villages although on marginal territories and deforested land hoed crops of American origin had been important since the eighteenth century. Potatoes in Northern Hungary or maize in Transylvania were popular foods. In the central regions the three-field system prevented their spread. The situation was similar in the case of fodder grain although that could have increased the intensity of livestock raising. The discontinuation and disintegration of the compulsory three field system was therefore a condition for the spread of the new crops. Winter corn (wheat and rye) was food for humans and spring crops (barley and oats) fodder for animals. The first change in the system appeared with the general practice of sowing fallowland (maize, potatoes, lucerne and clover). Towards the end of the nineteenth century the local adaptable and extensively bred animal species were replaced by the more profitable new species bred in other regions of Europe. The change in the central regions of the country strated from west to east, and spread to the outer regions. Under the influence of big estates the good milch-cows from Western Europe appeared in the middle of the century in Western Hungary and spread to the whole of Transdanubia, at the turn of the century to the Great Plain and in the 1920s to Northern

Hungary. The fattening of pigs began at the end of the last century and has become general in this one.

Hungarian grey oxen were used as draught animals in the past century—in some regions almost exclusively. Only in the twentieth century, when roads were improved were they replaced by the faster horse.

In cereal production, which was of the utmost importance, there were two well-definable systems which coexisted in the nineteenth century. In the Great Plain, corn was harvested using scythes, cut in swaths much like grass, carted home and threshed by horses in the open air. In the hills corn was cut using a sickle, bound into sheaves, stacked and left to ripen; in the autumn the grain was threshed with a swingle in the threshing yard of barns. Since the end of the nineteenth century the sickle-using regions have switching over to scythes; for several decades the peasants from the uplands went to work in the plain where they used a scythe, and the sickle at home. The real change came with the steam thresher although some regions near the Great Plain had done away with treading at the end of the century; then the mechanization of threshing (fire-machine, horse-gin) took over completely.

In soil cultivation, partial intensity came only at the turn of the century. By then iron-footed and coulter-ploughs were replaced by iron ploughs, wooden harrows by iron harrows. They started to plough the land two and three times, spread dung, used fertilizers, the disc-harrow, and the field-roller.

All these changes affected both the mixed and the specialized farms. However, in the mixed farms limited innovations did not necessarily change the type of husbandry; so the production and consumption pattern of large sections of the peasantry remained structurally the same as they had been in the nineteenth century.

PÉTER SZUHAY

PEASANT ART 1800–1914

Tendencies of separation and convergence

Folk art as a concept is a product of nineteenth-century intellectual development in Central and Eastern Europe. The general search for popular culture led, in the eastern part of Europe, to the concept of a specific folk culture related to the peasantry. It was the oral literary traditions of the villagers that were first discovered, then music, dance, costume, ritual, architecture, and ornamental objects were placed into the category of folk art. In Hungary, too, nineteenth-century observers were looking for surviving archaic traditions and were describing these forms of peasant expression as the most ancient cultural heritage of the nation. However, as recent studies show, a great many of these forms and styles were not inherited but created in that very period. In fact, Hungarian peasants of the nineteenth-century showed an unusually high degree of creativity and produced a wealth of melody, poetry, decorative forms, and so on.

This vigorous artistic activity seems to run against the general historic development. During this period, the Hungarian rural population was increasingly producing for the market and were themselves fast be-

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coming a part of the capitalist world. The influences of bourgeois changes were having their effect. As a result of these developments, the social polarization and disintegration of the peasantry accelerated. Rural people in large numbers migrated to cities and abroad. Peasants became exposed to the influence of a then emerging national consciousness and culture and through this came literacy and what were for the peasantry newer elements of rational thinking. A logical conclusion one might draw from the above process is that it would lead to a decline in the artistic expression of peasant culture as recently developed models of European popular culture also suggest. According to Peter Burke and Robert Muchembled, popular culture since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries has been increasingly suppressed by the state and by the social elites. This dissolution was gradual and by the nineteenth century popular culture had been replaced by a mass culture.[1] However, this model was not replicated in Hungary and in East Central Europe, where in fact, the peasants elaborated on and further developed forms of artistic expression specific to their strata.

In this paper I would like to suggest that this nineteenth-century flowering of peasant art in Hungary was a conspicuous expression of peasant self-awareness, and also a tool and a symptom of the peasants' acculturation and integration into a national society.

Until recently in East Central Europe the study of peasant culture has devolved on national ethnography. Briefly, and with considerable simplification, we may state that national ethnographies were developed in Central and Eastern Europe during this period of national awakening and had as their specific task that of incorporating peasant cultural traditions into national cultures.[2] National ethnographers worked with a concept of culture according to which a culture was composed of individual traits and elements. The traditional ethnographic approach was to collect as many elements as possible of peasant culture. Using descriptive methods, ethnographers have attempted to define the origin, propagation, and distribution of these cultural elements (for example: melodies, folk tales, types of ploughs, decorative patterns, and so forth). Only in the past few decades has a structural perception of peasant culture appeared in Hungarian ethnography. With this, the question that was raised is how peasant culture, as a system, adapted itself to the rapidly changing historic circumstances of the nineteenth century.

Owing to the peculiar division of labour between scientific disciplines in East Central Europe, the transformation of peasant art and ritual did not appear as part of the picture of nineteenth-century peasantry painted by historians. The portrayal of nineteenth-century peasants in history books was very different from that in ethnographic and folklore literature. As described by historians, peasants were acting under the pressure of historic circumstances, and almost exclusively as economic, social, and political beings. In contrast, the variegated picture of customs and cultural patterns, depicted in ethnographic and folklore studies, produced a portrait of a creative group who are concerned with the presentation of their own lifestyles, joys, and sorrows, the turning-points of their individual lives using to this end the many available possibilities of choice and innovation. Now, I hope, a comprehensive historical approach allows us to put an end to this double vision and to integrate the "historical" and "cultural" pictures of the Hungarian peasants.

Stylistic change in folk music

Zoltán Kodály and Béla Bartók were the first to show a fundamental transformation of the musical taste of Hungarian peasants in the nineteenth century. Through their analysis of folk music, they discovered the birth of a new folk-song style which had relegated earlier melodies to a less important position.[3] They coined the term "new style"

for these tunes. The same term was applied later in ethnographic literature to designate the new trends in clothing, ornamental design, and dances.

In 1905 Kodály began the systematic recording and notation of folk songs. In the 1920s he and Bartók, using several thousand tunes, were able to develop a tripartite classification for Hungarian folk-song tunes using formal analysis (Bartók, for the sake of precision, used the term "peasant song").

They defined an "old style" which was characterized by a pentatonic scale, very often by *parlando rubato* rhythm and a sinking melody line. It was this group of melodies which differed most from the folk music of other European peoples. Parallels were shown in the music of Turkic and Finno-Ugric groups and it is generally assumed that this archaic stratum is a heritage of Hungarian prehistory.

Furthermore, Bartók and Kodály distinguished another group which they termed "new style"; this had a set of clearly recognizable stylistic traits. The rhythm here is *tempo giusto*, the scales are diatonic and the structure architectonic, in which the last line of the stanza usually repeats the first.

In addition, a third "mixed" category was set up for tunes of foreign origin, showing the influence of historic European musical styles, from medieval Gregorian chant to the popular songs of the eighteenth century. (Bartók called this "class C").

In the decade before the First World War, Kodály and Bartók found the "new style" fully in vogue everywhere in the Hungarian language area, with the exception of some remote parts of Transylvania. At this time, the young people of the villages sang mostly folk songs of the "new style." The birth and rapid spread of new melodies in the "new style" could be continuously observed. This popularity was more or less shared by sentimental urban songs, written in a pseudo-folk style and by songs taken from operettas. Folk songs of the "old style" and of "class C" were mostly remembered by the elder generations. The two ethno-musicologists had the impression that they were witnessing the final stage of a "musical revolution" (Bartók's term) which was nearly entirely replacing the older musical repertoire by new songs. They compared the dynamic spread of the new style to a flood or to a tidal wave.[4]

Because of the lack of adequate sources, the course and chronology of the stylistic change are still being debated. Some statements in the now classic studies of Kodály and Bartók locate the first appearance of the new style at the beginning of the nineteenth century, while others have it that the most typical "new-style folk songs" were created not earlier than the last quarter of the same century.[5] There is a general agreement among musicologists that the new style absorbed and reshaped stylistic elements of the popular urban songs of the *Vormärz* period and assimilated foreign (Bohemian and Moravian) influences. Bartók and Kodály stressed the originality and the Hungarian character of the new style, but they also claimed that with the prevalence of the new style, Hungarian folk music had moved closer to the music of Central and Western European peoples.

Stylistic changes in folk dance

The advance of a new dancing style in the nineteenth century was closely related to the changes in musical style. The new dances were accompanied by instrumental versions of the new folk song and other related tunes. According to a new and thorough analysis by György Martin, the shift in the dance repertoire and dancing practices reveals significant changes in nineteenth-century peasant attitudes.[6]

Those who took part in the new dances were males (namely, in the *verbunkos*=soldiers' recruiting dance) and couples (in versions of the *csárdás*, the national dance for pairs of the period); the couples held each

other close using steps and spins. These dances are simpler and easier to learn than the older ones, and they offer a wide range of opportunities for improvisation and individual variation. Earlier, most of the old dances had a strong symbolic significance and their performance was restricted to certain ritual occasions and to specific periods of the year. With the new dances this ritual restriction became less rigid. Instead of traditional festivities which were associated with the life cycle and with the ritual cycle of the year, dances now became separate events. György Martin appropriately calls the new dances "dances for amusement." In the new type of dancing parties, dances were arranged in cycles, beginning with a slow and ending with a fast piece. A similar loosening of the integration of dance into a ritual and moral order was also noticed by ethno-musicologists. The performance of new folk songs was also less restricted to a specific occasion than in the case of the repertoire.

The new dance forms can be traced to two sources which are difficult to separate. The first is spontaneous peasant innovation, the second the conscious attempts of dance masters and composers to form a national dance style. The latter agents systematically drew on peasant traditions. Some of their innovations found fertile ground among rural people. Concomitantly, the peasants began to perceive these dances as being part of a broader national culture and a way of expressing a national identity. Thus the new dances were increasingly referred to as Hungarian dances.

The development of the new peasant dance style reveals a continuous interaction between the populist current on the level of national culture and the new style which was spontaneously evolving at the level of peasant culture. Analogous symbiotic relations can be observed in other branches of folk art, too. The "new folk song" "absorbed and reshaped" stylistic elements of the songs of populist composers and, conversely, provided them with inspiration. There was a vigorous interaction between populist literature and oral folk poetry as well. Populist poets of the Reform Era, among them Sándor Petőfi, collected peasant oral tradition in order to publish it and to give it back to the people. As "Poets of the People", they also composed "folk songs." Within a couple of decades their folk songs were incorporated into the peasant oral tradition, frequently in a locally modified form.[7]

The changes in dress, architecture, and home

The old period was characterized by relatively poor peasant homes, simple garments, and a relatively high degree of self-sufficiency in producing clothes, furnishings, and utensils. Two groups of objects with an aesthetic function can be identified among peasant goods: first, mostly home-made objects for everyday use which retained age-old and well-proportioned shapes and second, ornamental objects made by artisans. The craftsmen found customers in the aristocracy and in towns as well; their relatively narrow range of products for the peasants' use communicated the artistic taste of the era to the villages.

From the end of the eighteenth century, with the growing prosperity of the landowning strata, the proportion of festive and ceremonial objects to those for everyday use changed, sometimes radically, in favour of the former. On these ornamental objects, gradually, a new and original style of decoration appeared which, in contrast to the "old style," had an overt peasant character.

As the peasants began to produce increasingly for the market their environment also became more differentiated and elaborate. First, there was an increase in the living space in the peasant house, often through the addition of another room to the kitchen and the all-purpose living room, which was where the new highly decorative textiles, pottery, and furniture were kept. Secondly,

there was a radical transformation in dress customs. Homespun linen and wool were complemented or supplanted by manufactured cloth, decorated with rich colours, tassels, ribbons, and laces. With the use of these elements there was a high degree of regional elaboration which gained further momentum as time advanced. Whereas in earlier centuries women were referred to as "white folk" (because of the colour of their home-spun linen clothes), in 1842 an observer in Western Hungary wrote: "Young women are as fancy as the birds of God." A few years later another traveller commented: "On the wives and daughters of common farmers... one can often see material worth hundreds."[8]

The creation of such new demands stimulated certain kinds of handicraft or cottage industries. Craftsmen, who had earlier worked for urban and other social strata, lost their non-peasant customers. They now produced in the new folk style for peasants. In the town of Hódmezővásárhely (on the Great Plain) eight registered potters were at work in 1788. Their number increased to 56 in 1836, and by 1848 it had reached 169. The peak of over 400 was attained during the 1860s. Just prior to the Great War, there were still over one hundred.[9] It must be emphasized that their products were not fire-proof pots for kitchen use, but glazed plates, winejugs, and brandy-flasks, that is, decorative objects to be hung on a wall or to be used only on festive occasions.

One example of cottage industry is that of the Saxon or German-speaking town of Heltau (Nagydisznód, Cisnădie), whose frieze manufacturers in the 1870s still produced 100,000 pieces of cloth (sufficient for 400,000 *szűr*-coats) which were mostly exported to the Great Plain and sold to tailors of *szűr*-coats.[10]

During this time the *cifraszűr*, the embroidered frieze coat, was the normal Sunday best of the male Hungarian peasant. The *szűr* was an archaic type of coat, which in earlier centuries had been the principal protection for herdsmen and peasants against the elements. This plain garment symbolized the subordinate social position of the serfs and servants. In the very last years of the eighteenth century decoration of the *szűr* began in Western Hungary. The decoration was highly original and definitely peasant in style; instead of the gentry's braiding, trimming, and large silver buttons, the *szűr*-tailors used coloured appliqué and embroidery in a manner unparalleled by anything in the clothes of the nobles or gentry.

The *cifraszűr* is a good example of the social symbolism of the new peasant fashion.[11] Under the pretext that its ownership would induce peasants to utilize illegal means, the authorities immediately began a forceful campaign against the *cifraszűr*. Its manufacture was banned, and the gendarmes were instructed to cut off the decoration of the *cifraszűr* whenever they found a wearer. In spite of such stringent laws the *cifraszűr* spread throughout the Hungarian language area very rapidly. The overreaction by the authorities and the universal acceptance of the *szűr* by the peasants demonstrate a new consciousness or self-awareness among the peasantry. Thus, the *szűr* became a political issue.

Inside the villages, an aspect of the emergence of the use of expensive garments, furniture, and other objects was that it intensified social differentiation. For the poorer villagers it was difficult to keep abreast of the wealthier. The could not acquire, for example, embroidered fur coats *(suba)*, which remained the exclusive property of the heads of the wealthiest families. Yet, it was characteristic of Hungary that even the landless sections of society insisted upon wearing clothes similar in style to those of the wealthy landowners though, of course, in a less expensive version.

Thus the specific nature of the evolution of nineteenth-century folk art was that it maintained an illusion of unity among strata which in fact were quite separate. By contrast, in Scandinavia—to use one example—

the well-to-do peasants used folk art as a social strategy to exclude the lower peasantry from the village culture.[12]

The course of stylistic change in many individual centres of production or in certain communities is accurately documented in museum collections. The personal styles of individual masters have been identified and the propagation of artistic innovations can be followed from year to year. Further, in this variegated picture, some general trends to the development appear. In the Reform Era decoration was still restrained, absorbing stimuli from the classicism of the politically active nobility. This "noble touch" disappeared later and the second wave of peasant-style folk art in the 1870s and 1880s brought an ornamentation more pronounced in colour and form and freer in the use of decoration that is, a gradual profanization in the use of ornamental objects. The relaxation of the ritual rules allowed freer experimentation with form. In certain communities where folk costumes were popular, the rhythm of stylistic innovation accelerated enormously. Once a given path was selected, the formal development was pressed to the utmost limit. Thus, certain objects became elaborately over-decorated; pottery bowls painted both inside and out; the number of petticoats increased from two to twelve or more; man's shirt sleeves required two metres of material; the pace of dancing became quicker and quicker, close to the limits of physical capacity.[13]

By the end of the nineteenth century a significant portion of the Hungarian peasantry had abandoned the peasant style in clothing and other forms of material culture. In contrast to these villages, in other regions, the belated elaboration of folk costumes and material culture was still going on, and in some instances exaggerated, overdecorated forms were created.

Finally, I wish to return to the initial question: how can the seemingly anachronistic flourishing of folk art be related to the transformation of nineteenth-century Hungarian society? I see three links.

The new developments in nineteenth-century folk art can be related directly to the process of embourgeoisement. In all branches of folk art there was a shift towards profanization and a decrease in ritual restrictions. This change is reflected in the increase in opportunities for individual variation and for personal expression in all genres. This reflects the appearance of a more innovative and entrepreneurial type, in contrast to the earlier conservative, tradition respecting serf-peasant.

Secondly, by expressing peasant identity, the new folk art helped to articulate the peasants' relationship to other groups in a national society. The increase in market production and the integration of national society brought about more intense contact between peasant and non-peasant, which in turn necessitated a more exact role identification and articulation in contact situations. Folk art became a form of expression for regional groups as well as for the peasantry as a whole. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that in the vicinity of urban centres, especially elaborate and intense expressions of folk art were to be found.

Thirdly, peasant aspirations can be traced through stylistic elements of different periods in the nineteenth century. Here I should refer to Péter Hanák's "Double Pyramid" model in which he explains how the new capitalist hierarchy separated from the feudal one.[14] The peasants belonged to the feudal pyramid and were under the marked influence of that lower strata of the gentry who were now becoming salaried servants of the state.

This orientation toward the rural aristocracy and not toward urban values can be amply seen in the direct borrowing of architectural, sartorial, and dance elements from this section of society. István Györffy has summarized this by finding that after 1848 the Hungarian peasant donned the

noblemen's broadcloth suit decorated with braiding.[15] This type of imitation of older customs of the former elites is reminiscent of the belated Sanskritization in India at the time when the twice born castes had already been Westernized.[16] In addition, these observations are in accord with Károly Vörös's statements which indicate that peasants were led by a hope born in the Reform Era that they could be integrated into a national society without abandoning the traditional forms of peasant life. Such way of thinking came to a dead end during the 1890s. In other words, exactly at the time when many regional groups were abandoning their peasant costumes and rituals and others were maintaining an illusionary and exaggerated form of peasant art.[17]

TAMÁS HOFER

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PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE PEASANT

François Arago presented his new, photochemically based picture-fixing process which he had discovered together with Mandé Daguerre and Joseph Nicéphore Niepce to the Paris Academy of Fine Arts in August 1839. The discovery had a wide range of use and was quick to be taken up; new, improved versions were soon introduced. In August 1840 Antal Vállas presented the process to members of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. By the middle of the century photograph-writing workshops and studios had appeared in enormous numbers in Hungarian provincial towns. Some of the founders were outstanding portrait painters such as Miklós Barabás and József Borsos, who had started work in the 1860s; as well as the new process they also sometimes provided traditional portraits for customers who ordered them. Ambitious crafstmen also took up photography: one of these was the goldsmith Lipót Strelisky, and even Ottó Herman, the great natural scientist, opened a photographic studio with two colleagues in 1863 in the town of Kőszeg. This initial impetus led to a further proliferation after the compromise of 1867 which —despite a few, smaller and greater setbacks—saw an economic boom which in turn provided good opportunities for photography. Thus the new invention not only gained ground in Hungary, its products became an integral part of the life of the different sectors of Hungarian society.

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The relationship between the Hungarian peasantry and official photography developed when the basic process of the cultural change which accompained economic growth, as a result of the emergence of Hungarian capitalism, also changed the peasantry's way of work and life. By the second half of the 19th century the closed peasant communities had gradually disintegrated, their characteristic peasant traditions had been transformed and then interwoven with elements of urban middle-class culture. The various regional and ethnical groups on Hungarian-speaking territories assimilated photography into their culture at different stages of their transformation, depending upon local historical and social conditions. Naturally, the photographs collected in different regions reflect these phases. So in photographs taken between 1870 and 1910 of peasant families in market towns of the Balaton highlands, the Kisalföld or the Hegyalja region, it is not unusual to find men plainly dressed: however, photographs from Kalocsa or Mezőkövesd between 1890 and 1950 show the full process of the rise, development and disappearance of local folk-costume.

People who went to the photographer were generally in festive clothes. If this dress of theirs was a folk-costume, as is the case in most early photos, it was adapted to the norms and expectations of the area where the customer lived and where the photo was to return. The exceptions to this were the photos taken for the occasion of getting out of the traditional local community: pictures of soldiers in uniform or of the American Hungarians (emigrants) with the intention of sending them to the old country. When these people returned home they reverted to local norms of dress. Therefore these dressed-up photographs especially those of soldiers, which have a great tradition in peasant society, fit organically into the time sequence of family photographs in folk costumes.

In pictures taken earlier than the 40s smiling faces were extremely rare. The categorical imperative of saying "cheese" was not so widespread among the studios at the time and, indeed, it was to have no effect whatever while traditional expectations on behaviour remained valid. When people

appeared in official public places their faces should not show emption. Closed postures went together with closed expressions. However, this did not mean rigidity. The faces on these photos are earnest, their eyes frank—especially noticeable when these old pictures are compared to the portraits made by studios today.

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In group photographs personal relations are also expressed between the persons standing or sitting behind or beside each other. The traditional sign language of interpersonal proxemic relations is primarily an expression of social value relations. Just as every communal event in peasant life from seating in church to priority in entering a pub and taking a seat at a wedding table or standing before the grave at a burial is a necessary expression of the social balance of forces in community life, the same hierarchy prevails on a photo.

The status-signalling gestures in wedding photos are very characteristic. The newlywed couple stand beside each other, the bride is generally on the right of the groom. Her posture is closed: in one hand she may hold her wedding shawl; her other hand is held by the groom or sometimes placed on his shoulder. In Mezőkövesd the groom holds the hand of the bride and places his other hand on her shoulder. According to local interpretation this posture not only expresses the solemnity of the rite but also the subordinate and superior relations between husband and wife in marriage.

An unlit cigarette in the hand of some young men on the photos was also an expression of rank: it signalled that the immature youth had grown into a young man who could stand before the camera in his festive inaugural dress—from now on he was permitted to smoke.

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The photographs commissioned by peasants were always linked to some event concerning the community. They recorded and emphasized a turning point in the life of the individual or the family. In this sense they can be called functional.

The majority of these pictures which reflect turning points in people's lives are wedding photos. Most of them come from the end of the last century, and are found as early as that in a peasant environment. This was the broadest application of photography, and a wedding was the most emphatic and most memorable feast in life.

In Szék (Transylvania), the custom in the 19th century was to frame and hang on the wall both the posy worn on the groom's hat and the bride's headdress as a commemoration of their wedding. In the early years of the 20th century they used to place the photograph of the couple in the centre of a composition, surrounded by the wedding decorations which figured in the picture. Later, when the posy and the headdress lost much of their decorativity, they were relegated to the background and the central objects were the wedding photographs themselves; a photographer was hired for the occasion. Then in the latter thirty or forty years only the wedding photographs themselves were placed on the walls.

In Mezőkövesd the custom was to go to the photographer after the church wedding. The photographer had to be informed in advance of the visit, just as the priest, sexton and town-clerk of the impending wedding did. The cost of the picture of the new couple was paid for by the groom. Hence the new item in the wedding budget, the wedding photograph itself figured in the traditional division of the wedding expenses.

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In the years between the two world wars photographs became more usual on other formal occasions too, such as the ceremonies marking end of term, first communion or

confirmation. Other important landmarks in life also provided opportunities for photography, such as initiation into adulthood or being called up to the army. Within the peasant tradition the initiation into manhood, the ceremony of entering a new age group of adult men gradually lost its importance. The village community began to acknowledge that a young man who had completed his military service was now an adult fit for founding a family.

Boys between 13 and 18 were called *suhanc* (lads); after 18 they became *legény* (young men). They became *igazi legény* (real young men) when they chose an older man as a godfather and went with him for the first time to drink. For this occasion they dressed up as *új legény* (new young men) and were allowed to smoke publicly for the first time. Thus the cigarette of the photographs was an important symbol of adulthood. In fact, its function was symbolic since it was always unlit.

The young man drafted into the army was the pride of his family: the fact that he had been found fit for military service meant that he was hale and hearty and so, according to the physical value system of peasant life, a true guarantee of the family's survival and the continuer of its economic viability. In this sense the photograph on the wall may be regarded as a certificate of the family's vitality. On the other hand military service was for most young people the first opportunity of going beyond the bounds of their village for some time and of becoming acquainted with cultural norms very different to their own traditions. During military service the young man also learned to cope with situations of physical danger. Photographs of soldiers replaced those of distant members of the family and aroused the awareness that there photographs could any time become a commemorative picture.

In this type of photograph the young soldier is in regulation uniform with all insignia and decorations. The pictures were taken in the usual studio environment; a weapon is often held in the hand. Another common pose had the soldier standing with one hand resting on the Bible and the other on the hilt of his sword—a pictorial symbol of the oath of allegiance.

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In the early years of the century and during the Great War a fashion developed for blank chromotypes which represented infanterymen, hussars and so forth in a heroic pose surrounded by the arms of the provinces of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, military emblems and with a romantic and schematic battle-scene in the background. Young men of military age and soldiers on active service could paste their own photos onto the place of the face. These were called war souvenirs or "a souvenir of my soldiering days" and were probably the best expression of the tension between the uniformity of soldiering life and the individuality of the conscript—but only in the eyes of today's urban viewer. For the peasant viewer it fitted harmoniously into those other pictures which all emphasized the general and the communal.

Another widespread peasant custom was to order a catafalque-photograph on the occasion of funerals. They show the members of the family and relatives standing on both sides of the coffin in the order and garb demanded by tradition. The photographer was commissioned to come on the day of the burial.

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Of pictures linked to seasonal events the most important are harvest and vintage-photos. These were ordered by peasant entrepreneurs and others who had risen into the middle-class for the reason that the ability to look at peasant traditions from the outside and find them interesting from an economic or bourgeois point of view was one that occurred among landowners, tenants or stewards.

Nativity plays were photographed in peasant, worker and the middle-class sectors where the process of cultural transformation was well advanced. These fancy dress photographs were ordered by families which viewed themselves from the outside and for whom their festive traditions were not natural things.

After the 1910s many pictures were commissioned by peasants who had changed their place of living or working for different reasons. Members of the family who went away for shorter or longer periods wanted to have a photograph of their family and sent of themselves home, so that the photographs helped to complete the family again.

Those returning used to say that these pictures had meant more to them than any letters and had helped them to feel at home to some extent whenever they had the family photograph hung in conspicuous places. The photographs sent to and from America and put in the same frame after returning demonstrate a particular process of acculturation: those in the family who had stayed at home stand before the camera with the new-born baby or the wife or mother in the centre, dressed in folk-costume and in the traditional hierarchy. The member of the family working abroad is generally dressed in the then prevailing taste of the host country. His suit is simple but decent as befits an honest worker; he stands before a background arranged to American taste or, if the photographer was cheaper before no background at all. In Hungarian regions such as the Zemplén mountains, Szabolcs or the Bodrogköz from where many men temporarily emigrated, it was not unusual for a child to know his father for long years only from photographs. "I have been told that the man in black whose picture is hanging beside the mirror was my father."

At the end of the 1910s some special photographs were taken by the Misses Weisbach Rilly of Mrs István Murányi, a famous woman of Mezőkövesd. Mrs. Murányi was a well-known peasant figure in the first half of this century. She was beautiful, ingenious and clever, and had excellent business acumen. She was known about town as "Cashier Mary". She was one of the first to discover the commercial possibilities of Mezőkövesd embroidery. She made embroideries herself but became soon a retailer for whom many Matyó women worked; she travelled and sold them. As she said herself she had access to the best circles in Budapest and during the First World War "went to sell her articles in the trenches". She dictated the folk-costume fashion of Mezőkövesd; Mrs. Murányi was in fact the first emancipated woman of the town, and the first to ride a bicycle.

The photos show "Cashier Mary" dressed in fashionable folk-costume with the famous bicycle. She ordered several variations on it: it was a true peasant "star photo" which aroused wide interst outside the community among the bourgeoisie. A postcard was printed from the photograph. The tension between the new means of transport and the traditional folk-costume must have played a major role in its popularity: it was all before a background of trees and a flowery meadow under the distant clouds.

All in all we can say that the most characteristic function of the photographs for peasant use was that they formed an organic part of the process in our times by which collective cultural traditions (folk lore) became first family traditions (family lore) and then individual traditions (individual lore) in our times.

ERNŐ KUNT

IN FOCUS

VILLAGE WEDDINGS

Customs linked to the feasts of the year and to family life are slowly disappearing given the restratification of society, the end of individual farming more than 20 years ago, and rapid urbanization. There is, however, a surprising exception, and this is weddings. In towns they are usually celebrated only through a dinner held for a smaller or larger circle, in villages, however, it appears, the weddings continue to grow, with several hundred—sometimes five or six hundred—guests being invited, and huge financial resources being accumulated, consumed, or handed to the young couple.

What could be the reason for the flourishing wedding in today's villages? Mihály Sárkány is interested in those latent functions by which the wedding adds to the whole of social life.

In the wedding customs themselves an impoverishment can be observed. Even in the inter-war period a wedding frequently lasted two or three days, but today it lasts only one day. The ceremonies have become simpler, the proportion of dramatic elements has been reduced as has their elaborateness, the magic acts if not dropped altogether have lost their meaning. The entertainment, once directed by professional masters of ceremony, is increasingly in the charge of the family itself.

On the other hand, the quality of food has improved and become more varied. The participants have spread widely beyond the circle of close relatives and neighbours; acquaintances and work-mates may also be invited. There are descriptions of weddings with four hundred participants in villages where the total population number two hundred. The nature and role of the presents and financial contributions of the invited have also changed. Earlier guests used to bring food to the wedding feast and gave only smaller presents to the new couple to complement the dowry. Among peasants who had their own farms the new couple usually began their family life in the household of one of the parents. After 1945, but especially from the sixties, the value of the gifts began to grow, and the guests, especially close relatives, offered increasingly expensive durable consumer goods, e.g. vacuum cleaners, washing-machines, television sets, table sets. The money collecting role of the "bridal dance" increased. Traditionally at midnight, when the bride is presented in the dress of a married woman, with her hair tied up, everybody dances with her and pays money for it. In the 1950s this amount was around 500–1,000 forints, in recent years the money received from the dance could

be 50,000 forints, and even more (200,000 forints has also been recorded), which is a considerable contribution to starting an independent household.

Valuable presents form part of a system of reciprocity; everybody can count on receiving a gift of a similar value when there is a wedding in their own family. Through these investments everybody becomes interested in the survival of this wedding custom. In addition, the luxury of wedding and the many gifts mean a form of invitation to the young couple on the part of the village to stay there. Employment opportunities in towns offer ample possibilities for the young to settle in an urban environment which offers more comforts and a greater choice of entertainment. Another hidden function of the wedding is that it expresses the increased self-esteem of the villagers, especially since the 1970s. With their rise in income and improvements occurring in other areas of village living conditions, today they proudly cling to some peculiarly village behavioural patterns, as opposed to the earlier times when they tried to shed the marks of village culture, linked as these used to be to poverty and backwardness.

A young sociologist, Zsuzsa Széman, has examined the changes in the wedding habits of a single village, the rich village of Felsőtárkány near Eger in Northern Hungary. As a basis for comparison she used a monograph on local wedding customs from 1945. At Felsőtárkány quite a number of young people marry who have continued their studies, are skilled tradesmen or who work in Eger, but it seems that schooling and occupation have no effect at all on village wedding customs.

The scenario of the weddings changes according to whether there is a church service (the people of Felsőtárkány are Roman Catholics) or whether there is only a civil ceremony. Most have a church wedding, not necessarily out of religious conviction, but because in this way they consider the ceremony to be more beautiful. The arrangements for the wedding depend mostly on the parents. Another reason for insisting on a church wedding is that only people married in church can be asked to act as god-parents, and to be a god-parent adds to one's prestige. Church weddings are not held when one of the parties is divorced, or because of growing exogamy, the bride or bridegroom are from another village or belong to another denomination.

Otherwise the structure of the wedding feasts is more or less uniform, whether there has been a church wedding or not. According to the author one of the main functions is entertainment. Numerous ceremonial elements which contribute to the wedding atmosphere and offer opportunities for entertaining the guests also survive even if their original magic symbolic meaning has become obliterated. These include the bride and participants jumping over a fire at dawn. This is why, even today, they recite poems linked to serving the various dishes, ask the bride ceremonially from the house of her parents and introduce her into the house of her mother-in-law. They have on the other hand dropped the long, sentimental leave-taking of the bride from her parents, which lately took place in the absence of the wedding guests. The ceremonial carrying of the bride's trousseau to the house of the groom on people's backs, in bundles, or on a horse-drawn cart, has been a victim of technical progress.

Wedding hospitality and customs have two kinds of integrative roles: they create new relations of reciprocity, mainly between the families, relations, and friends of the bride and the groom, and second, they maintain, express, and confirm existing relations —for example, through the presents, which may be considered a sort of down payment to be returned later. In addition, the wedding also expresses and confirms structures, such as differences in prestige and precedence, which are also expressed in the sitting order.

Finally, the wedding also represents a unique opportunity for communication in

village life, furthering the flow of information by personal meetings. For instance, young people can meet at weddings. One quarter of those marrying met their bride or groom at a wedding. Since weddings are attended because of wide-ranging family and friendly ties by guests from other villages and towns, exogenous ties can also be established in this way.

Finally, the author comes to the conclusion that no other social reunion or entertainment has as many functions as a wedding. From spring to autumn, young people can hardly be mobilized for anything else at weeks-ends, week after week they attend weddings. In spite of a certain simplification of the scenario and the appearance of new, modern elements, Zsuzsa Széman finds weddings continue to play a very important role in the life of Felsőtárkány, and this function has been affected to a small degree only by the social heterogeneity of the couples concerned by the increase in exogamy.

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T. H.

MANAGERIAL THINKING

Adorno and other members of the Frankfurt School began to investigate the roots and characteristics of authoritarianism during the Second World War in America in order to explore the social and psychological factors behind the way of thinking characteristic of fascism. According to Lővey, the thinking based on the principle of authority, which Adorno and his colleagues use in a somewhat different sense from the meaning of an authoritarian personality, is not necessarily linked to an extreme right political attitude, but is generally receptive to extremist dogmatic ideologies.

The F-scale used by Adorno and his colleagues has been altered to suit Hungarian conditions. Some items have been taken over from the scale unchanged, others have been modified, and some have been constructed by the Hungarian sociologists. The T-scale developed in this way contains twenty items. The interviewees make statements concerning their agreement with these items. Five characteristics of authoritarian thinking have been measured by this scale. These are the following:

1. An ingroup-outgroup scheme of thinking, with a negative judgement of persons who belong to the outgroup. This is measured for instance by answers given to the following two items:

"Homosexuals are not much better than criminals, and must therefore be punished severely."

"Numerous problems concerning Gypsies could be solved if they were not lazy and had not a couldn't care less attitude."

2. A rigid adherence to conventions and traditional norms. This is measured, for instance, by the following item:

"Obedience and the respect of authority are the most important virtues that children can learn."

3. A negative, cynical attitude concerning human nature. This is measured by the following item:

"A considerable number of people can only be induced to do honest work if they are afraid of unemployment."

4. Demagogy. This is measured, e.g. by the following item:

"The trouble in Hungary is that people talk too much and work too little."

5. Anguish, the sensing of the outside world as a threatening mob, and the aggression caused by this. This is measured, e.g. by the following item:

"Young people need strict disciplines in order to learn what life is about."

The T-scale was used to test 1,180

persons in charge at various levels (from foremen to general managers) by a building industry management training institute. 26 per cent were found to think in an authoritarian manner, 10 per cent not to be authoritarian, and 63 per cent intermediate.

The proportion of authoritarians was higher among the older than among the younger, among those with lower education and skills, as well as among the childless and those living with a spouse of lower schooling.

Attempts have been made to interpret these results in a variety of ways. The older generation which has lived through greater political changes is said to be more authoritarian because these historic events have profoundly burdened their thinking, under their effect they have a greater demand for unequivocal political situations, in which it is possible to know exactly in which direction to advance, and where one must not fear further upheavals. They therefore prefer their attitude to be prescribed from above.

Greater tolerance accompanies higher schooling, and this prevents the development of authoritarian thinking.

Among the childless there are perhaps more ego-centred personalities than the average, they suppress this egotism, and it is under the influence of this suppression that authoritarian thinking develops.

Lővey, Imre: „A tekintélyelvű gondolkodás vizsgálata és néhány mérési eredmény a vezetők köréből" (Thinking based on the principle of authority as reflected and measured in managerial thinking). *Szociológia*, 1982. No. 3. pp. 351–372.

R. A.

A CRITIQUE OF LAW

In a review of a recent number of *Jogtudományi Közlöny* devoted to property law and legal responsibility, Gyula Eörsi attempts a survey of the reform that has been initiated in Hungarian law and legal thinking. The legal reform started in connection with the 1968 reform of economic management. Since then the number of articles and proposals which are bewildered by the elements of existing law can hardly be counted. An obvious example to prove that the time for a synthesis has not yet arrived: is the attitude to state ownership in numerous cases unbridled imagination appears to be at work. Some propose half-reforms of an amending nature, others present comprehensive systems. Vested interests and ingrained ideological habits, insistence on what was learned and taught stand on the other side.

It is a sign of the times to come and an especially salutary change that system-theory is increasingly prominent in the inner structure of the legal system. Discussions on the branches of law earlier centred primarily around the divisions between the branches, while today it is connections that have come to the fore. If the law is to be stored and handled within boxes, better connecting links have to be established between the boxes.

It is an inevitable development that the worship of what is has been replaced by a more historical attitude and a readiness to quickly recognize obsolescence and to carry out changes. In conventional static regulation an attempt was made to anticipate everything in the operation of the economy; accordingly, regulations restricted the autonomy of action of economic and legal persons. Rigid limits did not permit any adaptation. In the concept of property law two new ideas are becoming discernable: the small is beautiful—and the large continues to be attractive. The first is embodied in the theoretical concept of the fragmentation of ownership (small enterprises, etc.), the latter deals with the proliferating bureaucracy of the control of large organizations, while it considers these large organizations to be indispensable. The conventional substance of property law (possession, use, disposition) is today at the most only a means through

which we may arrive at power and wealth, the goals which we wish to achieve through ownership.

New trends appear also in connection with damages in civil law and legal responsibility. In Hungarian civil law objective or strict liability had been gaining ground, and this was considered an important gain connected with industrialization. Now several authors would go back to subjective responsibility, fault, and negligence. This view (held by Vilmos Peschka) considers responsibility under civil law to be the institutionalization of the ethical influence of law. However, responsibility under civil law transcribes into law decisions concerning liability for risk. Of course, in the majority of cases damages are given against the person morally at fault. But is the payment of money as an influence on behaviour really of an ethical nature? Isn't there something awkward in the ethical effect of law by which the person who has committed moral fault makes his fault good by paying money? Responsibility under civil law, in fact, uses the expressions of fault and negligence only out of habit: it reckons with the force of habit, and while it decides liability for risk according to the requirements of commerce, it does not undertake terminological innovations.

Eörsi, Gyula: "Elmélkedések és álmélkodások a 'Jogtudományi Közlöny' tulajdonjogi és felelősségi száma kapcsán" (Reflections and perplexions on the number of *Jogtudományi Közlöny*, devoted to property law and legal responsibility). *Jogtudományi Közlöny*, November 1982, pp. 833–842.

A. S.

SOCIAL PRESTIGE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

In public thinking the various levels of government are not sharply separated. Obviously, the central will is asserted through many channels, and people are primarily aware of the actions and omissions of the authorities which are territorially closest to them and most affect their interests. It is therefore important to know what sort of image people have of public administration, the prestige of administrative work, and of those who do this work.

Endre Szabó stresses by way of introduction that unjustified privileges must not be used as an instrument of the creation or strengthening of this prestige. Prestige can be taken as satisfactory if in its operation recognition is given to it by public opinion.

If we consider expectations towards public administration as laid down by law, it can be assumed that the leading party and governmental organs attribute high prestige to public administration. Endre Szabó examines the question from the point of view of those who are professionally engaged in public administration, on the basis of empirical surveys of recent years. It is important to become acquainted with this self-image, because prestige influences to a great extent anyone who accepts public services, and those in the public service are largely responsible for the success or otherwise of public administration.

The social prestige of administrative work does not reach the level desirable, not even after the prestige increasing changes of recent years. After questioning 1,200 persons employed in local government and 300 in ministries it is clear that the attraction of the career is low. 27 per cent of even the graduates working in ministries mentioned their intention to change jobs. The situation is similar in the apparatus of the municipal councils. The executives of municipal councils are brought in from outside, in other words, the opportunity for in-service advancement is limited. At the same time official ranks and titles will not suffice for people with professional training. Although those who wish to enter public administtration consider it intellectual work, only 7 per cent believe that they will be able to show initiative.

The necessary changes (the recognition and rewarding of loyalty to the organization) can only be realized together with a reform of public administration as a whole. *Ad hoc* steps and the practice of individually initiated repeated reorganizations should be avoided.

Szabó, Endre: "A közigazgatási munka társadalmi presztizse" (The social prestige of public administrative work). *Állam és Igazgatás*, 1983. No. 2. pp. 111–120.

A. S.

LABOUR POLICY AND THE SECOND ECONOMY

There is a lively debate in Hungary about the role of the production and distribution sphere which complements socialist large-scale production and distribution. In earlier decades such activities—small-scale farming, private workshops and retail trading, regular and occasional work done in the black economy—were primarily judged officially on an ideological and political basis, which often called for restriction, condemnation, and even abolition. In 1980 the Political Committee of the HSWP declared that the second economy conducted a useful activity, and consequently it should not be restricted but integrated into the organization of the socialist economy, and a greater variety of entrepreneurial forms and sizes, small and medium plants, partnerships, occasional associations may serve this purpose.*

Lajos Héthy, the Director of the Labour Research Institute, surveys the problems of the second economy with emphasis on his own area of research: employment, wages, and incentives. According to him, it accumulates to itself phenomena and processes which not only complement the first economy, but provide a specific counterpoint to state enterprises. The higher work intensity, better work discipline and organization, more efficient financial stimulation of the second economy can also be considered a critique of the well-known shortcomings of large socialist enterprises. There is a view which includes within the second economy phenomena such as tips, bribes, etc. which run counter to the values and laws of socialist society and which, according to Héthy, should be prohibited.

In the opinion of the author it would be dangerous to look at the achievements of the second economy as if they proved to be some sort of triumph of small-scale production or private property over large-scale production and state ownership; it only indicates that the socialist economic system has not been able to exploit sufficiently the opportunities offered by the latter. Competition between the state sector and the private economy for resources is primarily for manpower (in the case of materials, machinery, and equipment the law ensures privileges for state enterprises); in this area the second economy is in a more advantageous position, since it is able to provide motivation and financial stimuli. It realizes successfully the principle of distribution according to work done, in the sense that in this sector it is not performance that adjusts to the low achievable income, but an increase in income follows more work done. It is well-known that in the socialist sector the differentiation of wages according to work done is present only in a limited way; and all this leads to indifference, withholding of performance and low productivity. Consequently it is political demagogy to demand the suppression of incomes in the second economy, which are a multiple of the average wages in the state sector. What is needed is the reform of the incentives and income structure in the state sector.

The social role of the second economy is very large; approximately three-quarters of Hungarian families participate in these activities, and share (albeit to a very different extent) in their income.** It has also

* *NHQ* 86, 90.

** *NHQ* 91.

an important political role, because it enables important sections of society to assert their interests through a variety of channels of activity and the obtaining of income, thus also maintaining social stability. The regulation of this activity can only be successful if state enterprises are not considered an example to be followed, but on the contrary, if changes are made there. Stability of legal regulation is an important aspect, only that will induce people to mobilize their financial means for long-term investments.

Héthy, Lajos: "A 'második gazdaság', a kisvállalkozás és a gazdaságirányítás" (The 'second economy', the small enterprise, and economic control). *Társadalomkutatás*, 1983. No. 1. pp. 29–43.

A. M.

ROMAN CHARIOT-BURIALS IN PANNONIA

One of the most complex groups of finds important for our knowledge of the Pannonia of imperial Rome is that of chariot-burials, since they are an opportunity for observations and conclusions of many types (religious life, popular belief, the social structure and the survival of the tribal leadership, its connections with the Roman administration, artistic relics and so forth). During the second and third centuries A.D. the representations of two-wheel of four-wheel chariots easily distinguishable from the genre scenes on the carved tombstones which were placed first over the cremated dead and later over the increasingly common inhumated dead, and the real or replica chariots buried with the dead symbolize the departure of the dead from the world of the living. This expresses a belief which has been common everywhere and at all times and can be traced from the prehistoric period. The purpose is to assist the long journey of the departed to the distant next world. According to a common belief, continental peoples thought that the place of eternal rest could be most easily attained by a chariot, while others thought that the island of happiness could be approached by boat. The final chapter in Hermann Broch's *The Death of Virgil* is a fine literary presentation of the latter. The belief had various hues among different peoples amply illustrated by the decoration of the chariots, the burial rite and the objects placed in the grave.

The chariot-burials of the rich and those tombstones on which a chariot symbolizing the journey of the dead for the less well-to-do is represented are especially common in the areas of Northern Pannonia which had a Celtic indigenous population. The structure of the chariots and other carriages can be established from their iron parts; the ornaments, the bronze statuettes reflect—more or less copy—the traditions of classical art (fine specimens of Bacchus, satyrs, of bird or other animal headshaped impressions can be seen in the archaeological section of the Hungarian National Museum) and are important relics of provincial art. The tomb accessories: the jug, the saucepan, the tripod, the instruments of ritual cleansing, the iron folding-stool indicate sometimes the rank of the deceased, the office that he had filled in the administration. All these objects, made in the Roman style, bear witness to the Romanization of the indigenous population. Most of the Pannonian chariot-tombs had come to light by chance at the turn of the century (including the Környe tombs). It is no longer possible to evaluate scientifically the conditions in which they were found. On the other hand, the tumulus explored more recently at Inota is a fortunate find, as it also contained a chariot-burial. The deceased was buried in the first third of the second century A.D. together with a four-wheel carriage and harnessed horses. This is so far the earliest Roman carriage-burial in Pannonia and also the first chariot-grave to be archaeologically explored and described.

K. Palágyi, Szilvia: "Die römische Hügelgräber von Inota" (The Roman tumuli of Inota). *Alba Regia*, No. 19., 1981. pp. 7–93.; B. Bónis, Éva: "A környei császárkori 3. számú kocsisír" (Chariot-tomb No. 3. of the imperial period at Környe). *Folia Archeologica*, No. 33. pp. 117–161.; Ratimorská, Piroska: "A környei 2. számú kocsilelet" (Chariot-find No. 2. at Környe). *Archeológiai Értesítő*, 1982. No. 2. pp. 255–276.

E. T.

A FORGOTTEN MEDIEVAL INSTITUTION

In medieval Europe the fortress and its appurtenances was a guarantee of rule over its area, at least until the fifteenth century. The owners also shared in power over the country, in other words, the fortress was a bearer of political power. Pál Engel has set out from this recognition in preparing two outstanding studies—based on his research on the history of estates—on *honor*. He proves that the national dignitaries, in a broader sense the barons, when they received an "office," also obtained a royal gift or *honor* which consisted of a fortress and its income entrusted to the supervision of the baron. However, the *honor* estate was not a grant in perpetuity, only at the pleasure of the ruler *(durante beneplacito)* and ceased when the office was recalled. The peculiarity of this was that the institution occurred relatively late in Hungary. *Honor* as an office fief *(fief de dignité, Amtslehen)* was found in almost all the West European states, not in the fourteenth century, but much earlier, from the ninth to twelfth centuries. So far the specialist literature has hardly taken any notice of its existence in Hungary.

Engel resists the temptation to discover how this institution came to pass to the Danube Basin, but he proves convincingly that the *honor* came about here as a result of internal evolution after 1310, with the kings of the Anjou dynasty.* The originality of the system is seen also in the fact that in the Hungarian fedual state the jurisdiction and the estate accompanying the office were not merged and could not be inherited.

Let us turn to some of the details. When a baron was relieved of his office, he ordered his deputies to vacate the fortresses and estates that had been entrusted to them. Simultaneously with the arrival of the new lord the king called on the noblemen under the jurisdiction of the fortress to declare their allegiance. Only one fragment of a single account permits us to form a picture on the handling of the *honor* estate itself, an account which refers to the household of the lord lieutenant of Temesvár and covers a few months of 1372. The expenditure shows the everyday life of such a household: small market expenses for the kitchen, for the purchase of herbs, for the keeping of horses; a separate column includes the amounts given to the lady, and foreign cloths purchased represent larger items. With the exception of the tax on two towns the possessor of the Temes *honor* disposed freely of the income of the estate and spent it as he wished, although he had to cover the costs of the maintenance of the fortress and of entertainment.

The political order of the Hungarian kingdom of the fourteenth century was determined to a considerable extent by the existence of the *honors* of the barons, and the keys to the *honors* were the royal fortresses. Only a few decades after the death of King Louis (the Great), 1382, the system disintegrated, because the sovereign lost control of the royal fortresses. The developing new feudal state was organized in a different political structure.

Engel, Pál: "A honor. A magyarországi feudális birtokformák kérdéséhez" (The honor. To the question of the types of feudal estates in Hungary). *Történelmi Szemle*, 1981., Vol. 24. pp. 1–19.; Engel, Pál: "Honor, vár, ispánság. Tanulmányok az Anjou-királyság kormányzati rendszeréről" (Honor, fortress, lord lieutenancy. Studies on the governmental system of the Anjou kingdom). *Századok*, 1982., Vol. 116. pp. 880–923.

G. G.

* *NHQ* 90.

FROM THE CENTENARY HISTORY OF A HALF-FINISHED PUBLICATION

Sigismund (1368–1437), King of Hungary, Bohemia, German and Lombard king, and Holy Roman Emperor was, to use the hackneyed expression, a contradictory figure of Hungarian history. It will soon be one hundred years since the plan to publish the full archives from the Sigismund period was first mentioned. Professor Elemér Mályusz, the grand old man of Hungarian historiography, reports how many complications and intrigues made it difficult to honour this intention. Mályusz's bitter, often ironic, tone is quite understandable, since the work represented over many decades the backbone of his labours. Even if it is not possible to agree with all his statements, the story certainly carries some noteworthy historiographic lessons.

The beginning is almost tragicomical. In 1889, a then 32-year old, highly trained and clever scholar, László Fejérpataky, presented a proposal to the Hungarian Academy of Sciences suggesting how the publication should be prepared. In view of the large number of documents his ideas were both modern and economical, since he wanted to publish shorter, Latin abstracts. The jealousy and professional amateurism of his older colleagues, and the then increasing political conservativism caused the plan to fail. Nor did Fejérpataky dare to return to it when he was a well-known university professor and official of the Academy. He accepted what was forced on him: a maximum of one-twentieth of the documents was to be published in an *in extenso* text edition. By 1892 he had covered a total of 76 archives, and had made approximately 2,000 copies. Then, for a long time, hardly anything happened. In 1932 the Academy decided that scholars could use without restrictions the Fejérpataky collection in their custody; it thus provided an outstanding foundation for several important works. True, in the meantime, owing to frequent use and the intervention of many hands, a considerable number of copies disappeared for good. Improprieties also occurred: somebody even published a document as an original find, although what he published was merely Fejérpataky's calligraphic, easily legible copy.

Mályusz joined in the work in 1942, and by 1944 prepared further copies of documents the quantity of which was approximately one-third of the old material. Then —owing to frequent bombings—he placed his own collection and a smaller part of the old material into the safety of the cellar of the Academy; and the remainder, documents which would have filled two large cupboards, was left on a desk in a room of the National Archives, which suffered much during the 1944/45 siege of Budapest. It was, however, they that survived, while the documents kept in the cellar were destroyed. After the war Mályusz set to work again with huge energy, and in 1956 his notes filled two and a half thousand quarto sheets. Due to his work as editor and collector, the first volume of the Archives (extracts or abstracts of 6,234 documents) was published in 1951, the second volume (8,155 documents) in two parts in 1956–58, and both volumes were accompanied by vast indices. But a quarter century has passed since, and the third and fourth volumes are still only at the stage of preparation.

The outsider may get the impression from Mályusz's account that he reads about an edifice the plans of which have changed often owing to the delays in building, and this damaged both the intention and the work. It appears that with a clear concept and a well-organized team of editors the work could have been accomplished sooner and more efficiently, as is proven by some outstanding foreign publications. Professor Mályusz's proposal should be taken to heart: publications of sources should be prepared in cooperation with neighbouring countries, which would explore the kindred features of life in the period of Sigismund, on the basis

of Bohemian, Austrian, German, Polish, Rumanian, Bosnian, and Dalmatian documents.

Mályusz, Elemér: "A Zsigmond-kori Oklevéltárról" (On the Collection of documents of the period of Sigismund 1387–1410). *Századok*, 1982. Vol. 116. pp. 923–959.

G. G.

THE LAST YEARS OF ISTVÁN TISZA

No serious scholarly biography has so far been published of István Tisza, the most important Hungarian statesman of the Austro-Hungarian era. It appears that the first such work will be published in the United States, where—to our knowledge—Professor Gábor Vermes has been working on it for several years and it is nearing completion. His book is awaited with interest but it does not lessen the need for a Tisza biography to be published in Hungary. Professor Ferenc Pölöskei's now published study on Tisza's last years harbours the promise that we will not have to wait for long.

It is welcome that as a foretaste Pölöskei presents immediately the dramatic conclusion, the war years and Tisza's final downfall and death. It is true that this end can really be understood only through a knowledge of the beginnings, and even the political, intellectual, and family roots, still, it is beyond doubt that in the life and career of István Tisza this last stage is the most important, the most dramatic and the most interesting, the period which is of international importance in the true sense of the term. The reason is that in the 1910s Tisza was no longer the strong man of Hungary alone, but of the Habsburg Monarchy. Whichever way we judge the contentious role he played at the outbreak of the Great War and his conduct in the war years, it is this which certainly had an effect on the fate of the whole of Europe, and even of the world.

According to Pölöskei, Tisza "grew above his fellow politicians by recognizing all the dangers threatening the Austro-Hungarian regime, seeking for opportunities to avert them, even if owing to his conservativism, it was a foregone conclusion that he could not find the way out." This is certainly true if we compare him to the other politicians who were in favour of the union between Hungary and Austria—mostly small run-of-the-mill politicians, however, the problem remains that the system was untenable, and Tisza tried to keep alive a régime which was condemned to death. This was why he first opposed the declaration of war on Serbia, the unleashing of the war, preferring to wait for more favourable conditions in the Balkans, this was why he wrote his famous letter of July 1 to Francis Joseph, recommending to King-Emperor that he should postpone the war.

Why did he abandon this position? Pölöskei maintains that he did so primarily owing to the Germans. He recognised the alliance with Germany as the cornerstone of the existence of the Habsburg Monarchy. He hesitated as long as he was not certain that the Germans would commit all their forces, but his doubts ceased when he became convinced of Emperor Wilhelm's commitment to the war. From then on—to the very end—he fully accepted the war, with all its consequences and responsibilities. He wrote in a letter: "Just as I decided with a heavy heart to share in the responsibility for the war, just as strong is my resolution to carry this gigantic struggle tenaciously to the end without dispair and hesitation."

He kept this promise. He used huge energies to do everything possible to increase the war effort, to repress the opposition and pacifist voices and movements which strove for a separate peace. After his dismissal in 1917 (Pölöskei writes euphemistically of "resignation"), he demonstratively asked to be sent to the frontline as an officer of the reserve, to thus enhance by his presence the spirit of carrying on. But his honourable character and energy only increased the scale of destruction for his compatriots and

country. He was a blind giant who, even on the threshold of collapse, when he openly ackowledged that the war was lost, saw only "operetta revolutionaries" instead of the extremely embittered people.

Pölöskei, Ferenc: "Szemben az árral. Tisza István utolsó évei" (Against the stream. The last years of István Tisza). *Valóság*, 1983. No. 5. pp. 87–97.

G. L.

NEW POSSIBILITIES IN PLANT BREEDING

The Cell Genetics Research Group of the Institute of Plant Physiology, Szeged, has reported on the transfer of male sterility (or inability to pollinate) to a tobacco cultivar from a sterile male donor plant using the protoplast fusion technique.

The theory behind cytoplasmic transfer of male sterility is based on the observation that the genes of different properties of plants are contained by more than the nucleus. Most genes, which are composed of various desoxyribonucleic acids (DNA) together with certain proteins, are restricted to the nucleus of the cell. However certain cytoplasmic organelles, such as the photo-energy-transformer *chloroplasts* which provide the green colour of most plants, and the high-energy producer *mitochondria* also contain specific desoxyribonucleic acids. The DNA found in the green chloroplasts, for instance, regulates the production of molecules, and this, in turn, controls the synthesis of specific proteins which contribute to the main function of the green organelle. This is called photosynthesis. Mitochondria, the other special cytoplasmic organelles, are furnished with a whole range of enzymes producing high-energy phosphate esters; these serve as the energy source for protein synthesis in the cell. In addition, these small 0.1–1 μm cytoplasmic organelles contain a special kind of desoxyribonucleic acid, which has been found to be responsible for a peculiar property of the particular plant: *cytoplasmic male sterility*.

It goes without saying that both chloroplast-DNA and mitochondrial-DNA might be—if utilized properly—of major economic importance in agriculture. However, under normal circumstances, such as through sexual crossing, male sterility bearing mitochondria will not be found in the F_2 plant at all. This is because inheritance of these organelles in exclusively material, and mitochondria from the male are not inherited. The only way to obtain mixed organelle population, organelles of both maternal and of male origin, is to fuse the protoplast of both cells. Indeed, using the protoplast fusion technique, mitochondrium-chloroplast combinations can be obtained that have never existed before. Moreover, the high variability of the resulting chloroplast or mitochondrial-DNA recombination can result in recombinants with extremely high practical value.

For such experiments a complex method of cell manipulation and culture was required and this has been worked out by the members of the research group in Szeged in recent years (1,2). The cytoplasm, containing mitochondria with male sterility DNA, was obtained for transfer from protoplasts which had been inactivated previously. (They lose the capacity for division but maintain the ability to serve as cytoplasm donor.) Such protoplasts can produce functional chloroplasts and mitochondria transferable to the recipient protoplasts. The cells with the transferred organelles can be selected directly by the use of an appropriate maerker, such as a molecule visible under the microscope, which is carried by the transferred organelles.

Several economically important properties are apparently determined by these organelles. In the adsence of appropriate approaches by conventional plant genetics, such a use of protoplast technique to breed cytoplasm can open a new chapter in improving the properties of plants.

Maliga, P., Sz. Breznovits, Ágnes, Márton, L., Joó, F. 1980: "Non-Mendelian streptomycin resistant tobacco mutant with altered chloroplast and mitochondria." *Nature* 255, 401; Maliga, P., Menczel, L., Sidorov, V. A., Márton, L,, Cséplő, Á., Medgyesy, P., Dung, T. M., Lázár, G., Nagy, F. 1982: "Cell Culture Mutants and Their Uses." In: *Plant Improvement and Somatic Cell Genetics*. Academic Press, New York.

J. H.

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Ethnographia — the quarterly of the Hungarian Ethnographical Society

Szociológia — quarterly review of the Sociological Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Jogtudományi Közlöny — a monthly of the Legal and Political Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Állam és Igazgatás — a journal of the Council Office of the Council of Ministers

Társadalomkutatás — a monthly of the Economic and Legal Department of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Alba Regia — year-book of the King Stephen Museum, Székesfehérvár

Folia Archeologica — year-book of the Hungarian National Museum, Budapest

Archeológiai Értesítő — a journal of the Hungarian Archeological and Art Society

Történelmi Szemle — the quarterly of the Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Századok — the journal of the Hungarian Historical Association

Valóság — a monthly of the social sciences

SURVEYS

JÁNOS BARABÁS

THE SITUATION OF YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

Attempting to outline the characteristic problems of young Hungarian professional people, reference must be made to the professions as such. The great social mobility which followed the liberation had a significant effect on the transformation of the Hungarian professions. Men and women born into working class and peasant families joined the professions in great numbers. This fundamentally changed the features of this group and contributed to the development of a new professional class. Research suggests that the formerly rapid and massive transstratification slowed down starting with the early sixties, and the courses taken by mobility have changed.

The social origin of those recruited to the professions essentially affects the direction of social progress. Research shows that while nearly half of the children of professional people train for the professions, only 8 per cent of the children of skilled workers, 3.5 per cent of the children of agricultural manual workers, and 2 per cent of the children of unskilled labourers do so. The data indicate that the professions have become more closed, and that the recruitment of the offspring of manual workers has slowed down. Sociologists have found that nearly half of the children of professional men have followed in their fathers' footsteps in Hungary in many recent decades, such as the thirties, fifties, sixties and seventies, and that the same is now the situation in the industrially most developed European countries. Hungarian progress also shows that the number of those who can become professional people coming from other sections of society is defined mainly by the limits on the growth of the professions.

This suggests that administrative measures determining priorities of parentage are not an efficient method. The transformation of the composition of the Hungarian professions was fundamentally the result of a growth in total size.

Based on a paper given at a conference held in Pécs, Hungary, in May 1982.

Differentiation

The professions have clearly definable features but are nevertheless, not homogeneous. Substantial differences are found between various professions in keeping with their status in the social division of labour. Differences in the level of training, and the prestige of various professions create differentiation. University graduates enjoy advantages compared with graduates of colleges of higher education; medical practitioners are in a better position than teachers. Surveys have shown that preference for professions of higher prestige is closely

related to social origin. (This is also substantiated by surveys of the medical profession. Hungarian medical practitioners are a closed group, more so than any of the other professions. The ratio of children of manual workers is lowest among medical students.) These differences among young Hungarian professional people assert themselves in a highly potentiated way in the early stages of their socialisation on the job.

The significant differences between young and middle-aged professional men and women cut to the core of things. Though the cultural facilities scissors between rural and urban areas are now closing a certain gap is apparent between their professional groups. The differences between professional people in executive and managerial positions and the rest are also highly significant. One may say on the basis of the available data—exaggerating to some degree—that only those, who are appointed to executive positions are able to secure accommodation and patterns of consumption in keeping with their professional status. The income differences are substantial. What might be called an elite has taken shape which includes some of the scientists and artists, as well as those who have good opportunities to participate in the second economy.

Difficulties of entry to the professions

Those under 30 occupy a peculiar position within the professions. Their proportion exceeds 25 per cent. Several indices mark the young professionals which differ from those of other age groups but also differ from those of other young people. What is most specific of young professional people is that their early years at work, of starting on the job, generally coincide with the early years of their marriage and all the problems of young children as well as securing housing and making a home.

Since the training of professional people takes a long time, they start work relatively late. (The time of post-secondary training varies from a minimum three years to six or seven years for medical students.)

Full time university or college students are not paid wages. They are kept by their parents and family, and/or various scholarships, and what they earn doing an odd assortment of jobs is only supplementary. They therefore are essentially dependants. A kind of peculiar status-inconsistency characterizes university students: physically and intellectually mature adults spend years without a responsible social role they are fully conscious of.

Graduates expect opportunities to prove their abilities. When starting to work, however, their professional lives encounter many difficulties.

The first great problem of the young professional man is employment, selecting the appropriate job. The majority of recent graduates find employment by applying for vacant positions. Demand for them differs significantly between the professions. Finding employment is relatively free of problems for the majority of engineering and economics graduates. However, inconsistency between their training and their work is also most apparent in their case. Suitable employment for a considerable portion of arts and science graduates who have no teaching qualifications is a problem. It is also sometimes difficult to find positions appropriate to their level of training, and subjects, for young teachers. The system of university and college training is not resilient and overspecialized; even in theory it is suitable only for meeting the demand for professional people apparent in the present structure of the division of labour, being incapable catering for changes in demand in the short, medium, and long term, also aggravates the difficulties.

Imminent changes in the economy are expected to pose further difficulties in the employment of young professional people. In spite of the problems of providing suitable employment which cause not negligi-

able tensions, it has to be made clear that a reduction in the number of university and college students would be an error. About 34–35 per cent of Hungarian secondary-school leavers continue their training at tertiary level. This proportion, and the number of students, has not changed in recent years. It is conspicuously low by international standards. Only 9.2 per cent of the 18–25 years age group is studying full time at universities or colleges, and the ratio is only worse in Portugal.

Incongruency

Incongruency between the training of young professionals, and the jobs they do is another source of tension. At least one-quarter do work that does not require the training they have had. The fact that only 58 000 engineers have university or college qualifications in about 100 000 jobs which require them, and at the same time 38 000 graduates of technical universities and colleges are employed in jobs where their qualification are not necessary, is a case in point. Many surveys show that a large number of young professional people are dissatisfied with their jobs; they consider that these could be done by less qualified people. Some analyses indicate that as many as 70–80 per cent of young professional people do not consider their jobs to be sufficiently challenging.

They believe that they spend half of their working time doing work that does not require their training.

Waiting for a suitable job, dealing with tasks other than of professional interest to them, slows down the professional growth of young people, causing dissatisfaction and uncertainty, and may also become a reason for job mobility.

The process of adjusting to the job environment is often accompanied by conflicts. The different requirements of university and college training and of gainful employment give rise to many troubles. The young graduate is overspecialized but also has greater theoretical knowledge, his practical experience is—however—still rudimentary. Training does not put adequate emphasis on know-how related to the practical application of theoretical knowledge. It must be said, however, that there is not, and cannot be, complete conformity between university and college training, and practical work. Practice is invariably more complex than the preparation for it.

A mere 5 per cent of young professional people fill some sort of—mostly lower level—executive position. 12 per cent of professional people in executive positions are under 30. This is mentioned here not only as a problem of the continuity of the generational change, but it also indicates that already mentioned advantages enjoyed by executive professional people are apparent in almost any dimension compared to the rest. Approaching the problem from a different aspect, it is found that some of the young professional people are immediately given managerial posts. Such occasions, however, usually make it clear that the majority of universities and colleges do not prepare their students for executive functions. The acquisition and use of management skills increases the problems of the early phase of work.

The need for further training and professional growth is natural for young professional people. They frequently try to acquire special training (e.g. as specialist economists or engineer-economists) soon after taking up employment and are usually supported by their employers in their endeavours. But the system of professional further training is satisfactory only for a few occupations.

Problems of income

The incomes of young professional people are relatively—for some occupations not only relatively—low immediately on taking

up employment, and they grow but slowly. The state of dependence lives on in certain forms, since a large portion of young professional people still need the support of their parents. Incomes do not depend primarily on the nature and quality of work, but on years of experience. Since they start late, young professional people are objectively incapable of catching up quickly with those of their age group who started work earlier instead continuing their training.

According to a 1975 survey, the majority of young professional people are 30–35 years old by the time they earn as much as those working in their occupational field who started work after leaving secondary-school. Teachers, however, cannot make up for the years they spent training instead of working as compared with skilled workers even by the time of retirement.

An analysis of incomes shows that those of skilled workers do not substantially increase after the age of 28–30. Yet salaries keep on growing to the end of a professional career. International comparison indicates that the role of age is incomparably greater in Hungary concerning the earnings of professional people, than in the developed capitalist countries.

Coping with the difficulties

Some have suggested that minimum incomes of young people starting their professional careers be raised. There was also talk about apparent tensions in the earnings of engineers, economists, teachers, animateurs, and some medical fields compared with other professional groups. No general changes can be expected at present. On the other hand, it is to be hoped that the example of a few enterprises and institutions who pay more to those who graduated with First Class rather than Second Class Honours, and more to the latter than to pass graduates, will catch on. This was included in some collective bargaining agreements.

The above applies only to starting salaries, and this suggests that it is worth going on trying. The more talented man may well outshine the honours graduate in practical work within a few years. Among professional people engaged in production a just and more accurate measuring of performance, and salaries in keeping with it, is certainly advisable. The difficulties of measuring intellectual output add support to the convention that salaries grow mainly with seniority—often completely disregarding performance. Differences based on seniority are greater that those that are a function of performance. Those, who started work straight after general school at the age of fifteen, may reach 100 per cent of the average earnings of the similarly qualified by the time they are 25–29. But the more qualified a man or woman is the older he or she is by the time the top earning rate is reached. The aim is, therefore, to let performance be the deciding factor in the incomes of professional people. Young professional people have in fact demanded decisive measures in order to assert the principle of distribution according to performance, in youth parliament debating societies. They explained that this should be in harmony with the improvement of efficiency and quality, and that wages and salaries should be unambiguously treated as the social benefits.

Young professional people generally have much less opportunity, further differentiated by professions, to engage in the second economy. All this substantially affects their chances of making money.

Accommodation problems, home making

The pivotal problem are the chances and prospects of solving their housing problems. Lack of suitable homes becomes the focal point of further problems.

Lacking an independent home, young professional people usually stick to the

vicinity of the parental home when choosing their first job. As a result, disproportions may develop in the areal distribution of various professions.

It is easier to get a home in country towns and villages, than in Budapest or the larger cities. Offering suitable accommodation may assist in attracting and keeping young professional people in smaller settlements but it may also become a means, by which employers may meet the demand for labour of less prestigious fields within particular professions. A home is a powerful attraction particularly for those who cannot count on the support of parents, that is for the children of families with a poorer financial background.

Young people have to shoulder burdens that exceed their powers in order to acquire a home, and this forces professional people at the beginning of their working lives to look for outside work for extra pay. The social as well as private interest requires that such activities should be socially necessary work, and conducive to a growth in income proportionate with its usefulness. Doing such extra work does, however, unfavourably affect the mode of life of young people in precisely the phase in which the process of intellectual and professional acculturation takes place (learning languages etc.).

It is difficult to understand how an enterprise, which does not offer suitable work to its full-time young employees, can do so in a different organizational form. Experience so far indicates rather that the aim of intra-enterprise ventures is not the assertion of qualifications, but economising on the one hand, and making money on the other. Yet this is still better than when some young people run out on their profession and go and drive a taxi or become contract cleaners or window-cleaners. It is generally believed that it is older professional people who profit by their qualifications and experience in second jobs, while the young want to make money in the first place. They need it to buy a home and support a family. It has to be added, however, that there is no place for moralizing over such cases. Starting salaries are not enough to finance the purchasing of a home. When young people do useful work, and earn an income commensurate with their efforts, the social interest is also asserted. Experience shows that young professional people who left their calling want to return to their own profession after a time, when they have earned a given amount of money, even if the way back is not easy. Their return will, in essence, be similar to starting to work but by then they will have considerable experience.

The lack of places in crèches and kindergardens further adds to the problems of families of young professional people. This affects young women graduates particularly harshly, since they are forced to stay at home if their parents cannot help. Dropping out of work for longish periods considerably handicaps their professional careers.

Pay for performance

Beside training experts the education of the professional class is fundamentally a task for universities and colleges. These more or less provide the knowledge and information absolutely necessary for budding professional people, yet they give less than adequate preparation for carrying out the functions that devolve on intellectuals in society. Other shortcomings of training are that young graduates generally neither have a useful command of foreign languages, nor a developed facility for articulate communication.

The intellectual functions mediating culture, transferring knowledge, shaping the public mind, are an objective requirement. The way professional men and women influence public opinion, political welfare and the intellectual-ideological processes is important.

The interests of society demand condi-

tions under which young professional people may realize their role which springs from the requirements that devolve on the intelligentsia.

Only some of the conflicts of starting to work are unavoidable. Unnecessary and unreasonable tensions can be coped with by conscious social effort.

The system of university etc. training has to be changed to eliminate the present functional disorders. The working out of types of professional training better adjusted to scientific and technical and social changes will have to be speeded up, basic training must become available that can be built on further, instead of complete expert knowledge. The realization of the functions of the intelligentsia in the broad sense demands general knowledge of a higher standard, a working knowledge of languages, and more articulate communicators. A well organized, differentiated system of institutional further training is necessary in the interest of preserving and renewing knowledge.

Providing spheres of activity suited to the qualifications is particularly important when young people start to work.

Adjustment to the working environment is easier once the beginner is made acquainted with the structure of his place of employment, its activities, interest relations and conventions. Therefore the institutional introduction of the young professional people to their work is essential, and this may also mean a more thorough acquaintance with the place of work.

Young professional people justly complain that earnings do not depend primarily on performance. The suggestion that an appreciable differential of income should be established between manual workers and lower rank professional people in favour of the latter is worth considering.

An essential element of the requirements related to the activity structure of young professional people is the undertaking of a public role. This becomes manifest only so long as they are given meaningful parts to play and they can count on a realistic representation of their interests. In this context the characteristic of young people must be borne in mind that they can only identify with tasks which are incomplete, and far from perfect, and do not pretend to be that, deserves far more consideration. Of course, I am well aware that the contemporary society of Hungary is not a perfect or finished product, that it can and must be built, and further changed. This implies innumerable meaningful and useful professional and public tasks also for young professional people.

GEOFFREY TIER

SÁROSPATAK REMEMBERED

Hungaria io te saluto—I make no apology for paraphrasing this title of a poem by Christina Rossetti, for it precisely epitomizes my own feelings, which began when I had the good fortune to find my way to Hungary in the autumn of 1939.

I was lecturer in the English language and literature at the English Institute in Prague when the storm clouds began to gather; and when on March 15th (the Ides of March) the Nazi hordes marched in, having first raped Austria in order to complete the encirclement of Bohemia, my wife and I decided that it was time to get out. We delayed as long as possible—until August 27th, 1939; but then the German authorities suddenly closed the frontiers, and there was one last plane flying from Holland via Prague to Budapest. For this, thanks to an official of the Prague National Bank whose hatred of the Germans exceeded all bounds, I managed to obtain tickets, and on August 29th we arrived in Budapest, with almost no money and the one suit of clothes each which were permitted.

Already some years beforehand we had started to learn some Hungarian words, by some prophetic urge of fate, from a slim volume called "Hungarian Self-Taught," for, being lifelong fans of Franz Liszt, and having mastered to a quite creditable extent all fifteen of his Hungarian Rhapsodies on the piano, we had already fallen under the spell of the Hungarian language, with its strange, euphonious beauty, and we regarded it as one of the most musical languages in Europe. I will not describe the crimes we committed on the pronunciation of that lovely language, having had to rely only on the phonetic transcriptions set forth in that stout little "Self-Taught" volume; but we did soon learn that the Hungarian "a" is pronounced, as nearly as made no matter, like the English "a" in "what," that we must say "Modyor" and not "Mag-yahr," "Lisst" instead of Lisht," "*Rah*kotsi" instead of "Ra*kot*chi," etcetera, all of which pronunciations were favoured in England at that time. We sat in various cafés on the Danube embankment, consuming vast quantities of coffee while waiting for the blow to fall, which it did on September 1st, the day on which Hitler spurned the British Government's ultimatum and entered Poland. The day before the outbreak of war we had been sitting hopefully for hours in a café staring at a notice on the wall: *Koncert holnap*, waiting optimistically for the concert to begin; and it was not until some days later that we learned a new Hungarian word *holnap*—tomorrow.

The first thing I did was to make my way to the office of the *Hungarian Quarterly*, looking for work, the British Consulate having brusquely informed me that "they had no funds" for repatriating British subjects; and it was there that I learned of "an English boarding school north of Budapest" and that, in view of the outbreak of war, it was highly unlikely that a new English master would be coming out and that I might do worse than send in an application. This I did forthwith; and three days later received from Sárospatak the fateful telegram: "Position vacant—would thank you if called on for interview" (verbatim). Immediately I got into bed while my wife took my one and only suit to the cleaners; and the next day, on September 14th, I went to the Keleti pályaudvar en route for Sárospatak, whither I arrived after about seven hours.

Shall I ever forget my first sight of that beloved school, with the boys playing football in the grounds and the ruddy glow of

the setting sun reflected in the dormitory windows, and the friendly salute of the little porter at the station as he pointed to the *internátus* just opposite? "This," I mused, "is what they told me is the 'Eton of Hungary', and by Jove, it seems to me at first glance that they were quite right."

I went in and was immediately greeted by a tall Fifth Former (one Gábor Opler) who, in impeccable English, conducted me to the Headmaster's office. This man, Mr. Gyula Szabó, was destined to become my greatest friend, who looked after us and helped us in every way in what was soon to become what was, technically, an "enemy country." He was a native Transylvanian, and the first piece of advice he gave me was to steer clear of politics in the classes and never to mention Trianon to them (O cruel and unjust Treaty, compiled by men who were entirely ignorant of even the elements of European history, geography, and ethnology). This injunction was easy to obey, as I had long since decided within myself that the rape of Transylvania was just as iniquitous as Hitler's rape of the Sudetenland twenty years later, and that for "princes" in Strafford's dictum on the scaffold: "Put not your trust in princes" one should read "Great Powers."

It was a few days later that we heard the rattle of army cars and military equipment passing through Sárospatak. We went out and saw a long stream of wounded soldiers, with bloody bandages on their heads and limbs, coming through Hungary from the north. The Hungarian Government, with typical Hungarian chivalry, had opened its frontier to allow the defeated Poles to pass through when fleeing from the German army.

When the next day at lunch at the top table in the long dining-room which was entered by a short passage which the boys called "the Bridge of Sighs" from its resemblance to the famous bridge in Venice, the Head informed me that the school always paid its masters in advance, and that if I would go to the office I would also receive my fare from England, I replied that I had not come from England, only from Prague, which was markedly nearer. Mr. Szabó then said that it made no difference whence I had come, the school invariably paid a master's fare from England. My wife and I looked at each other in amazed relief. We had given our last pengő to the station porter who had carried our luggage to the school for us. This was the first of innumerable examples of the consideration and generosity we received from our Hungarian hosts throughout our six years' residence in their country.

The next day being Saturday, we were free to wander through the streets of the little township and examine the surroundings. Sárospatak was in every respect what we in England mean by a school town—a place whose life and work are governed entirely by the great school, founded in 1581, and the English boarding school, which was a separate building situated in spacious grounds across the way. I know from actual experience that this was run in every way on the model of an English public school, and sometimes closing my eyes I could imagine that I was back in Thackeray's old school, Charterhouse. My duties were simple—I was to teach World History in the morning (in English, of course) and English Language and Literature in the afternoons. I had plenty of free time, so that we were able to make short trips to the nearest neighbouring town which rejoiced in the name of Sátoraljaújhely (which I later translated to mean "the new place at the bottom of a tent") and which was reached in a quaint and most convenient little motor train called the *sínbusz* (a corruption of *Schienenautobus*) where the first thing we did was to order some clothes. The Hungarians are excellent tailors, and their suits are beautifully cut, with slightly padded shoulders as distinct from the sloping shoulders so beloved by our own Savile Row tailors.

The next thing to do was to inspect the school—not only the boarding school but also the big, ancient school where, three hundred years ago, the great Comenius taught and Prince Rákóczi lived and learned. One of my favourite Rhapsodies is no. 15, which consists of variations on the Rákóczi March, which I played—if I may say so in all modesty—with some success at a public function in Sátoraljaújhely. This was one of the highlights of my life in Sárospatak, the opportunity I had of meeting the Magyars on their own ground by playing to them the compositions of the great Franz Liszt. I shall never forget the first opportunity I had of doing this; it was in the course of a lecture given in a big hall called the Konviktus, by the eminent poet Monsignore Mécs, and I had chosen one of the most spectacular pieces by the great Magyar, "La Campanella." The hall was full, and the audience listened spellbound; when I had finished, the applause was deafening, the boys—who were present in great numbers—clapped and stamped and shouted themselves hoarse, and Monsignore Mécs, whose eyes were shining approvingly, murmured to me in German (knowing that I did not yet understand Hungarian): *Spielen Sie noch etwas!* (Play something more). As this event was only four months after I arrived, I was soon made free of Sárospatak; and the tears come into my eyes at the remembrance.

I found that this fortuitous ability of mine came in very useful many times during my four years' stay in Sárospatak. Two years later one of my colleagues, Géza Képes, had the idea of arranging what he called a *néphangverseny* for the country people of the surrounding districts, and asked me to cooperate. Of course I was only too happy to do so; and with two of my colleagues, Balázs Szőke and Alexander Milne, we formed a trio—violin, cello and piano. (See the *Hungarian Quarterly* of that period.) We played a "Henry VIII Dance" by Edward German (violin), "Londonderry Air" (cello), and something I had learned as a teenager and had always wanted to play to a Hungarian audience—Liszt' Second Hungarian Rhapsody. The enthusiasm was unparalleled—for an Englishman to play their own music to a Hungarian audience was apparently something so absolutely new that the audience was in sheer ecstasy. Géza Képes was there in person, and rubbed his hands delightedly when he saw the first Hungarian peasant making way unconcernedly into the hall. Never, never shall I forget those halcyon days, and my heart grows heavy with nostalgia and gratitude as I write.

But now to the real purpose for which I was employed—to teach. I have taught at many schools and universities, and my students were of varying talent and intelligence; but in no school, anywhere, have I found it so easy to establish a close rapport with my pupils as with those fine, decent, erudite Hungarian boys. They were all of middle-school standard, as in an English public school; they were diligent and enterprising, and, best of all, liked to ask questions. Not in vain was that boarding school called "the Eton of Hungary." The first thing I did was to build a bridge between them and myself. "Will they cross that bridge and come and meet me or will they stay on their side of the bridge and wait for me to come over to them, as has happened to me in several other countries?" Sometimes it has been the latter that has happened to me, and the pupils have sat with folded arms on the desk in front of them like so many sober judges, and have appeared to be saying to me: "Well, here we are—now come over and teach us!" You may be assured there is no more frustrating experience for a teacher than that—to have to battle his way through a turgid sea of indifference. But not so these Hungarian boys; they themselves helped to build their end of the bridge so that they and I met in midstream, as it were, and between us we forged the bridge of mutual trust and un-

derstanding that grew stronger as the years and months passed; and when at last the time came for me to leave that beloved little township on the banks of the swift-flowing Bodrog, and I stood in front of the Sixth Form for the last time and said to them, my own, my very own boys: "Good-bye—God speed and *viszontlátásra,*" it was the nearest I have ever felt to heartbreak. "Good-bye"—that dread word, how many times in my life, a life fraught with wars and partings, have I been forced to say it—how it embodies all the tears of the world as one looks back on the years of happiness that one knows will never return, the end of friendships, the end of an era, and one recalls the words of Tennyson's "Morte d'Arthur": "The old order changeth, yielding place to new, and God fulfils himself in many ways." And again I was compelled to pronounce it when, acting as a head of department at the British Embassy in Prague, I received news of the death of my greatest friend, Gyula Szabó. *Ó Gyulám, kedves fiam, örök és hűséges barátom, jó és őszinte ember*... I can only say with Mark Antony:

"He was my friend, faithful and just to me...
My heart is in the coffin there with him,
And I must pause till it comes back to me."

*

Now back to the business of teaching. The mornings, as I have said, were devoted to World History, of which fortunately I had a fairly thorough knowledge but which until then, I had never actually taught. The best way to learn a subject, however, is to teach it. When we came to *English* history, I was on pretty safe ground, and was able to interest them in the various historical connections between England and Central Europe, although I had to face some unexpected questions like „Is it true that the Spanish Armada was destroyed in 1588 by gales and storms rather than by Drake's fireships?" The tactful, and correct, answer was that it was a bit of both. Again, „What was the actual result of the Boer War?" Here I was obliged to skate on some very thin ice, but satisfied them by explaining that the Boers had taught us some valuable lessons in trench warfare, and that one of the most eminent of their generals, General Smuts, became a stalwart friend of England. To the question of „What was the background of the antagonism between Philip II of Spain and Elizabeth I of England?" I was obliged to resort to the handy strategem of telling them that this would be dealt with in a future lesson, and then going home and doing some intensive homework. Of course, the history lessons were plentifully interlarded with explanations regarding the grammar and syntax of the English language; which brings me to the afternoons which were spent in something that was called English Practice.

I was slightly disappointed to find that the boys, and indeed the masters themselves, regarded this as a somewhat inferior subject, not to be considered as serious school work. However, I was soon able to dispel this idea and raise it to the level of normal English lessons. In this I was greatly helped by the understanding of the Head and the boys' own interest in English literature as I was able to impart it to them. I soon realized that it was no good falling into the trap of just reading to them, or having them read aloud, extracts from English and American prose works, which they would not have understood and which would have therefore bored them to extinction. The best way to hold the attention of pupils or students is to *interest* them, and that takes care of discipline also. The best thing for a teacher to do is *payer de sa personne* and describe the life and work, richly interspersed with appropriate anecdotes, of great English poets, novelists, and dramatists, and to read out to them

certain portions of their works, pausing at little wayside inns of explanation on the way. Indeed, I have endeavoured to pursue this plan ever since I found my true vocation as a young man of 24, and, judging by the enthusiasm those lectures aroused, and the many letters of gratitude—yes, and even affection—I have received from my pupils and students of seven separate nations, all written in impeccable English, that procedure would seem to have been more than justified. I soon discovered that it is best to *lead*, and not try to *drive*. There was one sixteen-year-old who actually knew very little but imagined that he knew a great deal, more than his teachers in fact, and continually interrupted the lesson with inane interjections. I soon discovered his psychological Achilles' heel—that he had a deep-rooted inferiority complex and that all that was necessary was to enucleate it without wounding his *amour propre*. An application of Jove's thunderbolt would have had the opposite effect and might have lost a basically decent boy. So one day, after a particularly crass interjection, I said to him: "That was a very good answer, Gábor, I see that you have understood the essence of that problem very well. Good for you." A beatific smile overspread his face; I could see that he was mentally rubbing his hands with satisfaction; he remained silent and chewed on his own "cleverness" for the rest of the lesson, and never gave me any more trouble.

*

The Hungarians love Shakespeare, and I spent several lessons on him, including a detailed analysis of some Shakespeare plays. Every summer the boys of the upper forms performed a Shakespeare play, and in 1940 "Richard III" was chosen. The Hungarians are born actors, and the boy who took the title role, one I. Horváth jr., a handsome boy of 17 with a dark, expressive Mephistophelian face, and who had the love of the theatre in his blood, made the best Richard I have ever seen, in or out of the theatre. Rehearsals proceeded for about three months, and one evening I was walking in the school garden when I heard a stentorian voice coming from a box-room window on the topmost floor: "A *horse*, a *horse*, my kingdom for a *horse!*" A pause, and then the same sentence with a different emphasis and intonation floated down through the still night air: "A horse, a horse, my *kingdom* for a horse!" It was of course young Horváth trying out which he thought sounded best. I stood irresolute. It was about 10.30 p.m. Should I go up and tell him to go to bed, or should I emulate Nelson at the Battle of the Nile who put his telescope to his blind eye and said "I see nothing"? I finally decided on the latter course, and left him alone in his illegal solitude.

The play was a roaring success. I take no credit for it. The whole thing was managed by young Horváth, who had arranged for three Gothic arches to be built in front and by the sides of the stage for the actors to enter and exit, at, I am afraid, considerable expense to the school, and caused Gyula Szabó to experience some economic heart-searchings; but all went well. Richard was magnificent, and when he thumped the table and barked to a realistically cowering Lord Hastings: "If? *If?* Tellest thou me of *ifs?* Now by Saint Paul I will not dine until thy head is off!" you could feel a sort of ecstatic thrill going through the auditorium.

Another subject that I taught, voluntarily, was English composition (essay writing). This was to develop the boys' style and initiative. One subject I set them was "The Pleasures of Eating and Drinking"; and from the answers I received I had the conviction that they had no very high impression of English food and cooking. In short, they wrote that the English do not live to eat, they eat to live; and while I could not

in all justice tell myself that they were mistaken, this subject produced some fruitful argument on both sides. And, speaking of food, I never tasted such wonderful cakes and confectionery as in Hungary. I remember how once we got on to a Danubian river steamer to look at Esztergom, and we sat by the wall of the cathedral consuming an *oroszkrémtorta* which was an ambrosial confection out of this world. And the highlight of Sunday lunches at the school was an ethereal concoction called *gyümölcsrizs* consisting, like *oroszkrémtorta*, mainly of whipped cream, assorted fruits, and strawberry jam. English schools, please copy. Other culinary marvels were the *pogácsák*, little cakes made of clarified lard and baked in the oven.

No treatise on Hungary would be complete without mention of the Gypsies. Just as a German general is born in uniform, so the Gypsy is born with a violin in his hand. Sometimes a Gypsy boy of 10 or 11 or 12 or 14 would appear in front of us as we walked through the streets of Sárospatak and perform a few lighting-like scrapings on his fiddle in return for a single pengő (then the rough equivalent of one shilling). Once a lively-looking lad of about 15 appeared in front of us without any violin and asked for money. I looked at him sternly and said: *Semmi hegedű, semmi pénz*. Whereupon he grinned and vanished, only to reappear in about three minutes with his fiddle under his chin, and was rewarded this time by *two* pengős. I just couldn't resist him, remembering how much of Liszt's rhapsodies are based on Gypsy music. From time to time the boarding school organized dances, at which a Gypsy band officiated. At that time there was a particular Austrian *Schlager* which both my wife and I liked, and I went to the platform and asked the band leader if they could play it. He shook his head, disclaiming all knowledge of it. Then a sudden thought struck him. "Can *you* play it?" he asked. When I said yes, he invited me up to the platform and said that if I would play it he and his men would follow. It was a novel experience. I sat down at the piano and began, and out of the corner of my eye I noticed that each member of the band had his violin at the "ready." Little by little the violins began to follow me, although they had never heard it before; and in ten minutes they were playing it and harmonizing it with verve and expertise as if the violins and dulcimer had played it all their lives. It was such an experience that I remained up there on the platform for an hour or so, and that must have been the only Gypsy band in Hungary that sported an English pianist. But one thing I learned—what a wonderful ear those Gypsies have; they cannot read a note of music, but will play, absolutely correctly, anything they have heard only once.

I look across the room and see, on a shelf by the wall, a set of six earthenware teacups, brown with green and blue and orange leaves, which I bought from an old peasant woman, one Mrs Szkircsák, who used to make and sell pottery at the street market in Sárospatak. The set includes a large, lovely pot-bellied teapot of the same material, which we still use on special occasions, notably when we have the good fortune to be visited by old boys from Sárospatak whom we love to entertain whenever they are in England. A fine aquarelle, painted by my wife, of Mrs. Szkircsák's cottage near the Bodrog, hangs on the wall of my study. I look up—and there it is; and all the old nostalgia comes flooding back into my heart as I look and reminisce...

There is one more memory I have of Sárospatak which was both unexpected and amusing, and was, in its way, typical. One evening in 1940 we were on a tour of exploration in the township when we came to the Catholic church on the outskirts, near the Rákóczi Castle. We went in, and climbed up to the organ gallery to see the fine organ made by Miklós Zelenák in 1786 and finished in 1794. I discovered

these particulars when one of the boys gave me a gramophone record of some compositions—Bach, Brixi, Greene, Hummel, Pachelbel, Rathgeber, and others—played on it by Gábor Lehotka. It is a proud memory for me that I was privileged to play on that famous organ, even though I did so illegally; for after a few minutes in the church we heard a resounding bang from below. We hurried down and found that someone, not knowing that we were there, had slammed the door of the church and locked it. It was evening, and we were unwilling to spend the night in an empty church and possibly the next day also (it was Friday). We looked at each other, and we each saw the solution dawning in the other's eyes. The organ must be played, to attract attention, and in no hesitant or pianissimo manner. "I," said my wife, "will blow it." And so, pulling out a generous assortment of stops, including, I remember, the Principial and Super-Octave in the Swell, the Principal and Open Diapason and Triple Cymbal in the Great, and the Violoncello and Octave Bass in the Pedal Organ, I sat down at that noble instrument and began to play, forte, *O du lieber Augustin*. This, not only the choice of subject but also the degree of noise, did the trick. In a very few minutes we heard keys clanging in the door and went down to find an old grizzled peasant, obviously the sexton, with grey hair and a real Hungarian moustache like the inverted handlebars of a racing bicycle, standing and looking at us with suspicion and some indignation. In those days I spoke no Hungarian, and so I said to him in slow and distinct English: "I am very sorry, but we were locked in and could not get out..." A slow smile overspread the rugged face of that ancient peasant, and he replied, to my amazement, in *English:* "It's all right, sir, it's all right. You and your good lady are from the English school?" I was so taken aback that I could only stammer "You—you—you speak English?" "Yes, sir," he answered, "I was in America for many years, it's a bit 'ard after so long, but I still remember a bit, you know." It was a wonderful moment. I just seized his gnarled hand and shook it and shook it and shook it, and "my good lady" did the same. There we stood, shaking hands with one another like crazy. I offered him a ten-pengő note, but, politely and firmly, he rejected it. "No, sir, thank'ee, sir, it was a pleasure, it was my pleasure." And we went home and recounted it to Gyula, whose face shone in one broad beam of delight and satisfaction.

I could write more, much more, but I think I have exceeded my space. I have enjoyed writing it; it was a labour of love—of love—of respect and gratitude to the country which gave us its all and has so grown into my heart that I can only end in what Dr Johnson called "the language of permanence": *Vivat et floreat Hungaria.*

AN EXPLORER OF ANCIENT CULTURE

A London talk with Géza Fehérvári, teacher of Islamic studies

This year is the fortieth anniversary of the death of Sir Aurel Stein, who died in Kabul, Afghanistan, in 1943, at the age of eighty, during the course of his umpteenth expedition. On a visit to London, I went to the British Museum to admire again the rich material excavated by the Hungarian explorer in Central Asia. I last saw it about fifteen years ago, when I wrote my book on Stein.* I had the good luck then, that besides the finds on show—which is only a fraction of the huge material collected by Stein—the museum staff brought out the most beautiful pieces of wallpaintings kept safe in the storerooms so that I could admire their rich colours, full of life, which even a thousand years did not fade. This time I encountered not only treasures preserved in marvellously good state but also a scholar, who is continuing the work of exploring and interpreting ancient civilizations began by earlier generations of Hungarian orientalists—Sándor Kőrösi Csoma, Ármin Vámbéry, Ervin Baktay and Aurel Stein. Géza Fehérvári, the lecturer in Islamic Art and Archeology at the London University, went to England from Hungary, just as Stein did. As he said, he wanted to start our conversation in the "Stein hall" because he received the first, decisive inspiration for his own research from the life work of Aurel Stein. Stein's interest was aroused by the contact and inter-action of the great ancient cultures. He explored unknown relics of the connections of the Chinese and Indian, and the Middle Eastern and Indian civilizations. He traced the relics of the Indian campaign of Alexander the Great when he stumbled upon relics of Hellenism in Bactria. "I wanted to follow in Stein's footsteps," says Géza Fehérvári, "since he was my ideal from early childhood. I grew up on his books."

* *Romvárosok a sivatagban* (Cities in ruins in the desert.) Móra Kiadó, 1970. in Hungarian

From Eger to Tell-i Iblis

Fehérvári spent his youth in the Northern Hungarian town of Eger. The medieval fortress of Eger played an important role in the history of Hungary: the defence of the fortress against the overwhelming power of the besieging Turks in 1552 is a memorable feat of arms, a proud moment in Hungary's history. It became deeply imbedded in the imagination of young Fehérvári. His father was foreman in an iron works where a still-burning passion for metals and metal work stirred in the young man. His first book was an analysis of Islamic metal work but it was only published three decades later, in England. First came the university years in Budapest, with teachers like Gyula Germanus and Károly Czeglédy, followed by years of archeological work. Fehérvári took part in the archeological exploration of the Chapel at Buda Castle, dated back to King Sigismund of which László Gerő was in charge and later in the exploration of the Zrínyi fortress at Szigetvár. The latter was reconstructed after he left Hungary, and the work of the Hungarian restorers was successful, as Fehérvári found with pleasure on the occasion of his visits to his home country.

When he left Hungary in 1956, he first spent some time in Vienna. He went on to England where he worked under David Storm Rice. After the death of Rice he was appointed as lecturer in Islamic Art and Archeology at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. His teaching duties occupy much of his time but the university—he explained—also gives him time for archeological explorations and

excavations from time to time. The excavations he lead in the area of Tell-i Iblis proved to be the most important so far.

The exploration of Ghubayra

Kirman, a South-Eastern province of Iran, the Carmania of ancient times, had long engaged the attention of archeologists. Aurel Stein lead an expedition to this province in 1932, and found several fields of ruins, among them the area popularly known as Tell-i Iblis (Devil's mound) near the present village of Bardsir. Four decades later a new expedition was organized with the financial help of some international organizations and funds—among them the Stein-Arnold Foundation—and this expedition has excavated sites in the area for three years. As a result the remains of the legendary town of Ghubayra were excavated.

"I regard the fact"—Géza Fehérvári said "that contrary to earlier assumption, we proved that this ancient settlement existed continuously and remained an inhabited place for thousands of years in spite of subsequent conquests by Iranians, Seljuk Turks, Arabs and Mongols, as the major achievement of our explorations".

Ghubayra could be compared with ancient Troy—naturally, only from this aspect—where remains of older and still older towns were discovered at various depths in the course of excavation. The survival of Ghubayra, defying all conquest, was due evidently the fact that it was situated next to important trade routes. Merchants could proceed unhindered with their wares from this town in the plains of Bardsir towards the East, in the direction of Sistan and the countries of South-East Asia. The climate of the area used to be more favourable than now. It was milder and there was more rain, consequently there were vast forests around Ghubayra, with rich fauna. Even lions lived here, as skeletal remains prove. The climate became hotter and drier probably as a result of an Easternly shift of the monsoon. This killed the forests, but Ghubayra still remained a thriving town for many centuries in spite of that. When the Mongol hordes invaded these areas in 1221 an interesting and significant personage emerged as leader of Kirman province, a certain Buraq Hajib, who accepted the role of Mongol vassal with far-seeing realism, saving Kirman from destruction by this act. He succeeded to win the confidence of the Mongols to such a degree later, that he was made governor of the province under the Mongol name of Qutlugh Khan. When he died, his daughter Turkhan Khatun arose as leader of Kirman, an exceptional event in the history of Islam. She governed the province first in the name of her husband, later in the name of her son, and established a real golden age in South East Iran. She was a lavish patroness of the arts, and ordered large-scale constructions. Marco Polo travelled across the region during the reign of Turkhan Khatun, and gave a detailed description of the prosperity of the district. All this came to an end when a later ruler rose up against Mongol rule. The hordes of Timur raided the province of Kirman in 1393, and destroyed the town of Ghubayra too. Even the memory of the town faded during the centuries to come.

The catastrophe of Ghubayra eventually became a blessing from the point of archeology. An inestimably rich material of the relics of Islamic civilization survived under layers of earth and sand piled up during the centuries. Part of the finds went to Iranian museums, while others are being processed by the team of Géza Fehérvári in London. The processing of the skeletal remains will be carried out by Dr. Sándor Bökönyi, who is on the staff of the Archaeological Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

Remembering Magyarabs

Géza Fehérvári carried out notable excavations also in Lybia, among the ruins

of Medinat Sultan, where the remains of a township destroyed in the middle of the 11th century came to light from under many layers of earth In the course of prior excavations, Mohammed Mustapha excavated two gates of the town, and part of the walls of the fortress. Fehérvári subsequently discovered the third gate, and remains of a highway. He succeeded in identifying several works of early Islamic art brought to light in the course of the excavations.

In one of his travels he visited the Sudan where he carried out an archeological survey in oder to prepare later excavations. His encounter with the Magyarabs in the district of Halfa Daghim proved a moving experience. The fact itself, the existence of Magyarabs was already known, yet the personal encounter with these late descendants of those Hungarian boys who were carried off by the Turks from occupied Hungary during the 16th century as Janissaries moved him greatly, The descendants maintained an awareness of Hungarian origin for four centuries although their forefathers embraced Islam, and married local women. As a reference to their Hungarian origin the words *al magyari* are still part of the names of most of them. An aged man with a big moustache, Hassan al Magyari ben Ibrahim offered much help to Fehérvári with great affection and zeal. He guided him to the island of Magyarnarti where their forefathers lived. The notion of kinship is so strong amongst them that when they had to move recently because of the construction of the Assuan dam, they stayed together, resettling in a new village.

Bi-centenary of Kőrösi Csoma

The encounter with the Magyarabs was symbolic in many ways. Wherever his work takes Géza Fehérvári no Hungarian reference eludes his attention. When he travelled in Afghanistan, he felt it his duty to make a pilgrimage to, and lay a wreath on, the final resting place of his Hungarian orientalist predecessor, Sir Aurel Stein. In one of his books he describes pieces of the Islamic collection of the Hungarian-born collector, Ödön Unger. His next book will be on the arts of Islam in Hungarian, to be published by Képzőművészeti Kiadó, Budapest, possible English and Arabic editions will follow only later.

The Hungarian and international world of scholarship will commemorate the bicentennary of the birth of the noted Hungarian orientalist and author of the first Tibetan dictionary, Sándor Kőrösi Csoma in 1984. The team of Hungarian orientalists which organizes the conference to be held on this occasion, lead by Károly Czeglédy, a professor at the Loránd Eötvös University of Sciences, Budapest, asked Géza Fehérvári to prepare a symposium and an exhibition in England. An exhibition of Islamic art will be organized in Budapest in 1985. It is hoped that the British Museum and other major collections will loan some material on the occasion.

ZOLTÁN HALÁSZ

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

NEW VOLUMES OF POETRY

Ottó Orbán: *Helyzetünk az Óceánon* (Our Position on the Ocean). Magvető, 1983. 214 pp.; Imre Oravecz: *A hopik könyve* (The Book of the Hopi). Magvető, 1983. 178 pp.; Zsuzsa Takács: *Tükörfolyosó* (Corridor of Mirrors). Szépirodalmi, 1983. 92 pp.

Ottó Orbán's new book, *Helyzetünk az Óceánon* (Our Position on the Ocean), has the form of a novel in verse. The poems are mutually explanatory fragments of an autobiography and of a series of reflections. They succeed one another not in the chronological order of the events described but cyclically, in the erratic but logical order of realization, confrontation, valuation, and revaluation. Orbán uses several poems from two earlier books of his, *A visszacsavart láng* (The turned-down flame, 1979) and *Az alvó vulkán* (The dormant volcano, 1980), and builds on them in this verse novel. Its principal characters, an Orthodox Jew who supplied cannon to Lajos Kossuth during the 1848 War of Independence and a village swineherd (the author's ancestors on his father's and mother's side), bring to mind the characters of some novel yet to be written. Family history, cultural history, social history, travels, autobiography, biography are the variations in the poems or verse essays of *Helyzetünk az Óceánon*. Orbán's first book came out in 1960, and since then his poetry is that of lush and tangled metaphors which almost have an independent existence. Since the late 1970s, and especially now, Orbán has created his poems upon the confrontation of fact, reality and possibility rather than the accustomed metaphors. They are poems because of their concision, quick turns and imagery; they are essays because they are thought-provoking and their posing of questions and conveying of messages are valid. This is particularly true of what he writes on Budapest in the early years of this century, of what he writes on the problems of poetry or the mechanics of emotions are valid beyond and independent of poetry. The writer who at first narrated experience through a torrent of metaphors returns through the essay to poetry as defined classically. This is simply to say that he returns to that sort of poetry (or idea of poetry) which, as against romanticism or other movements, does not distinguish between the validity of the poem and the validity of the world outside poetry. "I too have swallowed the humbug that poetry is omnipotent."

War is his particular experience. In one of his verse essays he narrates how his father —a member of a forced labour company— was beaten to death. In *Bölcső* (Cradle) he

describes a wartime man-hunt: "I came to see fate in a tenement house: a dashing moustache above his thick lips, he wielded a rifle, the tool of his trade, as the peasant does a spade or the hairdresser his scissors; he did not look like a monster. He was, rather, apathetic like someone who had not had enough sleep and had a cold. Nothing memorable in his looks. He entered the room, sized up the place with a trained eye: the wash-basin half filled with water, a pan on the iron stove, a cracked mirror, an unmade bed—a wartime room. He just beckoned—Out! That was where the incalculable could be calculated. We assembled in the courtyard with our bundles, just to have something to throw away."

In reply to this there is *Az arcom a tévében* (My face on TV). It records something which happened many years later: "The survivor of a shipwreck is chattering here, and above his shirt alluring the firemen, televised in colour, you can now really see his septal deviation."

Ottó Orbán defines his position in the prose poem *A költő, aki lett belőlem* (The poet that I became): "A real Central European. Beside his *yes* there is always a *but*. He is rich for a poor man, and poor for a rich man... that is, he is neither... or rather he is both—wait a bit for him to find out that he is the loquacious agreement in striking contrasts, a son of his age who understands. But don't be fooled if he smiles upon you, because burning under his shirt is what he smuggles through the customs of days, aided by police dogs and sophisticated instruments nosing for incendiaries—fire."

Orbán is no less than a self-possessed Central European. This is a strength as much as an obstacle he has to surmount. How much distaste he has to overcome in England is seen in a series of descriptions, *Szigetvilág* (Island world). Visiting the National Portrait Gallery, the Hungarian, the Central European in him becomes indignant: "How sick I am of this, the painted dossier of state records! How far from here is the sizzling of the burning thatched roof, the shrieking, the wailing, the bleating of sheep?" How difficult it is to understand that more than Central European experience is possible, and more than Central European experience is valid. Once you have understood this, suggests Orbán, your consciousness of Central Europe will only become richer.

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In *NHQ* 78, back in 1980, I said of Imre Oravecz's second volume, *Egy földterület növénytakarójának változása* (The change of a territory's vegetation): "I think it marks an important event in Hungarian lyrical poetry. Certainly it is one of the strangest volumes of poetry I have ever read." It was divided into three cycles whose heroes were Trakl, Artmann, two nineteenth-century Hungarian explorers in America, Thoreau, Carlos Castaneda, and the Hopi Indians or, rather, their mythical version of the world. In this article I remarked that, as far as I knew, the name of Carlos Castaneda was first mentioned in Hungarian by Imre Oravecz, and I quoted what he had written on the Viennese Artmann in the postscript to a Hungarian selection: "...like a sort of modern mannerist he was constantly changing the scenes of his life, a commuter between Gibraltar and Franz Josef Land. He also never ceased to change the style of his works, with never-flagging zeal between Homer and Nestroy... he could put everything to some use, for him, everything in literature, the old and the new, were equally full of life and value." I quote these lines again because of their confessional nature, because I feel they characterize Oravecz too. His first book, *Héj* (Rind, 1972), featured aphoristic and metaphoric one-line poems. In his second book, there is also to be found haiku, prose poems, short free verse, and lengthy commentaries.

All this has to be repeated in order to review Oravecz's third volume. Because this small American Indian tribe, the Hopi, who

define themselves as The People, are among the protagonists of this book as well. Oravecz has remained faithful, having started with single-line poems and not averse to trying for technical solution; so, now, with the Hopi in mind and inspired by Franz Water's *Book of the Hopi*, he creates a whole myth, an explanation of the world.

In his preface of *A hopik könyve* (The book of the Hopi) Oravecz says: "... (this is how) with the aid of a prehistoric culture I have come or, rather, I have come back, to the place where I had always longed to be: to my race's rustic culture that has decayed but has been stored for ever in my consciousness, in my nerves and my gestures, or if you like, in my own prehistoric ego. And this is how I have become aware that, though my poems are directly about the Hopi, they indirectly speak of that community which my ancestors were members of and of which I too was a member till the end of my childhood..."

Oravecz was born in 1944. He read English and German at Debrecen University and then took another degree in linguistics at the University of Illinois. He consistently represents a new concept of the oneness of the world. The eighteenth century also professed a singularity of the world, mainly one of morality. But it saw oneness in identity and in what is a perverse version of evolution, considered deviation and difference to be deficiency, abnormality and failure. In the twentieth century there are more and more people who more and more often seek oneness in the acceptance of dissimilarity. Ruth Benedict wrote in an essential book in 1934, *Patterns of Culture:* "the anthropologist is interested in human behaviour, not as it is shaped by one tradition, our own, but as it has been shaped by any tradition whatsoever." Léopold Sédar Senghor regards the right to be different as the outcome of a really fruitful dialogue between cultures. A critic of *A hopik könyve*, Csaba Sík, writes: "Oravecz recognizes, with a certainty that is astounding here, one of the greatest intellectual tasks of the century and even comes to it honestly: he does away with the boundary pole between the two cultures. The pole between European and Indian cultures, between modern and ancient cultures; the Hopi myth leads him back to his native land, to the past and present of the native land, as the Mediterranean myth led Picasso, and the myth of the peoples of Mexico and Peru led Henry Moore, to the most modern present time. I have not lost my sense of proportion, I only recognize the common intention."

A hopik könyve, like the Pentateuch of Moses, is divided into five books. There are parallels which indicate intention. The first book of the Hopi narrates their myth of the Creation and the appearance of sin. The book of Genesis begins with the Creation and continues with the Fall. The third book of the Hopi, just as the book of Leviticus, is on the laws. The fifth book of the Hopi carries the songs, monologues of the chief figure of the work, Sziliomomo. The last two poems are two songs from the dying man. Personally, for a long time, I have been reading the book of Deuteronomy as a sort of immense monologues, or rather a series of monologues, by Moses, in which the dying prophet again sums up his most important deeds and teachings.

A hopik könyve has been made out of elements of ethnographic, cultural and religious history and has been combined with the creative fantasy of a poet. The texts vary in form, size and technique. Oravecz's epigrams also recur in it:

"Love is the honey of the Creator's soul"

thus Eototo and Aholi on love. With an unparalleled bravura Oravecz creates his own singular Hopi poems. While reading them I stopped time after time to delight in his linguistic power, ingenuity, in the familiarity and the freshness. I can only assert that Oravecz has found the language appropriate for the creation of a myth.

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Tükörfolyosó (Corridor of mirrors) is Zsuzsa Takács's third book; her first appeared in 1970. A highly cultured, sensitive woman of chiefly musical inspiration speaks in these poems in an elevated, urbane and moderate tone. The poems are addressed to somebody, we hear in them one side of a dialogue repeatedly interrupted. Powerful emotions, powerful since they are controlled by high culture, surge in these lines. Nature is anthropomorphized, taking over the emotions of the one who speaks in the poem:

"Unreasonable hope following rain / causes white sticks to grow in the midst of rose plants, / and even stone drinks up water because it is thirsty."

Zsuzsa Takács translates Descartes's *cogito ergo sum* into the language and experience of emotions: "And he who is spoken to *exists*."

Her poems are psychological dramas, about the problems of sensation and perception, the chances of man and his future, the hopes and hopelessness of human relations. Variations on the personality and the search for happiness:

"There may come anything, there may come love, the true one, / but the eye is closed, it sees: that's illusion." Or:

"If you love me I love myself."

Through her poems run motherhood, love, fate, loneliness, the process of creation. The opening piece of *Tükörfolyosó* describes the genuine bewilderment of Brahms' secretary as he hears in the garden Brahms playing or composing music in the house. Zsuzsa Takács causes feeling of intimacy to resound in her reader while speaking on her loneliness, the creator's loneliness and dreams or illusions:

"There come musicians and new dancers, / finally the sea, everybody's dancer, / comes in the shape of dawn, takes me into its arms / and is dandling me."

The elevated tone, the music and bashfulness of the confessions, the hardly perceptible hints give this poetry a broad perspective. Someone is being addressed and the intimate, familiar signals make the reader feel that Zsuzsa Takács is addressing her words directly, personally to him.

LÁSZLÓ FERENCZI

BAD SURVIVAL TECHNICIANS

Csurka, István: *Létezés-technika* (Survival Technique). Selected short stories. Magvető, 1983. 815 pp.; Hajnóczy, Péter: *A fűtő—M—A halál kilovagolt Perzsiából—Jézus menyasszonya—Hátrahagyott írások.* (The Boiler Man—M—Death Rode out of Persia—The Bride of Jesus—Posthumous Writings). Szépirodalmi, 1982. 718 pp.; Szabó, Magda: *Megmaradt Szobotkának* (He Remained Himself). Magvető, 1983. 475 pp.

Survival Technique is a collection of the best short stories of István Csurka written over thirty years. The title story comes from the sixties: it is a four-page novelette on a conversation between two provincial actors. To be a provincial actor has been in Hungary for many years the *nec plus ultra* of hopelessness. Actors in the provinces lived from one pay-day to the next spending their time drinking. Once as a promising talent and an academy student in Budapest the provincial actor naturally had ideas of his life and career but then the most he was capable of was drawing his conclusions. The conclusion

which one of the actors arrives at in the conversation is that his survival technique was bad.

In an interview Csurka defined the technique of survival as the ability to remain relatively unhurt in a role which does not fit one in a situation enforced on one or in a compulsory calling with which one is unable to identify. Csurka's generation has had a lion's share of such compulsory callings. He belongs to the generation which, in the early fifties, had started out on artistic and intellectual careers in the mainstream of artificially generated enthusiasm. Like himself, many others of this generation had broken with the traditional peasant way of life overnight, "emerged into life" as the ironic phrase has it in one of his stories, and believed that with the opening of the gates justice will be meted out in real life as it is to the youngest son in folk tales. The ecstasy was soon over, however, and hangover and disillusion followed, together with the realisation that the new ideals had been false and the old had been lost on the way. But they had to pretend that nothing had happened and put a good face on it, if possible, saving and preserving something for better times. Briefly, they had to weather the crisis with a good survival technique, and in this sense the survival technique is not far from respiratory technique: in fact this is what one of the actors thinks the other is talking about.

Csurka's heroes are mostly bad technicians of survival. His stories convey the irresistible feeling that when whether somebody remains unhurt depends on survival technique, then every self-respecting person must prove himself to be a bad technician of survival. And those who can cope with the technique will necessarily pay for it in terms of human decency. Csurka writes of intellectuals who try to keep up their pretence of humanity but are irremediably corrupted and cannot account for the "deficit," and he writes of little men swept out onto the margin whose conflicts and failures have a tragic effect.

In *Happening** Lónyai, the educated and cynical writer, starts a casual adventure with a "stupid and therefore innocent" kitchenmaid. He immerses himself in the deep water at the bottom of society where "it stinks." At the end of an assignation regarded and experienced as a "happening," he tops everything by asking the girl whether she loves him. This question throws the girl into a fever, her rigidity and frigidity suddenly melt, and Lónyai realizes with a shock that the girl has understood nothing of the attitude with which he organised this happening. In his cynicism he had thought that everybody was more or less as cynical as he.

The short story *The Ticket Tout* (A jegyüzér) is about an outsider who, although an objectionable small-time crook, manages to arouse a flash of sympathy. The tout is disappointed and bitter because "the film is not 'in' today," there are no sensations any more. He does not regret business because business can be found anywhere and better business even; he regrets the absence of movement. "Now there is no movement, no will. There seems to be no fire, no enthusiasm today. No ticket? Never mind, we'll go to see it to-morrow. Earlier: guys with their eyes popping out were running up and down before the cinemas: 'Any tickets, any tickets?'" Then he confesses to the narrator that he is only a small-time vagrant who does not like work but he likes to read, and Saint-Just is his ideal. And this is Csurka—the embittered ticket tout who preserves the memory of the radicalism of Saint-Just in the age of consolidation, the grotesque parallel and contrast, this flash between the innocent bagatelles of everyday life and the latent essence of history.

Protest-song is an example of the even sharper and cruder consonance of humour and tragedy. Somebody gets on a bus and is

* *NHQ* 45, as "Nothing Simple."

assailed by a smell of alarmingly and unambigously human origin from the next seat. His neighbour is a gypsy. The hero who, like the protagonist in *Happening*, believes himself educated and privileged, pursues an indignant interior monologue against the unscrupulously aggressive foul smell coming from his neighbour; gradually he conceives it as a protest song, albeit one with some anarchist exaggeration. Finally he cannot refrain from raising his voice against this provocation but he is reprimanded because he was mistaken in the source—it is in fact someone sitting behind him, who is a very old man. "He had to see immediately that on the whole bus he was the only one who did not know anything. He is sitting here between two strokes, beyond and outside everything. He does not look at anybody and does not bother about anybody, maybe he watches only his insides, the stirs of his disintegrating organism but even this does not shatter him. He knows everything because before him is the unalterable certainty, the end."

István Csurka can do something which, to a certain extent, is the most fervent desire of every writer: he can recreate magically authentic dialogues and scenes. Many of his stories are written in dialogue. Two or more persons are talking, and these true stories, these unpretentious and inane everyday conversations offer glimpses into human fates. It is surely no accident that Csurka, at the time when he had "emerged into life," had been a student of the faculty of dramaturgy at the Academy of Theatre and Cinematography, where he learned the techniques of stage and screen writing. His talents as a short story writer unfolded in the early sixties when Hemingway was the ideal of young Hungarian writers, and Csurka managed to successfully utilize this technique for what he wanted to say. One of his fine newer short stories, *Utasok* (Travellers) proves this. Two old men and and an old woman jabber away in a railway compartment, they maunder on confusedly, reproaching and bragging, until it emerges that one of them is on the wrong train. He gets off at the first opportunity to go back but in the dark he has mistaken the place, they have not yet arrived at the station, the train has stopped out on the open track, and the old man loses his way completely: "after the last step there was an abyss, the side of the railway bed and he could not help falling into it." There are few stories as poignant as this one on guileless human frailty.

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Péter Hajnóczy was a writer who conducted his own survival very badly: at 39 he left a complete lifework behind himself.* One and a half years after his death, in the summer of 1981 this appeared in a book of 700 pages. Hajnóczy belonged to the same self-destructive breed as one of his ideals, Malcolm Lowry. He too was an alcoholic and saw this as the stigma of being accursed and chosen, just as did the author of *Under the Vulcano*.

Anyway, he dedicated one of his early stories, one which had attracted attention, to Heinrich von Kleist, and wrote it as a grotesque paraphrase of the theme of *Michael Koblhaas*. His hero, Mihály Kolhász, is a 31 year-old boilerman in a factory and the conflict arises when one day he is deprived of his "protective drink," the daily half-litre of milk. The explanation is that this particular boiler-house is not a place of work harmful to health. The parable *A Fűtő* (The Boilerman) narrates how, following his classic model, Kolhász tries to gain amends. In the absence of any forum to give him satisfaction he wants to appeal to the UN "as the responsible delegate of the human race," but then he burns his appeal on the iron grate of the oven. His intention to douse himself with petrol and then set fire to himself is not carried out; the most

* See *The Funeral*, in this issue, on page 93.

he is able to do is thrust his tongue out at the petrol can. We are in the seventies, and man has definitely lost every illusion of being able to assert his rights. Kolhász does not even believe in the sense of selfdestructive demonstration any more although, according to literary tradition, he could be expected to show obstinate and monomaniac resistance.

One of Hajnóczy's last longer pieces, *Jézus menyasszonya* (The bride of Jesus) concerns itself with the ascendancy, the spread of this hopeless state. The impertinent and challenging grotesque which still prevails in *The Boiler-Man* is replaced here by nightmarish visions. The hero, the Boy lives in a town where man-hunters stalk on the streets. There is no war but homicide, which is legal and, indeed, obligatory in war, is still allowed, although within institutional limitations. It is a form of national sport for which one can take out a licence. One ticket entitles the bearer to shoot two adults. The relatives of the dead get money, and Csilla, the Boy's sweetheart is proud of her father entering the circle of privileged victims since his body has been stuffed. The boy teaches the girl the method of mounting a human body, and, in his fear that Csilla will denounce him to the hunters he kills her, and is hit by a bullet in turn. The starting point is morbid and grotesque: in Hungary there is a prosperous business leasing hunting concessions to rich Western visitors for hard currency; Hajnóczy transplants this practice into human society, and his story becomes horrifyingly absurd because the people live together with this business activity as with a natural and familiar medium of their life, they would even like to profit by it themselves. Kolhász does not rebel any more: he is even proud of his defencelessness and humiliation, and speculates on selling it.

An earlier short story, *A véradó* (The blood donor) is a grotesque parable on the inexhaustibility of human reserves. A butcher creates complete confusion in the health service and even in other authorities trough his ability to donate blood in unlimited quantities. Indeed, if he is not incessantly on tap, he feels unbearable torment and tension. Hajnóczy signals in the story that this inexhaustible overflow of blood is a metaphor for the butcher's unsatisfied sexual desires. However, *The Blood Donor* is left open also to a more general interpretation: here is somebody who is unable to do something with his emotional capital, his humanity, his desire for love and his biological existence because nobody needs them.

The same interpretation should be given to *A halál kilovagolt Perzsiából* (Death rode out of Persia), a short, autobiographical novel which is regarded as Hajnóczy's masterpiece. Here the parallels with Lowry are conspicuous. Alternating different planes of narration, it tells how the existence of the hero, as determined by history and society, has lead to alcoholism. This young man is unable to love or to write with the natural spontaneity dormant in him somewhere deep down but fatally fossilized so that only alcohol is able to release it occasionally. But alcohol soon destroys him amidst horrible nightmares and sufferings. However cruel and commonplace, it is true also in this case: this volume of 700 pages, with its terrifying details, metaphorical visions and enlightening associations and images that recall Poe, Hoffmann, Lowry, et al., could be created only at the cost of the physical and spiritual health, and ultimately the survival, of their author.

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Although Tibor Szobotka was not 39 but 69 when he died in February 1982, this reprieve of thirty years was not long enough to teach him better survival techniques than those of Hajnóczy. True, Szobotka was no alcoholic, on the contrary, he maintained his moderate attitude and ideals persistently until his death, he was a "reliable gentle-

man" in the original, literal sense of the word and not as the doubtful hero of what was probably his best novel (of the same title) who discredited this label. And yet he was an unfortunate writer who was unable to gain his due recognition for fifty years. His works were not published or they were killed by a conspiracy of silence or disparaged unjustly; then again he was silenced and crippled by his conditions. Not surprisingly he himself lost heart and gave up the vain struggle for literary success. This failure which, with the passing of time, aggravated by symptomatic illnesses, must have been all the more painful (although on the other hand, this was a comfort) in that his wife, Magda Szabó, has established herself as one of the most widely-read and popular Hungarian novelists here in Hungary and abroad. Now Magda Szabó has tried to overcome her recent loss by writing it out of herself. In evoking the figure and memory of her husband, she has deviously wanted to do him justice. This is what seems to be behind her *Megmaradt Szobotkának* (He remained himself), a strange book, indeterminate in genre.

One of its peculiarities is that parts of it are the work of Szobotka. In the last years of his life the fatal spectre of incomprehension and dispossession began to lift over Szobotka; his last novel was an undeniable success with the public, and the Magvető publishing house was planning to reissue earlier works which had gone unnoticed at the time. Szobotka, who was already dangerously ill, was fully aware of the possibility that the work would not be completed, and started to write his memoirs to explain and excuse himself why he had not been able to give more of himself, because he had not been recognized as a writer. To one of the chapters he gave the title *Megmaradtam Szobotkának* (I Remained Szobotka). He remained Szobotka in two senses of the word: he held by his own name, one which does not sound Hungarian, despite the advice of some people to choose another if he wanted to be a Hungarian writer; he remained what he was in every circumstance: educated, humanist and European, a representative of the middle class and of an age when even the worst technicians of survival were able to produce some sham compromise.

Magda Szabó has inserted the completed chapters of these fragmentary memoirs into her book, and even included long—and very interesting—extracts from Szobotka's diaries. Here and there she has complemented her own text with excerpts from Szobotka's unpublished writings, mostly his literary attempts as a child and a youth. All in all, about one third of her book is composed of the authentic texts of her hero.

We can speak of a hero in a certain sense although Magda Szabó does not pretend for one moment that she does not speak of her own husband and a writer and a man who is due an apology—she even accepts the consequence of this apology being inevitably prejudiced and emotional—but in some parts her book is like a novel. Her modern method of alternating the viewpoint of description contributes to this novel-like quality. At one point a writer who has only indirect information on her subject acquaints us with the childhood of the other writer, then again the subject speaks directly; in the report of the years spent together, we read the evidence of a personally interested witness who is closest to the hero. Magda Szabó's biography is also novel-like because, when she evokes these years spent together and, especially, Szobotka's last days, her scenes and images are poignantly dramatic. She relives what happened and shapes her report in the manner of a writer.

Finally there is something novel-like also in Szobotka's fate. Presenting and judging his work as a writer is not our aim here, all the more as Magda Szabó herself avoids doing so with tact and taste. But one can say this much: that Szobotka did not write this "novel" of his life after all; in his *Megbízható úriember* (Reliable gentleman) he

only set out the lessons of a youth spent before the world war in a story whose alienating effect is like a kind of "confessions of a confidence man." According to the evidence of this novel, Szobotka was an educated, sensitive and perceptive middle class youth with a wide intellectual horizon who has seen much of the world and was hungry for experience. He then experienced the disastrous evolution of the spirit of the age on his own skin. This spirit of the age which shed its spirituality and showed itself in its naked essence, defeated Szobotka well and truly. It deprived him of his first wife and newborn baby and, after a short interval to allow him to regather his strengh and to hope in a solution, it deprived him also of the most basic living conditions. Although by the end of the fifties Szobotka had a wife who replaced the first to the full, he had lost himself, his belief in his mission as a writer, his will to be one, and his faith in the world. His wife restored them through her example and encouragement, but by the time he felt himself a writer again, even if one relegated the background, illness struck him down and never left him again. Of course his illnesses and failures were brothers, one paved the way for the other. And that teacher of English and translator of Joyce with hat, tie and waistcoat became more and more obstinate and would not enter into negotiations with his ill-fate: being a hopeless survival technician he had no other choice. Magda Szabó has written a book on this fate in which the widow's private sorrow, the passionate plea against the waste of value and life and the writer's flair for the model-material have come together into a captivating book.

MIKLÓS GYÖRFFY

HOW THEY READ FICTION IN PARIS AND BUDAPEST

Péter Józsa–Jacques Leenhardt: *Két főváros, két regény, két értékvilág. Olvasás-szociológiai kísérlet* (Two capitals, two novels, two worlds of values. An essay in readership sociology). Budapest, Gondolat Kiadó, 1981. 531 pp.; *Lire la lecture. Essai de sociologie de la lecture*, par Pierre Józsa et Jacques Leenhardt. Paris, éd. Le Sycomore. 1982. 422 pp.

At the time of its first publication Endre Fejes's novel *Rozsdatemető* (Scrap Iron Yard) created a storm in Hungarian literary life. It was the story of the breaking up of a Hungarian working-class family that had not kept up with the times. It was first published in 1962, has been frequently reprinted and translated into eleven languages, including English, German, French, Italian, Spanish, and Japanese. Hábetler, the name of the family on which the novel is centred, has become a household word: "Hábetlerism" denotes a socially passive, narrow-minded, idiosyncratic attitude. The novel had a considerable critical response and has been debated for years.

Georges Perec's *Les choses* (1965) is no less well-known. It was perhaps the first novel in French which described the effect of the consumer society on human consciousness with sociological exactitude and artistic sensitivity, doing so by describing the early career of a young couple, one a psychologist, the other a sociologist. *Les choses* had a good

critical reception, and was awarded the Renaudot prize.

These two novels provide material for an "Essay in readership sociology" (the subtitle). The project is described by Jacques Leenhardt, who is director of the Groupe de Sociologie de la Littérature at the École des Hautes Études en Science Sociales in Paris, and Péter Józsa—who died after completing the book. The nature of the enterprise deserves special appreciation, since this was the first international comparative readership-sociology project.

The authors sum up the aim of their research as: "We wanted to demonstrate in how many and what ways the readers may interpret those social, political, moral, and philosophic problems which a novel-like [. . .] text contains. Behind the interpretations we looked for the coherent ideologies and social structures which made them possible."

The work by Józsa and Leenhardt, their essay as the subtitle calls it, cuts a new path in readership sociology. It also crosses the limits of readership sociology and extends to the domains of the sociology of culture and the sociology of value. It does not seek an answer to the four questions—who? what? when? why?—formulated by Berelson, as readership sociology does in general, but it searches, on the one hand, for the substance of the aesthetic effect, how the novel works in the consciousness of the readers, and on the other, for those systems of value and ideological structures which determine the perception of a novel. Since these structures —"the social framework of reading"—differ considerably in France and Hungary, the meaning and message of the work are also interpreted differently by Frenchmen and by Hungarians; to put it more precisely, the work means something else in Paris than in Budapest.

This approach to the literary work which was the authors' point of departure in research, shows at certain points a kinship with the trend of reception aesthetics in literary theory. However, at the beginning of their project the authors were not able to take into consideration the teachings of this trend, and consequently realized their ideas in empirical research which was independent of it.

The research aimed at the "town population joined in the work cycle of industrial society;" the sampling occurred according to social-demographic groups (graduate engineers, quasi-intellectuals, technicians, workers, and [only in the French sample] shopkeepers); in other words, it excluded what is known as "humanist intelligentsia." Fejes's novel was read in Paris by 195 people and in Budapest by 148, Perec's by 121 in Paris and 145 in Budapest. The respondents filled in two questionnaires. Questionnaire A referred to their general reading habits, and questionnaire B to the two novels themselves. Owing to the relatively small samples, the questionnaires contained open-ended questions: these asked the reader to explain the behaviour of the characters, the situations in the novel, etc., or queried the interconnections between the world of the novel and social reality (e.g., "According to you, what social stratum does the Hábetler family belong to?"). Finally, through some questions the researchers tried to explore how the reading matter worked in the consciousness of the reader as a novel; to what extent was the reader able to recognize in some problems of the novel the opinions of the author. Altogether 70 questions were put on the two novels.

Owing to the open-endedness of the questions, processing of the answers was very difficult and involved; the researchers established in the course of lengthy and minute common work the types of answers which could be processed statistically.

Although this was not the immediate aim of their research, the authors drew up a system for *methods* of reading. Methods of reading refer to the intellectual attitude of the reader and do not contain choices of value. In the course of analysing the answers,

the outlines of three kinds of reading attitude unfolded. The first is the *phenomenal* method of reading, which stops at the phenomena, the facts; the second is an attitude by which the reader becomes identified with the hero of the novel, and therefore it was called the *identificative-emotional* method of reading; and finally, the third method indicates a kind of reading which tries to search also for interconnections between the facts and phenomena, the relationship of cause and effect behind them, and consequently its relationship to the novel is not determined by a personal connection with the hero but by an intellectual activity free of emotions. This is called the *analytical-synthetic* method of reading.

But the real aim of the research was to explore the evaluative taking of stands, the ideological structures which are in operation while the work is being read. This made an elaboration of *reading systems* possible. The authors identified reading systems by correlating answers; they did so separately for both novels and the two countries. (I do not refer here to differences in the elaboration of the two materials.) In the case of the French novel, the reading systems established on the basis of the French and the Hungarian answers can (discounting the extreme poles) be made to correspond partly to each other. The answers on "Scap Iron Yard" result in completely incomparable systems; and finally, while the systems of French readers can be made to refer to both novels, in Hungary the two novels produced systems which cannot be compared to each other.

Let us first see how the French readers interpreted Perec's novel. The answers belonging to the first system perceive the world depicted in the novel from the inside, without any distance; this system is characterized by "sober possibilism," the realism of rational possibilities. Other readings again (these form systems II A and II B) view the two principal heroes from the outside and critically. The critique of one type refers to certain ideals, such as culture, liberty, consciousness, the community. The critique of the second type appeals primarily to the values of seriousness and moral firmness; these readings condemn the two principal figures for their irresolution and softness, on the basis of a comprehensive ethical system. They recognize the right of the young to possess the longed-for *things*—but they tie this right to the values of dynamic action, work, seriousness, and moral firmness. The answers belonging to the third system do not pass any judgement, but connect the behaviour of the two principal figures with the social environment and social causes. This system is determined by the reading method of the "synthetic or sociological" type.

As opposed to the first too systems, this kinds of—analytical, not passing any judgement—interpretation had no corollary in Hungary. On the other hand, the analysis of the Hungarian material outlines two systems which are unknown to the French; one is characterized by unjustified optimism, an uncritical acceptance of the aims of Jerome and Silvie, a non-discovery of the contradictions, and the second by the condemnation of the characters on the basis of aggressive, moral criteria. According to the latter, the two principal heroes are shirkers, hippies, capitalists, and so on, who want to lead a good life in an impermissible way, without working. The Hungarian answers reflect fundamentally three kinds of mentality: "permissive egotism" based on a liberal way of thinking; "rational egotism" carrying also authoritarian features, and "moralistic egotism" of an authoritarian nature. This last mentality does not rely on some kind of community morality nor revolutionary ethics—readers do not demand social action from the two principal heroes—but merely consider do-nothingness impermissible.

The comparative analysis of the two materials throws light on very interesting tendencies and phenomena. Both materials contain an identical, comprehensive valua-

tion system—and this is fully comprehensible, since both countries are in the sphere of European civilization and culture. *Realism*, *duty*, and *seriousness* figure in both countries as fundamental values; these form one axis of the system of evaluation—i.e., the values ensuring social integration. Along the other axis, on the other hand, are placed the *rights* and *longings*—the demands made by the individual on society. The difference between the two countries is not here, but in the content of the "auxiliary axis:" these are formed in France by the value of *liberty*, and in Hungary of *welfare*. For some of the Hungarian respondents welfare is such a fundamental and primary value that they consider the longing of the main characters for goods and money completely normal and free of contradictions; and they find the renouncing of welfare incomprehensible. Only one-third as many Hungarian readers display a critical attitude towards the novel's heroes as French readers.

Although the authors do not stress the fact, it becomes obvious from their conclusions that the Hungarian reader did not sense the problem of the novel, the "trap" of the consumer society against which the young couple struggle. I quote the conclusion of the comparative analysis: "...in the eyes of the French the contradiction is in the—socially determined—situation of the characters, and is thereby inevitable; in the eyes of the Hungarians, on the other hand, it is to be sought *between* the more or less straying heroes and the outer world surrounding them which is free of problems, and is thus coincidental..."

I have already mentioned that the readings in Hungary of the two novels cannot be compared; they have resulted in entire by different systems. The reason is that readers read the French novel as a fable, and the Hungarian as a document. The readings of "Scrap Iron Yard" are differentiated primarily in respect of the relationship between the novel and social reality, in the different appraisal of the truth-content of the novel. The Hungarian reader—as opposed to the French reader who does not know or hardly knows the Hungarian conditions—takes up a passionate position on the extent to which Fejes's book reflects reality; the scale extends from resigned acceptance to an angry refusal to accept the truth of the novel, the questioning of its truth content. Consequently, the Hungarian answers do not contain so much judgements of value as "judgements of existence."

This reading—which was registered by the authors as a *political* reading as opposed to a "moralizing" reading of Perec's novel—was present also in the critical debates which occurred after the publication of the work. In the detailed description of the critical echo of the work, the authors show that criticism passed through three phases: the first was consternation over the world depicted in the novel, the second was where critics sought the *causes*—(legacy of the past, extremes of the characters)—and only finally, in the third phase, after years, was the novel analysed *as a text*. The Hungarian reader is at present at the second stage of criticism, and since the experts arrived at the third phase also only as the result of a process, "in principle we are not entitled to exclude the possibility that the average reader will also evolve further."

French readers too often referred to the Hungarian reality, but with an opposite objective; the dark world depicted by Fejes does not seem dark to them—in comparison to the Balkanic backwardness which is present in their stereotyped ideas about Hungary.

The empirical research has made numerous theoretical conclusions possible. Among these is the very important conclusion of the authors that reading—although it occurs as an individual act—is a *social fact*. And the text is but a "pretext:" "something which is not valid for its own sake, but which only has the function of making it possible that importance should be attributed to it, i.e., a pretext." In this way, the authors see

that the classical concepts of communication theory also need revision and re-interpretation, since the theory interprets modified reception—i.e., the case when the text, the message arrives from the sender to the addressee with a changed meaning—as an unsuccessful communication, which occurs owing to a technical error on the part of the sender, the channel, or the recipient.

Józsa and Leenhardt's book is telling and novel, not only for experts engaged in the sociology of reading and literature, both in respect of its method and final conclusions. We learn a lot about what the French and what the Hungarians are like. As far as our reading culture is concerned, the test does not result in a very good diploma for us Hungarians. The method of reading of the Hungarian reader—with his emotional attitude, his centring on the hero—has in essence stopped at an earlier, nineteenth-century model of the novel.

But the mentality structures discovered in the study are also food for thought. The bulk of Hungarian readers do not analyse but pass judgement; they do not consider the facts and phenomena, do not try to put them into a wider context, but judge them acceptable or unacceptable. It is perhaps not difficult to discover in the mentality of the French reader, who analyses, seeks cause and effect, and often refrains from passing judgement, that French spirit which is doubting and strives for purity and clarity.

In conclusion, I quote the last sentences of the book: "It is an undoubted fact that nations are different on the plane of certain values controlling the mentality and behaviour of the masses of people, but they must and can be one in their efforts to understand themselves. This is of vital importance for every nation."

"Two Capitals, Two Novels, Two Worlds of Value" represents a step forward not only in the narrower area of the sociology of reading, but provides important data also for this process of self-knowledge.

EDIT ERDŐDY

ARTS

KING MATTHIAS AND THE RENAISSANCE IN HUNGARY

Exhibition in the Hungarian National Gallery

An extremely important event in 1982 for those interested in Hungarian culture and art was the exhibition in Schallaburg, Austria, jointly organized by the Hungarian National Gallery and the government of Lower Austria.* In February 1983, the works returning home from there were exhibited in the show-rooms of the National Gallery in Budapest. This exhibition was important not the least for its size, the catalogue items running to 903; thus it was the most considerable of all displays so far of any period of early Hungarian art.

The beginnings and decline of the Hungarian renaissance

Of course, the importance of a display resides not only in the number of exhibits but in the period itself. Hungary was the first country to open its doors to the new style. Work in the renaissance style was already being done here in the second half of the fifteenth century, a time when the new style was not yet definitely prevalent in Italy where it had taken root in only a few places outside Florence. Where it had done so, this was due to artists invited from Florence (as was the case in Hungary, too). Considerable renaissance borrowings north of the Alps usually appeared only in the sixteenth century, and these through the mediation of North Italian art; at the same time in Hungary the renaissance motifs adorning King Matthias's Buda castle and Visegrád palace as well as the residences of important courtiers and of prelates, as a logical consequence of the early borrowings, were drawn from the best source, Florence itself.

It was not for nothing that the name of King Matthias (1458–1490) was so markedly emphasized; in a certain sense he personally deserved credit for the early advance of the Renaissance in Hungary. It was he who, through his strength of will and successful government, created internal peace and prosperity, and secured the steady revenues for the treasury which were indispensable to intensive artistic activity. In addition, he was a genuine renaissance ruler, the first in his kind north of the Alps; he knew precisely how important the arts were, and patronage of the arts was no mere sign of a love of pomp, nor complaisance towards the humanists used to sing his praises; for him it was conscious action aimed at the development of the country, at the enhancement of its prestige. He was assisted in all this by his second wife, a daughter of the king of Naples, Beatrice of Aragon, who was accompanied to Hungary by distinguished Italian scientists and artists, and who maintained lively contacts with Italian

* See *NHQ* 89.

intellectual life. Since the results were manifold and obvious, the historical consciousness of Hungarians—perhaps in consequence of the general decline soon after the king's death and of the Turkish conquests and the loss of independence—has preserved the memory of the reign of Matthias as that of a golden age; moreover he is the king of Hungary best known abroad and this distinction is indeed fortunate. However much the later Hungarians may have esteemed their former sovereign, such a large exhibition documenting in such detail the flourishing arts under his reign and in the period immediately following, has never so far been arranged. It is precisely in this the merit of the event lies.

The reader living far from Hungary—in England or still farther—may now wonder why Hungarians, if that period is so important, to them, have not so far gathered together the relevant items for an exhibition of this type. The best answer lies in the shaping of Hungarian history. The disastrous defeat at Mohács by the Turks in 1526 and their taking of the country's capital in 1541 were only the beginning. The central part of the country was occupied by the Turks for a century and a half; the northern and western parts which had avoided this fate came under Habsburg rule, and only the east, Transylvania and the adjoining regions remained Hungarian—under the sultan's control, at times tighter, at times looser. The continual wars had caused so much destruction and loss of human life that, when, with the passing of a century and a half, Turkish power and been driven back to the Balkans, the whole country came under the sway of the Habsburgs of Austria, and thereupon national independence was again out of the question. A national dynasty would obviously have carried out the protection, collection and restoration of the relics of the Hungarian nation's past other than it was actually done by the ruling dynasty which had its capital city, household and centre of interest outside the territory of Hungary. The buildings, especially the royal castle in Buda which had endured several sieges, had sustained so much damage that reconstructing its former life required a study of contemporary sources and archaeological research based on them in the same way as was necessary, for example, for ancient Athens and Rome; often even the groundwalls of the buildings could be uncovered only through excavation. Those treasures of renaissance art which were portable could hardly have been kept in Hungarian territory; they were either taken out of the country as plunder, gifts or confiscation or were destroyed.

The extent of this destruction and scattering is well shown by the fact that some followers of the hypercritical school of research found it impossible to give credence to the suppositions concerning the pomp of the period, the sumptuousness of the works of construction, and felt those were romantic excesses of national self-delusion. It can well be imagined how profound the research, how careful the examination of sources, how many archaeological excavations were needed in order to remove the doubts. Characteristically, what was probably King Matthias's best-known achievement and that most praised by the humanists of the age and most envied by foreigners, the Bibliotheca Corviniana, has also been so widely scattered that, apart from the volumes which most evidently form part of it and are marked with the king's coat of arms, its former holdings can be reconstituted only by arduous work. The number of the codices which once were part of it but are now in great libraries all over the world is fortunately growing, if not from day to day, at least from year to year, so that competent and fortunate scholars can recognize more and more manuscripts as having once belonged to the Corviniana stock. Taking all this into consideration, we should not be surprised that the exhibition could not be held earlier, that the research had to bear fruit for the exhibition to be held. This exhibition has

made it clear to the Hungarian and to the foreigner alike that the court of King Matthias and later the entire country had produced brilliant witness to the early flourishing of the Renaissance in Hungary.

The organizing principles of the exhibition

The appearance of the Renaissance and its spread over the territory of the entire country could be traced through a display of splendid creations at the exhibition. The organizers spared no effort to ensure that whatever could be moved was all gathered together here: one could see a few fine pieces, some of more than one metre, from the marble plates from the permanent exhibition at the royal castle in Buda and the summer residence at Visegrád. A few tombstones, larger than two metres, were represented by casts made of them: the replicas had been coated, for the sake of effect, with paint accurately reproducing the original surface of red marble, and the illusion became perfect. There were objects which could not be brought here in replica. To make up for their absence, they were presented in photographs or large back-light colour slides. As a solution it did not disturb, partly because the buildings could of necessity be represented only through photographs, and partly because this was ultimately an exhibition on cultural history rather than on art history: the reason for particular objects being shown was not only artistic value but especially their being characteristic for the period. An astronomical instrument, a letter, a manuscript and a genealogical table prepared for the less initiated viewers are obviously no works of art, nor do arms and wax seals always have artistic value. Consequently we did not have to forego entirely unobtainable objects which were unobtainable or available only for a short time. Through first rate reproductions they were displayed and set before the visitors and, what is still more important, they were included in the exhibition catalogue.

The catalogue is more voluminous and more richly illustrated than is usual in Hungary, though it falls far behind that produced for the previous exhibition in Austria. Those who devised the scheme of this exhibition clearly did not think the Hungarian public required a catalogue so complete in scholarly studies, detailed descriptions of the works and a bibliography on each item as the Austrian catalogue was. The scholarly descriptions attached to the exhibits displayed in Austria, the vast majority of them, were prepared by Hungarian experts who were thus not given such exposure in their native language. All that the too modest Budapest catalogue did was to serve as a reference to the exhibits and anticipate a more complete and more scholarly new catalogue in order to keep alive the body of knowledge amassed there. The information required can obviously be acquired in this manner, too, but it is needless to add how much more circuitous a way it is.

After this brief comparison between the two catalogues let us look at the two exhibitions. In fact, we are dealing only with one single exhibition as the difference between the exhibits displayed at Schallaburg and in Budapest is scarcely greater than the order one or two per cent. Probably it could not have been possible at all to reduce more the proportion of the inevitable changes, for there were many pieces of exceptional value obtained from the most diverse sources who were willing to part with their treasures for only a short time or just for a single occasion. The number of exhibits in Budapest was even increased by a few very important pieces of fine workmanship, apparel and jewellery. Most painfully missed were, however, the Corviniana codices now in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.

The exhibits were displayed essentially in chronological order. Presented at greatest length and in greatest detail was the royal seat, Buda; this, indeed, was the best way

to put in a proper light those early creations of the period between 1447 and 1490 which represent the very first examples of Italian renaissance art north of the Alps, and which stress the importance of King Matthias as its protagonist. This section included also the works of renaissance architecture built in the closer and more distant environs of the capital together with one of the most famous and most personal creations of the king, the Bibliotheca Corviniana.

According to research to date, the collection originally consisted of more than 2,000 volumes which covered the whole field of learning of the time. Of these codices 208 have so far been discovered, including the 37 volumes now together again in their former storage place in Buda castle; to be accurate, we have to add that a good number of those were not actually among the exhibits, only photographs or slides of them were shown there. They could be seen side by side either for aesthetic or scholarly reasons. This would have rated as an extremely significant cultural event (even if the exhibition had not had so many other objects of interest from the Hungarian Renaissance) if only for their presence. True, enjoyment was greatly hindered by the fact that the showcases containing the codices were shaded, but the experts rightly feared that continuous heavy lighting for several months would have a harmful effect on these immensely valuable and very delicate works of art.

The examples of goldsmith's work were perhaps still more attractive, although they were never held to be such rarities as illuminated codices. However a close and lengthy inspection of the great number of gold articles is an experience which no one would miss. The effect is conveyed by the gold vessels used for religious ceremonies and wordly feasts, as well as by croziers, necklaces, and buckles for robes, all of these complemented with the embroidered chasubles which add diverse colours to the glitter. An imposing pageant of the period's arts and crafts, where painstaking workmanship, a marvellous mixture of noble materials with the craftsmen's love of their work and taste brought about a very valuable and attractive result. It is curious and obviously not accidental that precisely this which attracts so much the viewers accustomed to today's more functional and more puritanical work.

The period after King Matthias

Matthias died in 1490, but the Renaissance in Hungary did not die with him. (This in itself is proof that the new style was not a personal whim, not a hothouse plant hardly capable of living here. Even if the personal part played by Matthias was doubtless decisive, it was by no means exclusive; his taste may have been in advance of his nation but it was not in conflict with it.) The number of building projects sponsored by the king declined, but the craftsmen released as a consequence spread their skills so much the more, and the new style became all the more the property of the entire nation. This, of course, took no little time, and the first two decades of the sixteenth century was a brilliant period for a particular genre of Hungarian Gothic art, the painting of winged altars. Although these were not represented at the exhibition, the room of the National Gallery where winged altars of the Late Middle Ages are displayed is next door to one of the show-rooms. (In fact, they were included in the catalogue as if they had been exhibited together with the other works placed at the disposal of the National Gallery exhibition and transferred to its show-rooms.)

Hungary was still able to follow the change of style in Italy from the quattrocento to the cinquecento, but the number of relics of more recent origin markedly decreased after the first two decades of the new century. The peasant revolt (1514) that

shook the whole country, the faction struggles that became ever more bitter, and the ensuing dissension that become ever more bitter, and the ensuing dissension created circumstances less and less inducive for the arts. The assault of the sultan's armies eventually happened and brought disaster near Mohács in 1526, even though it was not immediately followed by occupation. It was only fifteen years later that the Turks occupied the capital city and with it the central part of the country, yet the exhibits originating from that last period are already far more modest than the earlier ones. The pieces worth examining are mostly arms, the literary works are descriptions of wars, the emblems on a few letters patent of nobility issued at the time represent one or another Hungarian warrior fighting some Turk. All this makes us aware of the tremendous pressure being brought to bear upon Hungary from the south in that later period of the Middle Ages, and it surely heightens our respect for members of those generations who a few decades before, while aware of the contigency were able to achieve such a prodigious flowering of the arts.

A few more words about the arrangement: it did sit well with the importance and dignity of the Renaissance. Installation never became an end in itself, illumination was not meant for effect, it was the works themselves which were given pride of place. The exhibition in Austria, as a consequence of the smaller rooms, broke the display up into smaller ensembles, so that it looked somewhat more didactic; the larger rooms of the Budapest exhibition could better suggest the sensation of magnificence and richness. A great many things could be spaced out more widely; for example, the chasubles which not set out behind one another but side by side could evoke the pomp of the royal treasury and could be inspected more closely. The separation of sepulchres from one another certainly detracted from the impressiveness of the Budapest exhibition, but the figures of larger than life-size warriors in armour, standing side by side, would have irresistibly conjured up the image of an invincible phalanx.

It was a fine exhibition, pleasing the public and useful to the professionals. It is to be hoped that presentations showing other periods of Hungarian art in similar detail and applying a similar scholarly apparatus will soon take place. The success of this one may make it evident that such an exhibition can be arranged not only when foreign interest is aroused or when an obligation under a cultural agreement is to be satisfied.

JÁNOS VÉGH

ISTVÁN MÁCSAI'S STUDIO

István Mácsai (born 1922) had recently an exhibition in the Budapest Vigadó Gallery. The painter called it an exhibition from his studio; but even laboratory would be appropriate. Mácsai's panel paintings are a mixture of novecentism which has rediscovered the early renaissance, modern classicism, surrealism and hyper-naturalism; his technique attemps to attain the precision of the ancient handicraftsmen. This exhibition of many studies, drawings and paintings tried to convey the path towards the final composition.

"I wish to point out that the pictorial method wich is presented here is not the only true method, and nothing is further from my thoughts than proclaiming it as such"—said Mácsai in the catalogue. At first sight, this is somewhat startling: objectivity does not fit the stereotype of the

artistic temperament as we tend to imagine it. An artist should be as partial towards his own concept as a citizen towards his country or a lover to his loved. This objectivity, however, fits Mácsai because he tries to translate this balance to his works even if they then seem to be too cool or dry.

This ambition to be cool could be the consequence of Mácsai's formative years: thirty-odd years ago his master had been Aurél Bernáth the post-impressionist who luxuriated in fiery colours. Bernáth had a very strong personality and was a suggestive teacher, an artist who believed that his conception was the only way to salvation. Some of his pupils indeed were unable to throw off his influence for years. So Mácsai's cool objectivity emerged as a revolt against Bernáth's sunny and lyrical landscapes; similarly, he wanted to paint the city, and in particular Pest.

Budapest, like all big cities, is composed of parts of very different moods. In the old districts of Pest there are many shabby houses with large and mysterious courtyards, with dust-bins which are none too fragrant; to somebody born there these slum streets often composed of streets of such houses may recall many pleasant memories.

At first glance Mácsai seems only to paint accurately what he sees. This precision, however, is deceptive, it reminds one of the streets painted by the Belgian surrealists with the smoothness of their ripples and their grey shades. These houses are in fact the backgrounds of something mysterious, unusual and strange, something which is somehow connected with something as deeply human as sadness or transition. For instance, an old, brown and cheap wicker chair is standing beside a street-door. It is customary for old people to come to sit in the evenings in front of the houses in Pest, but this chair is empty now. What happened to the person who used to sit in it? And why did he sit there alone? The lonely and empty chair carries a tragedy in itself. So does the painting *Pesti halál (Death in Pest)* which depicts an old woman covered with wrapping paper on top of which somebody has put her shabby handbag; the fact of death is emphasized even more by the accurate rendering of everything around the visible part of the body: the pattern of the kerb, pulled-down shutter of the shop, the peeling poster on the wall or the insulation on the electric cable are painted with meticulous care. Everything is dead here, the melancholy mood of transition floats above the district which otherwise would seem a normal townscape.

These pictures of Pest form only part of Mácsai's œuvre to date, which is built successively with meticulous precision. The works which have the greatest impact although I, for one, do not consider them the most important—are versions of some classical pictures of the past, for example, Vermeer's compositions, with modern requisits. Vermeer's studio is in ruins but the artist continues to paint his female figure with the trumpet; in another picture Vermeer's model takes up the well-known pose with a cardboard-box for photographs and a ruler, displaying quite a bit of self-irony. Such paraphrases of well-known pictures are frequent in modern art but this is not a fruitful trend. Whether it is done by Picasso or Mácsai, it remains the painter's private affair and becomes interesting only to the extent that it helps understand those pictures which captivate the viewer.

There is a substantial amount of surrealism in these paintings turned towards the past; the same goes for those which revive the renaissance manner of composition by raising a suggestive and portly nude above the background of the landscape; or by painting a gothic cathedral rising like a vision among the houses of a small Hungarian village. This too is the artist's private affair, just as is the cardinal's purple in several versions. "Who knows how many pictures will be necessary until I solve the mystery of its red?"—said Mácsai in the catalogue; the viewer, however, is interested

only in mysteries already solved and not in the trial leading to solutions. The artist sensed this, this is why he called his exhibition 'Atelier'. The slightly melancholy portraits painted with much empathy suggest much more to visitors; so do the above-mentioned nostalgic townscapes, which have sometimes become historical documents on Budapest since they preserve the appearance of a condemned building more subjectivily than a photo. Even the notes are interesting, in which the painter described which shade of colour belonged to this or that form sketched in the world's museums.

By the way, the form of these notes recalls the works of concept art, just as the townscapes resemble hyper-realist work. Ten years ago many people considered Mácsai conservative; now they may think that he wants to make the most of one of the contemporary tendencies.

ANDRÁS SZÉKELY

ISTVÁN BOLDIZSÁR, THE LAST OF THE NAGYBÁNYA PAINTERS

István Boldizsár: An Album of His Paintings and Engravings (with an Introduction by Éva Bodnár). In Hungarian. Published by the artist, Budapest, 1983, 62 pp., with 65 colour plates and 63 black and white illustrations.

In 1842 a sharp-eyed young poet—Sándor Petőfi—saw a "peculiar pure blue haze... above a town and the whole valley", since that time the town, Nagybánya, has become an integral part of the history of Hungarian painting. In 1896, a good fifty years after Petőfi's discovery of the atmosphere special to that hilly country and the small medieval-looking mining town a few Hungarian painters, teachers and students who returned to their native Hungary from the Academy of Munich set up their easels in this small town. Their slogan was "after nature"; they wished to return to nature because they sensed that the academism of Munich had become untenable, the battle-scenes and literary illustrations dull, and the affected genre-pictures of "folk-life" untrue.

The artistic colony and school of Nagybánya* became the birth-place of Hungarian plein-air painting and impressionism, and the transmitter of Art Nouveau. Those painters in Nagybánya established a radically new course and theory on their work and the purpose and duty of art; their influence has remained alive for many generations and still survives in the much-quoted statements of their contemporaries.

The last of the Nagybánya painters, István Boldizsár, is 86; he continues to work with undiminished energy, in winter in his Budapest studio and in summer in the South-Eastern corner of the great Hungarian plain on a rented farm near his native town of Orosháza. He paints mostly landscapes and flowers and, true to the motto of Nagybánya, always after nature!

He was born on July 29th 1897 into a peasant family. The talented boy took his first inspiration from the world of the farms on the plain—a small picture painted at the age of 19 shows the gathering of storm clouds above the farm, only the haystack glows still with the sunbeams gathered during the day. This is his first surviving picture: it radiates that earnestness which, according to

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later monographies on the principles and life of that group, has always been a characteristic of the painters of Nagybánya. However, István Boldizsár arrived at Nagybánya after something of a detour. In 1916 he was drafted into the army and only the collapse of 1918 made it possible for him to arrive in Nagybánya as a "soldier, barefoot and in rags". There at last he could start learning to paint.

He also learned the technique of engraving: this genre became very important to him: he had periods when he worked only on engravings. With the meticulous care learned from the old Dutch and Flemish artists he depicted the slowly disappearing scenes of old Hungarian folk life, the tumbledown farms, the old stables, the disused wells—a peasant world in the process of disappearance. This fine new album published sixty engravings and sixty coloured prints of his paintings. On some of them he has sketched also the figure of a painter sitting on a camp-stool and bending over his drawing-block.

An interesting feature of his engravings is that they do not show "development" (which the teachers of aesthetics demand and art reviewers demonstrate). István Boldizsár drew the same dilapidated houses, the same tumbledown water-and wind-mills, the same poultry yards and maize barns on his copper-plates back in the thirties with the same Rembrandtian rapture. He had found his style immediately and he has remained faithful to it.

Nor has his style of painting wavered much. His start in Nagybánya was strong. We learn from this album, compiled by Éva Bodnár and from her text that István Boldizsár had also had a short French period in the first half of the thirties when his colours became lighter (a marvellous painting, *Spring Sunshine* with graceful furniture on a sunny veranda is the product of this period) but if we look back on his career we find that the real feature of his work is the use of stronger colours: the dark peaks, dramatic sky and ripe ochre yellow of the hillocks in the foreground of his *Felsőbánya in the Evening* painted in 1928 ...and among the plains landscapes of latter years painted, the row of peasant houses casting sharp lights and shadows along with the surprising patches of roughly drawn red garments (*Clothes Hung up to Dry* 1978); or again his evening scene in which the deep green leafage almost fills the deepblue sky (*Watering Cows*, 1980).

István Boldizsár also paints the Balaton—he was almost fifty when he started to paint the lake. Éva Bodnár quotes him: "After Nagybánya the Balaton gave me the most important scenic experience. I have been wandering up and down the lake's shores for many years, watching the colour of the water. And I have found much similarity in the colours of the Balaton and Nagybánya." In his paintings of Lake Balaton he transmits the experience of the thousand shades of blue and sunny yellows; the basic thesis and maxim of Nagybánya, delight in the beauty of nature, imbues all his pictures. The viewer is fascinated by the beauty of the water-blues and water-greens melting into each other in *Stormy Sunset on Balaton* (1959), and his *Bay of Siófok* (1958) seems to radiate all the heat of summer. The *Garden of Csobánka* (1948) is darker, heavier, more massive, and the *Wheat-Field Verge by Lake Balaton* (1966) spreads warm light.

For a few years now István Boldizsár has had a small museum in Orosháza. It began with an exhibition of his engravings in his native town in 1975: the town purchased the entire exhibition. Then in 1977 the artist donated to Orosháza 36 important oil paintings which he had retained for many years. As an answer to this gesture, the town restored an old merchant's house and in 1979 opened Orosháza's first gallery. Boldizsár donated another forty pictures to the gallery: some of them had been in the possession of art dealers and the artist bought them, others were still in his studio.

The latter collection contains a number

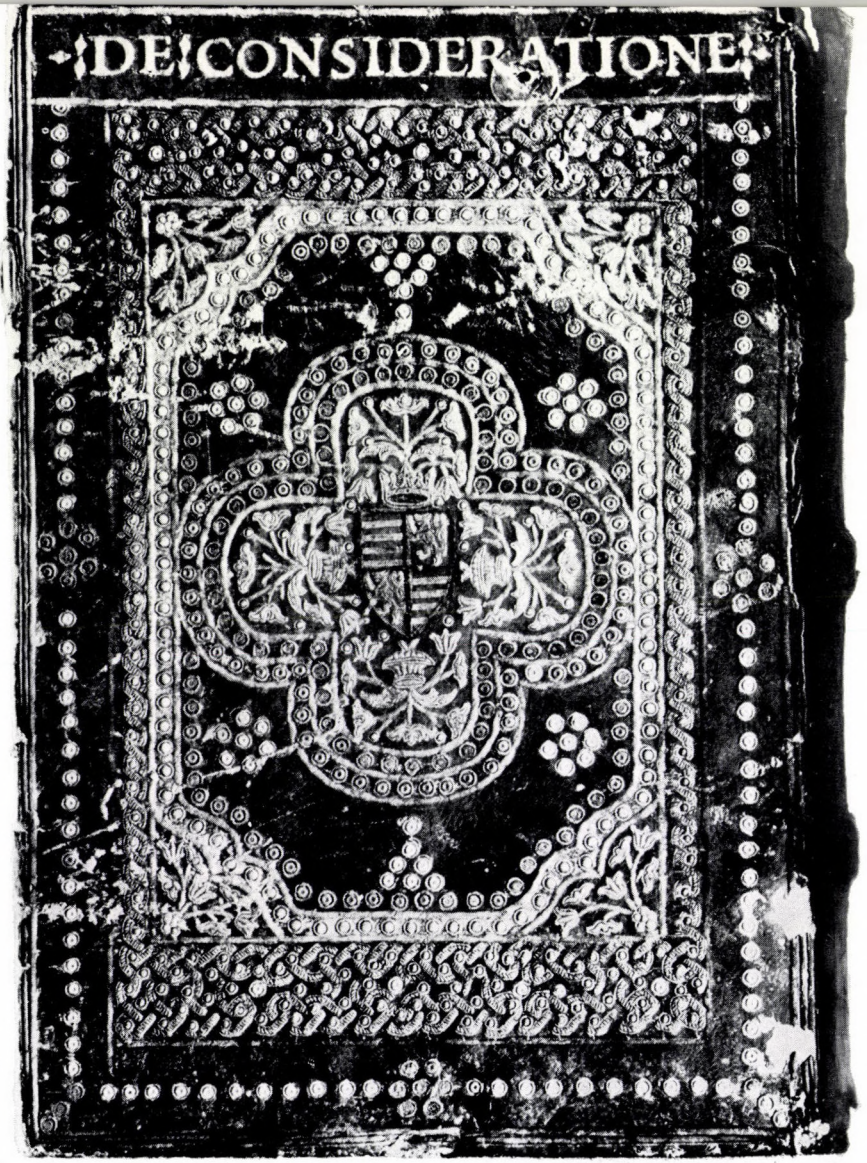
Tibor Mester

THE BÁTHORY MADONNA. 1526. 68×51×10 CM

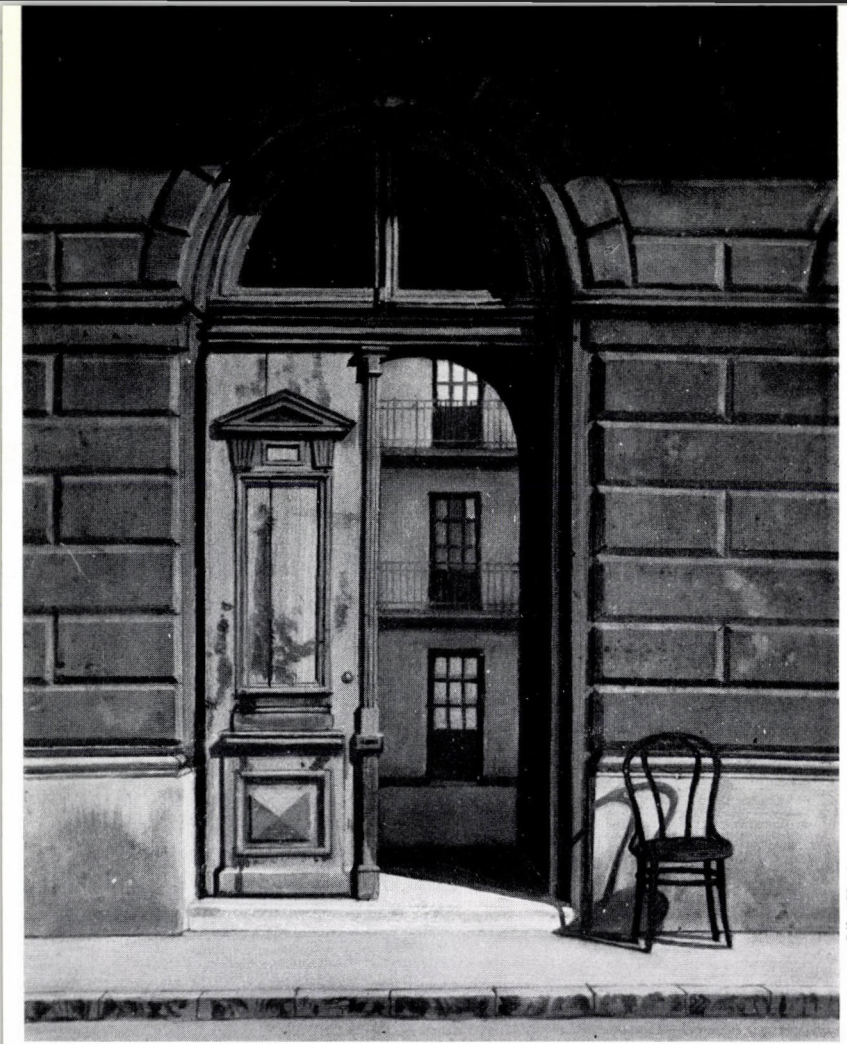
THE FUNERARY BRASS OF THE PALATINE IMRE SZAPOLYAI (COPY) 1487. 260×141×30 CM

Tibor Mester

DOOR-FRAME FRAGMENT FROM



BERNARDUS CLARAVALLENSIS: DE CONSIDERATIONE AD EUGENIUM.



Gábor Hegyi

István Mácsai: Front door in Budapest. Oil on wood fibre.
60×40 cm. 1982

Gábor Hegyi

István Mácsai: The model. Oil on wood fibre.
80×100 cm. 1979

Photos by the painter

István Mácsai: Fata morgana. Oil on wood fibre. 1982

István Mácsai: Housing estate (Óbuda) Oil. 30×40 cm. 1978

István Mácsai: Studio. Oil on wood fibre. 100×80 cm. 1980

István Boldizsár: Evening in Felsőbánya. 1928. Oil on canvas, 64×85 cm

Alfred Schiller

István Boldizsár: At the brook. Nagybánya. 1941. Oil on canvas, 79,5×101 cm

István Boldizsár: The shore at Balatonföldvár, 1969.
Oil on canvas, 80×100 cm

Alfred Schiller

István Boldizsár: The Siófok bridge. 1953. Oil on canvas,
60×80 cm

Alfred Schiller

István Boldizsár: Watering the cow. 1980. Oil on canvas, 70×90 cm

of portraits—Boldizsár was a celebrated portrait-painter in his youth; he painted contemporary political figures, fellow artists (his portrait of the painter Béla Iványi-Grünwald from 1940 is a memento of the man of intellect in hard times). His first flower-pieces from 1975, 1976, and 1977, his deep-glowing gladioli, exuberantly red poppies and burning yellow sunflowers are also in the gallery—some of them have been reproduced in the album. These still-lifes arouse the appreciation of even those critics who do not like the genre or believe that bouquets in vases are outmoded. All the fire of summer on the Great Plain is present in these late works of an old man; the glowing colours emerge at the touch of his sure and bold brush.

MÁRIA EMBER

ROUND THE GALLERIES

János Pirk, Ilona Csikós, Mátyás Oláh, László Fekete, Mária Geszler

Szentendre, the artists' town near Budapest, has often featured in these pages as the home of the old and the living avant-garde. Now the Szentendre Gallery has mounted a retrospective exhibition of a non-avantgarde Szentendre painter, János Pirk, on the occasion of his 80th birthday. An interesting fact, the postimpressionistic show was initiated by avantgarde-minded young painters, sculptors and art historians of Szentendre, who also have been, to use the sports term, its most zealous fans. Nostalgia has become the rage—there is something in the air which makes trends of yesteryear exciting again. Of course, what is decisive in the attraction exercised by Pirk is the unbroken quality of his oeuvre, stretching over six decades, the striking power of his works, which when seen thus together, becomes even more intensive than when presented singly. (Sadly one more often encounters the opposite.) Let me add that the painter's imposing, modest, withdrawing disposition is at least as attractive. And what adds further to this is—although not something usually mentioned in a survey—that this display is a summary to a long and blameless life.

An analysis of Pirk's work by István Réti, a classic of Hungarian painting, who died forty years ago, in the flap of the catalogue is itself a rarity. János Pirk's great-grandfather was a serf; the orphaned child was brought up by his field-guard grandfather. "After school," he writes in his autobiography, "I was always put to some peasant work. We went to make hay, to gather it, and whatever else happened to come about, we even went for day labour." Pirk's skill in drawing was soon discovered and he became a pupil of Réti, both in the artists' colony and at the Academy of Arts. In the 1930s he was given scholarships to visit Paris and Rome. After the war he moved to Szentendre and lived there in poverty. Some thirty years ago, when I wrote my first article on him, he was still going out a job by day. But over the decades, recognition has reached him, he has received prizes, decorations, and a studio apartment. He has been working in silence, his modesty restrained him from appearing frequently in print, and he rarely brought himself to exhibit. All that makes the large Szentendre show twice as valuable.

Pirk's pictures cover a narrow scale, his peasant genre pictures keep returning strubbornly over the past sixty years; his fundamental experience has been the old way of peasant life, but he does not approach

his portrayals with any sociological intent, or with any form of popular romanticism or any peasant pride. In fact everything he has done adds up to an autobiography. His characters and scenes are historical. Nowadays we use no oil lamp, the barefooted reaper with a scythe has become a rare sight, and the seed is no longer sown in the old manner. The sower is one of Pirk's prevailing subjects. "My first drawing," he remembers, "was of a man sowing wheat; at the time I had not even heard of Millet. This subject still gives me no peace, I have tried again and again to reformulate it as if it were pursuing me. But it is not so much the sower as such than man's reviving hope, and in colour, the dazzle."

The sower, a living parable from the New Testament, walks with dancing steps, in a Baroque manner. To cite just some of the titles where the subject appears, *On the Ploughland* (1938), *The Wheat Sower* (1960), *Sower Late in the Autumn* (1965), *Sunrise in the Fields* (1980). The figure of the sower is always returning, as does that of the man with the scythe this male figure crouching on the ground half reclining, with his legs crossed, in whose lines the painter recalls the pastoral life and presents a perfect example of linear and pictorial anatomy—in the way he draws this difficult, undrawable posture.

His group compositions, *Card-playing Peasants* in the light of an oil lamp, *Remembrance of 1922* (1980), of the same accent, and *Peasants on a Winter Evening* (1970), carry the dynamism of mannerism, despite their grave presentation.

I have said of his village pictures that they add up to an autobiography. His series of self-portraits are more ofen expressions of the same. The huge studio window always appears to the right of the lean, fine-featured painter, with the tools of his trade in hand. (Selfportrait, 1930, 1938, 1942, 1950). Of course the exhibition presents a great many other canvases too, figural compositions, interiors, landscapes and townscapes, always of Szentendre, yet it is not variety I esteem most highly in this oeuvre, but the recurring stereotype. The pictures which treat the same subject are always different, Pirk never copies himself. His artistic ethic would not allow self repetition.

In way of counterpoint let me mention two typical Pirk self-portraits as well. One, *Self-portrait in Bowler* (1932) is virtually of a dandy, and the other, from the 1930s, a scherzo: *Roman Study for a Picture* (1932). In the latter the painter dons a purple cassock with an abbé's hat and a prayer-book in his hand.

The approaching date of the exhibition seems to have animated the painter. And what other novelty could he have produced in way of a closing touch for the last room, than another, 1983 sower, *(For Our Bread)*. The picture exhibits the same impetus, the same dance-step as before, with the only possible difference that while expressive effects in the past merely served as "subsidiary material", as it were, in the post-impressionist canvases, by now they have assumed the leading role. Patches of chrome yellow, golden yellow and orange flash against a dark cobalt blue background, with the upper part suffused by a virtually otherwordly light. First I thought Pirk had used some fluorescent paint unfamiliar to me, but I was gravely mistaken. It is traditional oil, only the adjoining of colours produces these blazing effects, from the hand of the same Pirk who never aimed at bravura. The mental clarity has now brought him near to a solution to his pictorial thesis.

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There is something in the air, I wrote in connection with the warm reception given to Pirk's show, and ever since a number of artists have seemed to respond to the challenge of the motto, *returnons à la peinture*, including Ilona Csikós and Mátyás

Oláh. Csikós decided on an exhibition after a silence of many years, bringing a mature, rounded off cycle of a definite profile at the Fészek Artists' Club. The fact that such a style, such a pictorial trend has so far not yet emerged in Hungarian painting makes this show all the more thrilling. Even if the delay has been long, Csikós has supplied a missing link, creating, one may say, a Renaissance. With her cunningly conceived segments of suburban subjects she has in fact resurrected classical surrealism though there is no absurdity in her panels whatever. Indeed, she adds scarcely anything to her selected spectacle. Her compositions seem like mysterious, frightened nightmares, yet everything in them is everyday reality. She is fond of simple, shabby districts, of modest houses, courtyards, lower middle-class and workers' quarters.

She is always graphic, yet not ostentatiously so. She uses restrained colours; she depicts atmosphere, but not as it appears to one's eye, since this she feels would be deception, estranging her from her own message. Her atmosphere, a kind of rarefied space, is deliberately of a pearly tone, a Csikós *sfumato*, filtering the landscape, the objects and town scenes. At first sight I could relate her with a *C. S. Lowry*, who is obviously unknown to Csikós, but then I brushed aside the thought. In Ilona Csikós there is less social impulse, while Lowry has never sought for the miraculous element which is always present in Ilona Csikós.

Human-faced black birds (falcons? eagles?) in a snowbound landscape peep through the window (*Outside and Inside*, 1979), the heads and wings of stone angels just out from behind a stone wall in *Cemetery* (1978), as they do in every graveyard, and yet the presentation is mysterious and enigmatic, even the red bush in the foreground, painted with extre plasticity, has its own significance. *Defence* (1979) shows the courtyard of a plain, shabby single-storey house, with a partition wass on one side, a shed opposite, and two rows of rose-trees in the garden, with the flowers carfully covered in nylon bags. It is night, but the moon throws its light over this unfathomable, strange scene set in a deep perspective. *The English Sorceress's House* (1978) is a two-storied white house in a factory district; here too it is presumably night, but we still see everything, and the realistic light even stiffens the forms. Beside the house there is a small wrought iron gate, and nothing else. I wish I knew why I consider this to be statutory surrealism. Perhaps because in this the painter has turned the sound volume right down, which makes the background music invalid.

I asked Ilona Csikós about the picture. She told me she had come across the building and begun drawing it. The owners of the house noticed her and asked her to show them the painting when completed. When she went back to show them the canvas, they told her they had bought the house twenty years before from a sorceress. What is really strange in the picture is that it portrays the house as it looked two decades earlier, a state that no longer exists, what it looked like at the time of the wise-woman. In other words, reality is missing from the canvas, all that which the new owners have added to it.

*

The young Mátyás Oláh has returned to tradition in both subject and manner. His realm covers the Middle Ages, the requisites of Romanesque and Gothic architecture, and he clads his figures, whenever they are not timeless, in medieval secular and ecclesiastic garments. He is self taught but draws with facility, and is fully at home in the techniques of painting and of materials. Oláh has brought back the process of glazing; I would term this trend, close to surrealism, a new sensitivity. In the Óbuda Cellar Gallery one

first takes note of the panel *At the Time* (1978). He uses glazing in this green, light green, light brown, iridescent painting as well—a rocky hill-side with stone steps, a pine, and imaginary figures, including children—altogether thirteen human figures. At first one sees it as a picture in one plane, but a second look reveals it perspective in the regular division of foreground, middle distance and background. It would be also mistaken to see the composition as a montage, as the action takes place in superimpressed strips. It is and it is not a montage, as the placing of all the seemingly accidental elements and figures can in fact be justified in the picture. The huge panel of *Palace*, with its Gothic architecture, and historical figures, is straight new Romanticism itself. Built out of a greyish and pinkish dawn, the composition is scarcely visible, rather conjectural, and I think it cannot be photographed. However many archaic elements it contains, one still feels it to be utterly contemporary.

Oláh's drawings encompass a similar world of thought—I would call these usually large pieces pseudo-abstract, if such a concept existed. The drawings look like units of abstract patches, but stepping up near to them one sees the depiction, the action and the figure. They are crayon and pastel drawings, employing a most original technique. Oláh pastes sheets one upon the other, crumples them, then irons them; he rubs and chafes the layers of charcoal and pastel he applies, fixes them, then scours the picture and finally fixes it again. All these processes bring forth that singular effect of his drawings that is hard to reproduce in words, it must be seen.

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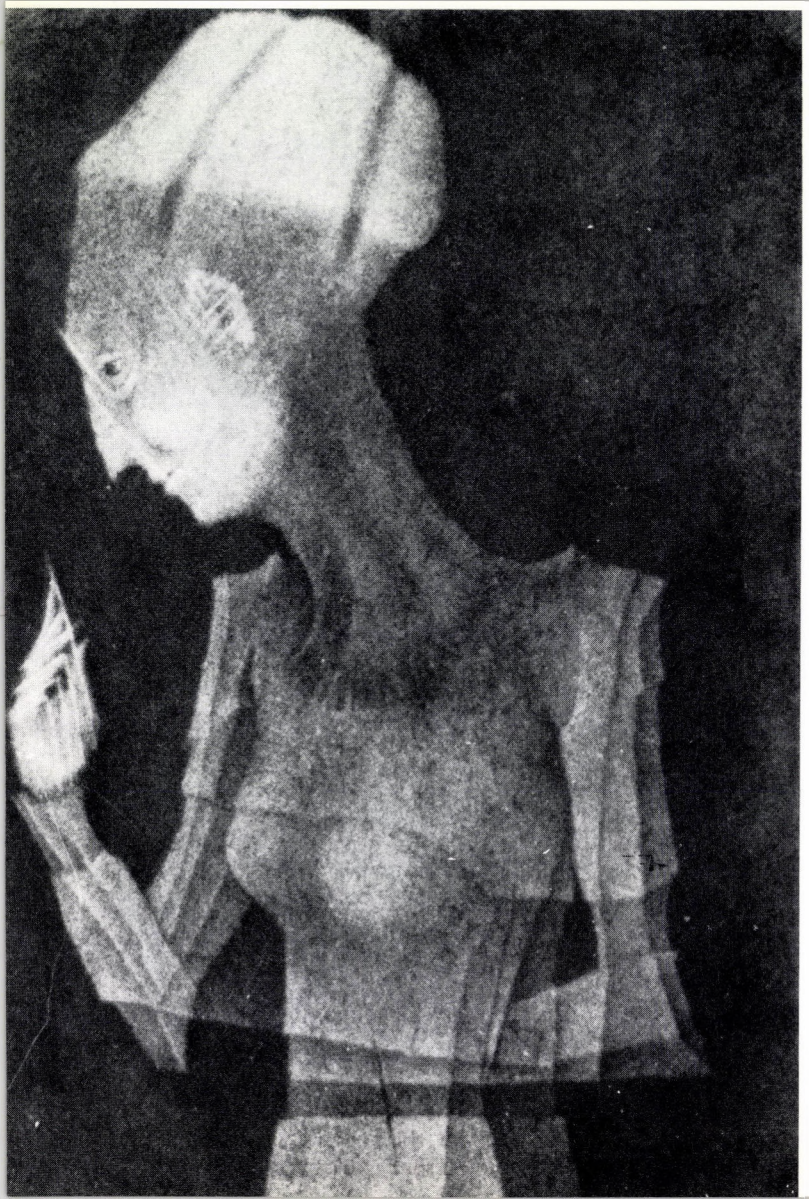
The two young potters László Fekete and Mária Geszler, have been brought together less by their ideas than the fact that both were awarded silver medals at the International Ceramics Biennial in Vallauris, France, in 1982. In the preface to the catalogue of their exhibition in the Dorottya Street Gallery, Imre Schrammel, their former teacher at the academy, welcomes this initiative of mounting exhibitions in Hungary for artists who have won prizes abroad.

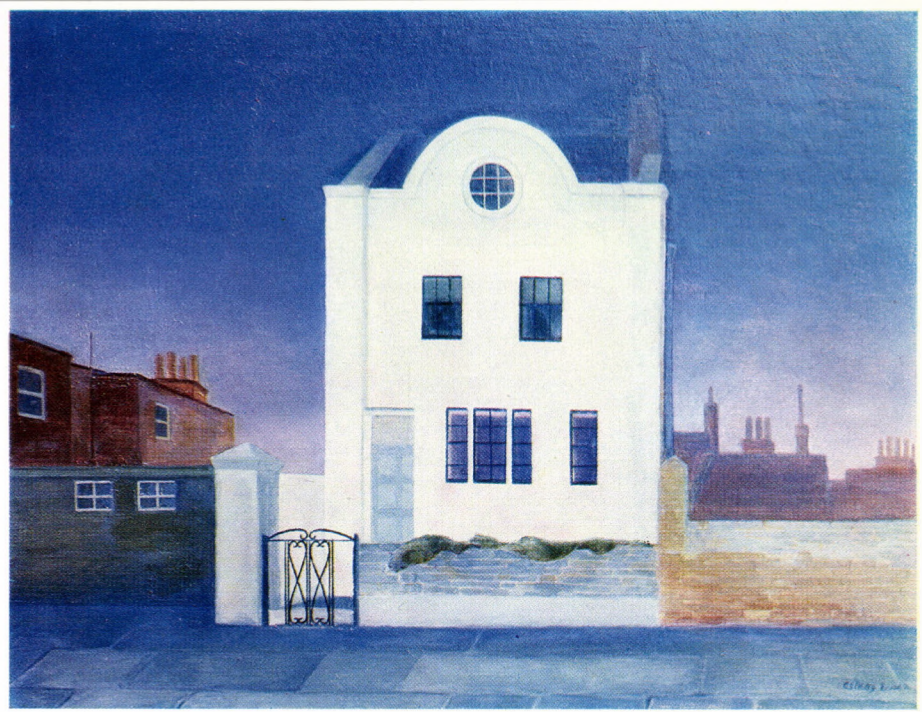
Fekete has terminated his earlier highly successful terracotta work, prepared in a most complicated manner, resulting in organic forms which are on the level of fine art even if they happen to have the shape of a vase. These works have already been reviewed in these pages*; now the artist is only exhibiting some of them, one of them with a beautiful plan in it. I found one of the entries in the visitors' book rather strange: it said that these vases are in complete opposition with the flowers in them, indeed they expressly destroy each other. I am of just the opposite opinion—what is so wonderful in Fekete's ceramics is that they are so organic that one virtually feels them to be the continuation of the plant.

His new works on show indicate, in an understandable reaction, one that is radically different, definitely figurative, strongly contentual, intellectual. Fekete, who is obsessed with precision and minute detail, now produces disintegrating, sketchy, indeed fractured pieces, with the same deliberation as that in his organic period. He uses red glaze on the ceramic fragments of live masks and hand impressions, thus communicating a very human content; his other composition intends to fight against terrorism. The largest piece by him on display is *Peep Show* (1982). It is a conical heap of bricks, 69 cm high, with a flowerpot upside down on the top, almost as if it were a hat. The bricks, some broken, were drawn on and glazed and finally, fired again. The painting is deliberately rough-and-ready, somewhat like the graffitti children scrawl on a fence. A red light radiates through the wide gaps between the bricks clearly seen in the repro-

* *NHQ* 60



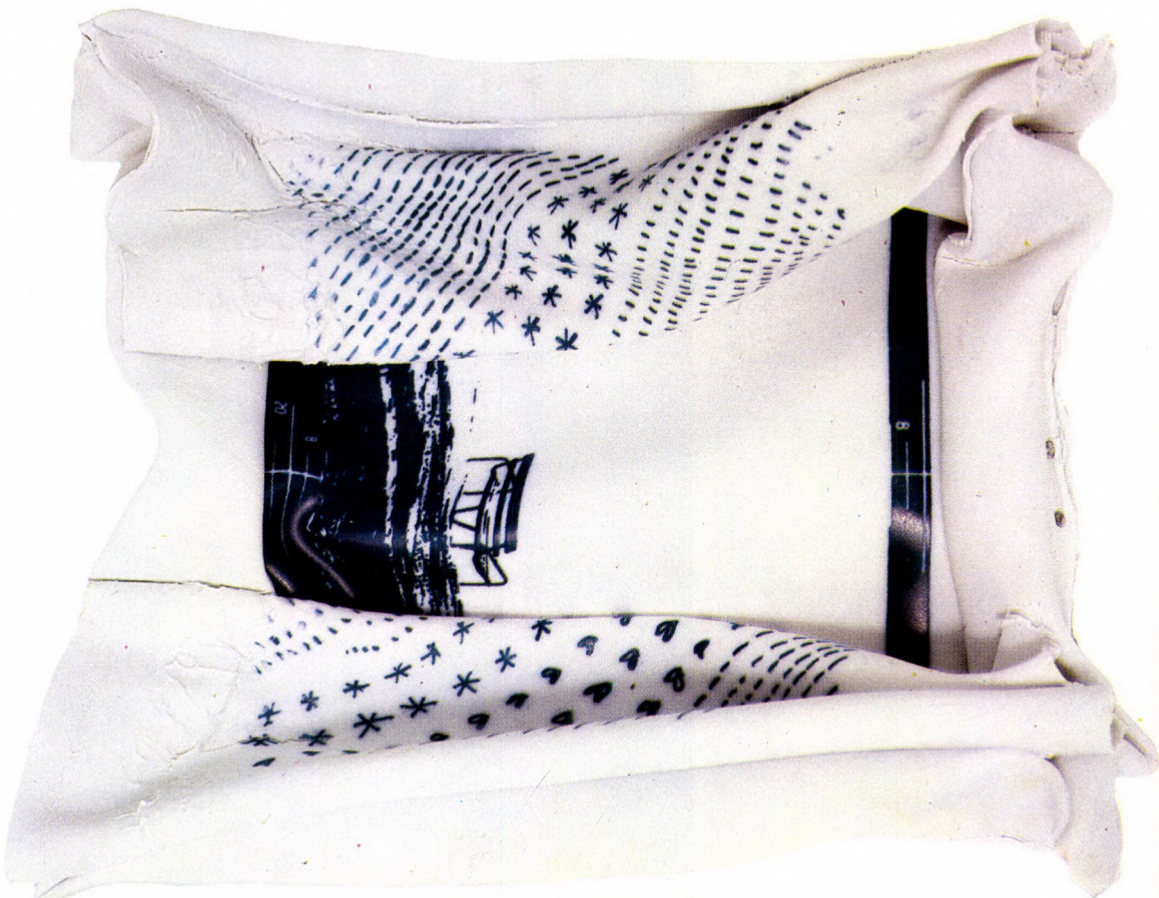
Mihály Réz



Ilona Csikós: The house of the english witch.
Oil. 60×80 cm. 1978 *Mrs. Gábor Dienes*

Mátyás Oláh: An alchimist Lady. 1979

Imre Juhász



Béla Ilovszky

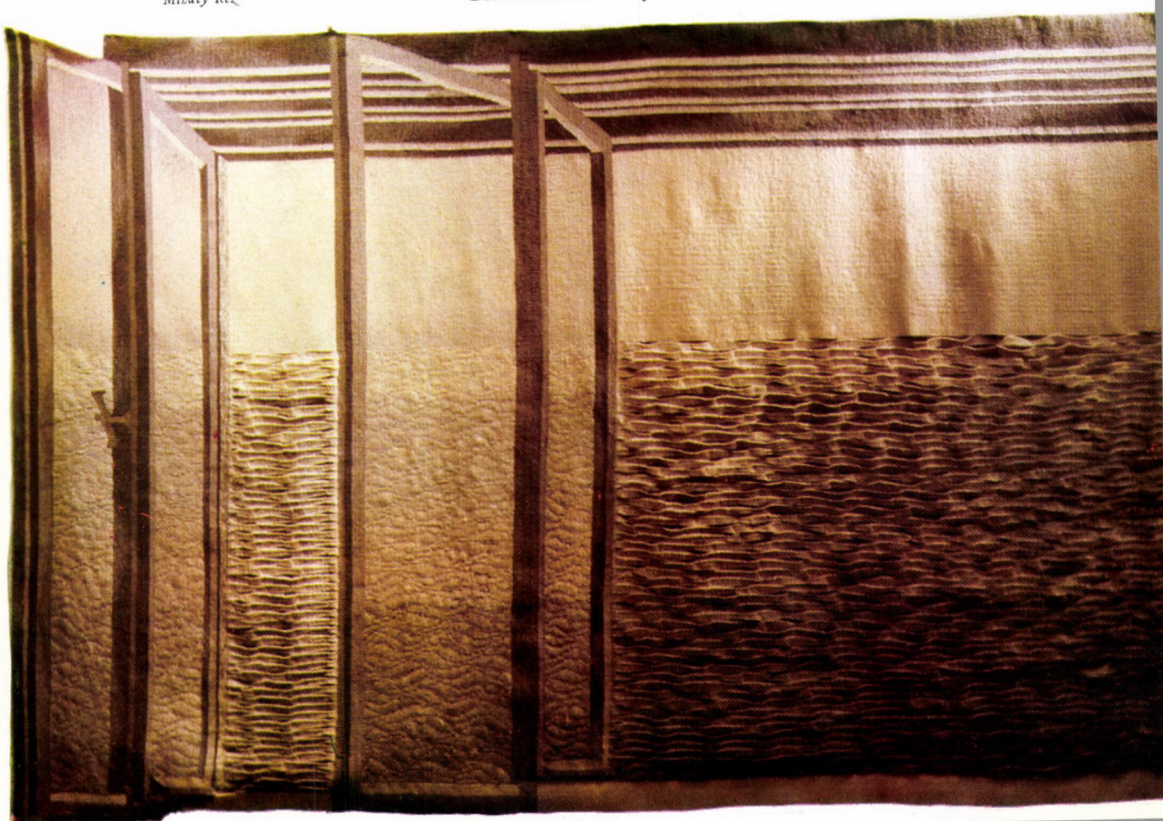
KLÁRA SZENTIRMAI: JONAH, TAPESTRY

KLÁRA SZENTIRMAI: ANCIENT HUNGARIAN DIRGE, TAPESTRY

GABRIELLA HAJNAL: SZÉCHENYI, TAPESTRY. 1981

Mihály Réz

GABRIELLA HAJNAL: NORTH VIEW, TAPESTRY. 1976



duction. One of the bricks bears the inscription "Peep", and by peeping through the gap beside it is to be seen a naked woman, cheap, wretched, pitiable china nude of the type sold in fairs. Beside the cone of bricks there is a palm print, a palm demanding the entrance fee from the peepers. Unhappily the china doll does not show in our picture, but never mind, the brick edifice, in its structure, architecture and mass, stands as an independent plastic work even without the joke.

While Fekete's basic character is to build, Mária Geszler's is leaning towards gravity. She imposes on her material, porcelain, a posture which is alien to it, by creating textile-forms out of this rigid material—draperies, or indeed a female figure looking *Through the Curtain* (1983)—all of china; without an illustration it is difficult to describe what she makes porcelain do. Her pictures are flanked by pairs of curtains, as it were, the textile pattern on the porcelain fabric usually consists of photographs imposed by mesh-print. The ethereal china and the realistic photo together bring forth the harmony of a singular, conceptual, or rather absurd contrast, as in *Solitary Bench* (1982) and *Gift Roses* (1983). Besides their quality of playful irony, these pieces are beautiful whether on display or in a domestic setting. Their colours are determined by the heat they are fired at—Geszler is fond of brownish and blue tints. What I find particularly witty in these illustrated fabrics is that while these porcelain photographs could also have been imposed on the traditional panels, in that case they would simply imitate a painting. Geszler use of this pseudo-textile, makes everything more metathetical, more complex.

The series of draperies is complemented by a one of half-length male and female portraits, sculptures, idols even. These too are porcelain and as ethereal as the textiles.

JÁNOS FRANK

THE OLD AND THE NEW IN TEXTILES

Exhibitions by Klára Szentirmai and Gabriella Hajnal

The sixties saw a new era begin in textile art across the world. Plain textiles were replaced by what are called space textiles which have a plastic effect. More and more work in textiles could be called coloured abstract sculptures. You could walk round these forms through which their creators experimented with the new opportunities for shaping textiles, from strings dangling in space to small-scale buildings. The chief protagonists of the new style numbered among them the leading figures of the Lausanne Biennial, this large international review which gave a new impetus to the whole genre.

Besides the Americans and Japanese, it was the Poles who played a leading part in Europe; Hungarians followed them at some distance. Following the example and teaching work of the gobelin artist Noémi Ferenczy*, there was an enormous tapestry cult, which meant that the new concepts met with considerable resistance. But space-textiles were gaining ground by the mid-sixties; indeed, a national exhibition in 1968 demonstrated the decisive turn in their favour.**

The seventies brought the development of these new textiles, everywhere. It soon emerged, however, that the possibility inherent was not unlimited and, more important, that it was difficult to find for them a place in everyday life. Textile sculptures

* *NHQ* 75.
** *NHQ* 56 and 63.

were not suitable for a museum or a public building: they became dirty very soon and fell apart easily. In the absence of a real function they could no be used as practical objects either. These considerations have certainly played a part in the present trend when the old techniques and half-forgotten functions of textiles are again in the foreground.

If we compare the new productions with those of four of five years ago we can see clearly that old and new techniques have interpenetrated: two exhibitions of the first half of 1983 have shown us the latest achievements.

Klára Szentirmai, who is relatively unknown in Hungary let alone abroad, presented her works in the Helikon Gallery. For many years she has produced very little; her family life has not left her much time for creative work. So, rather unexpectedly, she has exhibited the material of a mature artist. Visitors are taken by a rare mood of beauty and exceptional fineness: if the word were not so banal I would say there is magic in the hall. Klára Szentirmai works with perfect ease and a type of care which can usually only be acquired through working continuously for years.

Her continual presence shows itself in many things. The rustic surface of her reliefs signals unambiguously the assimilation of the achievements of the textile space-age: the finest pieces show that she has been able to utilize the different fabrics and nuances of natural-coloured material, that she has made use of the diverse possibilities of expression offered by the material. This variety has, however, not led to slackness since the unifying factor is style: their general feature is a form of archaization. The artist has revived early medieval decorativity and impact. Her small reliefs would make excellent ornaments on the walls of a home or even on book covers, all the more as genre and style conform to their theme: some are icons, some are scenes from the Bible.

However strong her links with the past though, the artist does not historicize. Her world of themes and forms reaches down to medieval roots. This enables her to represent the first Hungarian poem, the *Ó-magyar Mária siralom* (The Old Hungarian Lamentation of Mary) with the force and mood of a Pietà representation. Szentirmai sews her saints with ordinary packing-thread and bits of cheap linen as a sign that she does not wish to recall the silky and colourful world of chasubles. Her imagination does not draw inspiration from the splendid pomp of the church ritual but from the stories and legends in the Bible. She evokes long-forgotten, old tales in a racy language in such a way that their naturalness, humour and bold turns make them modern.

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Gabriella Hajnal studied painting and graphic art at the Budapest Academy of Fine Arts but she has made herself a name as a textile artist. As do many other excellent artists, she also designs tapestries. Although not a pupil of Noémi Ferenczy, she follows the example of her great predecessor in her extreme care for detail.

In the sixties Gabriella Hajnal distinguished herself with brightly playful and charmingly graceful compositions whose subjects and mood could be described as synonyms for harmony and *joie de vivre*. Every single piece, every line in her work reflected an ambition to create beauty in the world which surrounds man.

After traditional tapestries, she worked on space textiles for a short time as can be seen from a few of the works. In one exhibition she showed a stock of enormous size, in another, she furnished the whole hall with sheets and ropes. Her latest show in the Vigadó Gallery tells us that she has since reverted to gobelins; she was invited to exhibit in the last Lausanne Biennial. Although her technique is traditional,

Gabriella Hajnal's compositions are far from being so.

The works with angels still evoke the well-known Hajnal but most of her pieces reveal a new thinking. The shapes of nature dominate in her newest works—their subjects are trees and rivers rather than human shapes. What is even more important is that the trees and rivers do not appear as something before our eyes. When she looks at a landscape through a window she does not record mountains, hills, or fields but composes stylized waves into her works. For Gabriella Hajnal nature is a mysterious liane penetrating everything: the tree and the river become one so that we do not know whether what we see before us are the branches of a tree or of a river.

This fluidity is her essential artistic statement. Gabriella Hajnal suggests that things flow into each other, that we see only the surface and understand only a fragment.

She is far from saying, however, that the surface or the fragment are not interesting. Indeed, Gabriella Hajnal wants to show the beauty of detail and make us realize the presence of a vast ocean in a single drop. Earlier she used to illustrate scenes from the Bible but now she quotes lines from it in English and Hungarian on her tapestries. There is no picture, the composition is the text itself. After a moment of wonder, one sees that Gabriella Hajnal has chosen her theme well. The Bible is a book which is not read continuously from beginning to end, and not necessarily in the order of its events. With these works mockingly called "text-isles" (after the French pun "text-île"), she demonstrates the attractiveness of detail and the vitality of old texts and technique.

JÓZSEF VADAS

A HUNGARIAN STAGE-DESIGNER OF THE BAUHAUS

Andor Weininger still active at the age of 85, lives in the United States, far from his native Hungary, and unjustly neglected by historians of modern art. He left Hungary in 1921 in the company of some other young people from Pécs: the little-known painter Stefan Henrik, Johan Hungo, Cačinović, and Farkas Molnár, the architect. They were the group which set out to the Bauhaus of Weimar.

They were attracted to Germany, instead of the Technical University of Budapest, where Weininger had studied earlier, by the atmosphere of free creation, a novel system of study that differed from those in all of other academies. In line with the declared programme of the Bauhaus, they too were seeking for order, wishing to realize it themselves in the arts after the chaos they had lived through. They formulated their typically Bauhaus search for synthesis programme in 1922, studying among young artists and artisans from various countries, the border regions of Central Europe. The Hungarian journal *Út* in Újvidék demonstrated the cooperation of this group. Their watchword was KURI, the Hungarian acronym for their principles constructive, utilitarian, rational, international. After the analytics of -isms, they committed themselves to the new synthesis of constructivism, to the interaction of art and technology and of the various branches of art.

Coming from a German-speaking family in Baranya County, Weininger found it particularly easy to adapt himself. He followed the *Vorkurs* of the Swiss master, Johannes Itten, from November 1921, and then he became active in the wall-painting studio between 1922 and 1925. Not did he merely explore the fundamental rules of colour and designing, but he

emphasized the power of artistic subject, experience, intuition. For this reason he left the Itten Academy in 1923. His successor was the technically inclined László Moholy-Nagy. The principles, colour and contrast theory of Itten, and his search for the connections between music and the colours undoubtedly captivated Weininger. His love of music, inherited from his father who was the second organist of Pécs cathedral, also helped. Weininger himself also admits modestly to being "a musician in spite of himself." His attachment to music was of help in leading him along the special path of abstract art and towards harmony among the arts. Colours are not just vehicles of expressive power corresponding to emotions, moods; he also looked for harmony, in the interrelationship of colours.

It is understandable, therefore, that the Weimar works of Andor Weininger, the painter of impressionist landscapes in Hungary in 1916–17, were colour-chords made up of 24–25 units. He filled upright quadrangular forms with clear colours in rectangular units. Rhythm came from the various colours, the units formed by varying the number of the small quadrangles of identical colour side by side. The artist built up these compositions through the contrast of primary colours. Between black and white, however, other colours, chosen by the artist, particularly the complementary colours—purple, orange, green—also found room in the variations on primary red, yellow, and blue-coloured squares. The relation of the squares to one another creates the impression of depth on the viewer. This illusion of varying depth on a flat ground results in a further impression, the dynamism of space. This was the foundation the constructivists built upon. The Dutch neoplasticists related only the primary colours in strict quadrangular system. The Vienna picture-architectures of Lajos Kassák and Sándor Bortnyik used clearer colours, and more diversified yet strictly geometrical forms to build on the white sheet of paper.

The experiments Weininger began in 1922 are closer to the Dutch. The large-size compositions reconstructed in recent years on the basis of the small sketches kept by the artist—one of which is in the Janus Pannonius Museum, Pécs, and another donated by the artist in 1983 to the Hungarian National Gallery—can also be considered as stained-glass window designs. Space formed by coloured geometrical surfaces led to the temporary linking of the Bauhaus of Germany and the Dutch constructivist group, which took place from 1921 on, the year in which Weininger began his studies in Weimar.

Weininger both realized and developed the theatrical practice of constructivism. Using mechanical geometric puppets among stage elements built in pure units of colour, he was even then aspiring to use movement beyond the spatial effect of the colours. It is difficult to ascertain how much the 1920–21 *Gestaltendes Schauspiel* of the Hungarian-born Vilmos Huszár, one of the founders of the Dutch De Stijl constructivist group, was known to his contemporaries. His two robot-like puppets, which we know from the De Stijl publication, speak the abstract language of geometry and mechanics. This the "moving architecture" Weininger envisaged on the Bauhaus stage. The stage work was directed by Schlemmer, who was primarily interested here also in the relationship of man and space. As against the theatre of drama built on speech, he wanted to create a theatre of spectacle, of visual happenings independent of any sort of literature. His "figural cabinet" is witness to this. He looked for the stage equivalent of autonomous picture creating in the mechanized movement of human figures, bodies formed by geometric abstraction. Andor Weininger's *Revue* was born in the same spirit in April 1923. This abstract, mechanical play was built on colour and movement relations and was the result of the few months he worked at a Hamburg studio theatre. Its graphic variation can be studied at the Hungarian

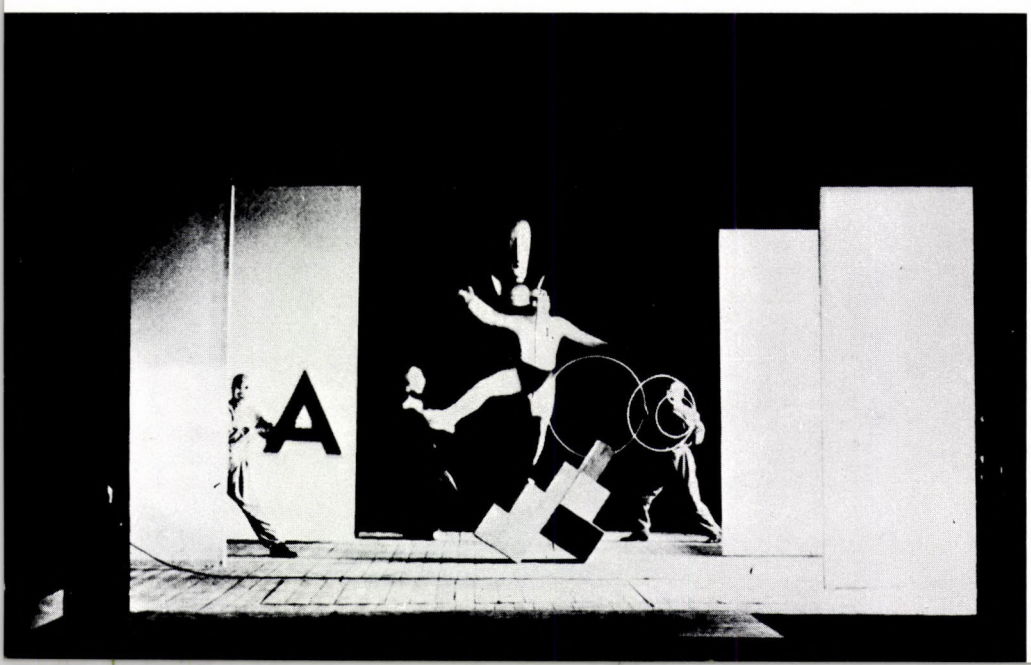
János Pirk: For our bread.
Oil. 157×86 cm. 1983

Iván Gajzágó

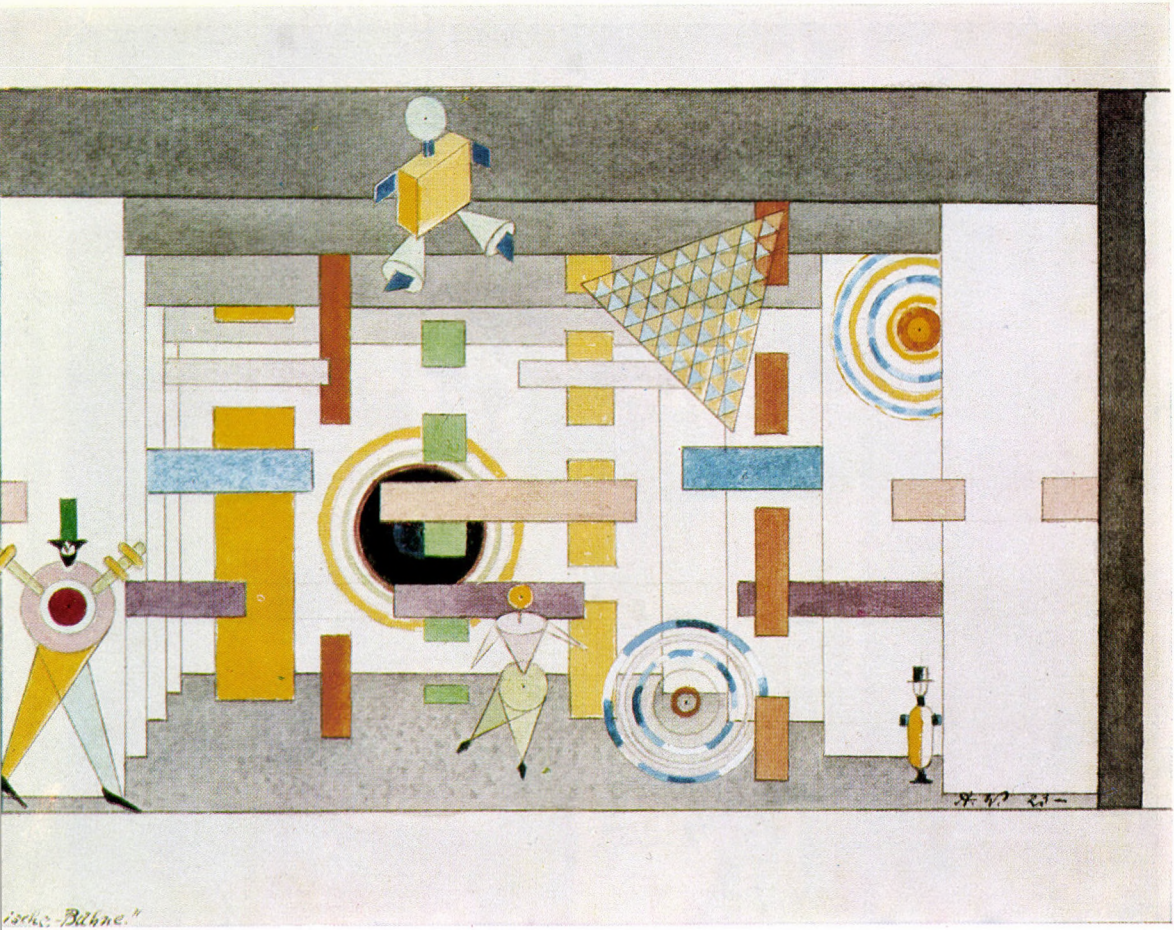
János Pirk: Self-portrait with bowler.
Oil. 44.5×34.5 cm. 1932

THE BAUHAUS BAND, 1930

THE BAUHAUS STAGE, 1930



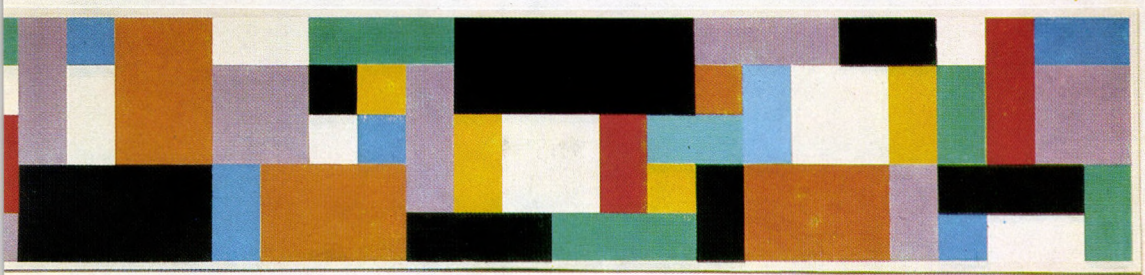
Reproductions Zsuzsa Bokor

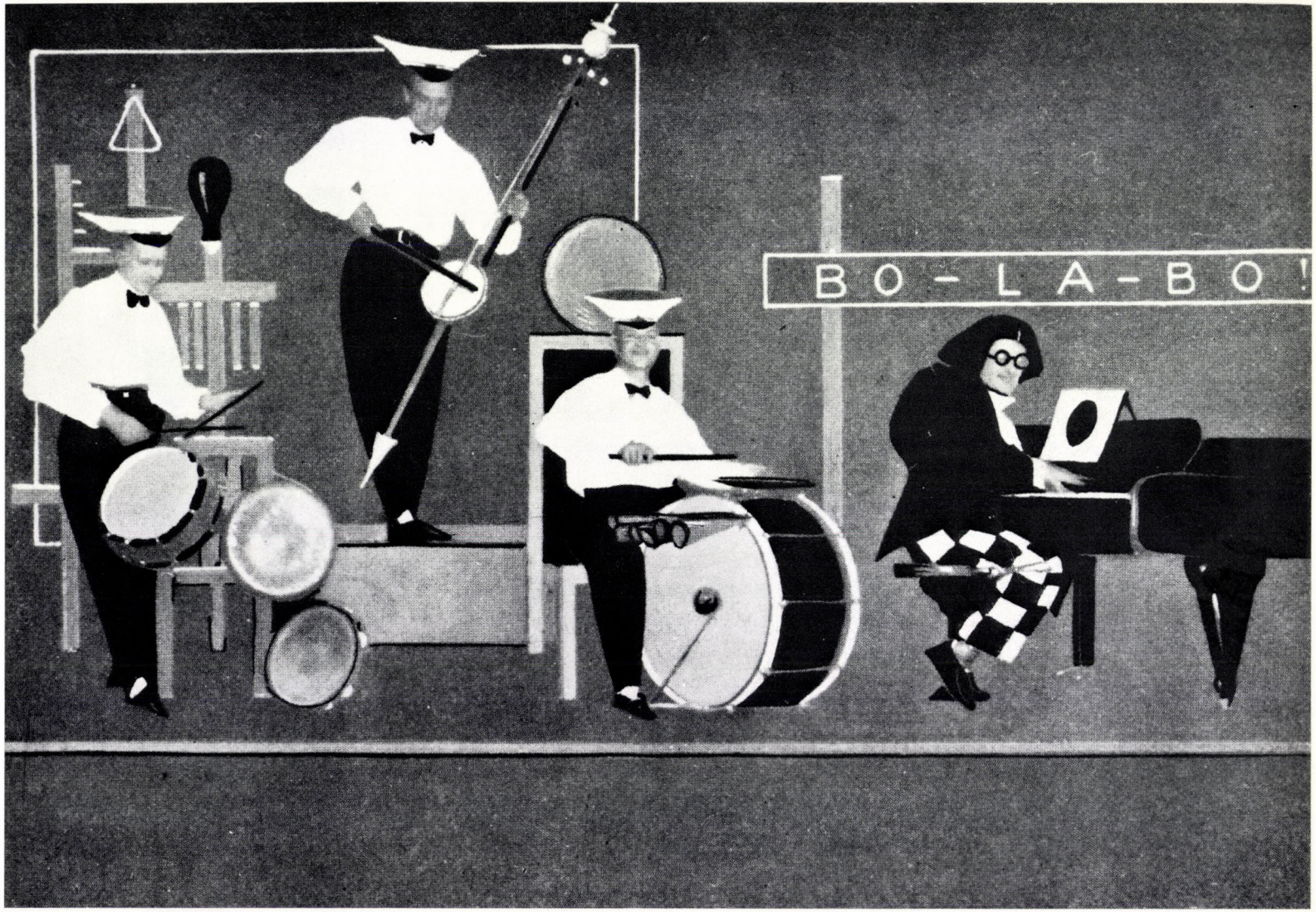


ANDOR WEININGER: REVUE 1923. WATERCOLOUR, PAPER. 288 × 360 CM

Zsuzsa Bokor

ANDOR WEININGER: COMPOSITION. OIL, PAPER. 101 × 26 CM. 1922/63





Repr. Tibor Mester

A Scene from Oskar Schlemmer's treppenwitz, 1925. On stage Hildebrandt, Stedhoff, Schlemmer, the music clown Weininger

National Gallery for the time being, and was shown in the June 1983 exhibition on "Hungarian Constructivists," a striking sample of his work in the Bauhaus theatre. Weininger's concept is a stage along the course of the idea, which from Kleist to E. T. A. Hoffmann puts robots and puppets on stage to be rid of subjective restrictions and to render in the theatre mechanically abstract to absurdity precisely that which is the basis of the theatre, man.

The essence of the Bauhaus stage directed by Schlemmer—where Weininger also worked between 1925 and 1928—was the dynamic relation, visual symbolism of the "artificial body" and the colourful, architectonic stage area. This exerts a shock effect even today, and the grotesqueness of the abstract dramatic extreme. Nothing proves this better than the great 1982 sensation of the New York Kitchen experimental theatre, the revival of Schlemmer's *Bauhaus Dances*. The expert adviser on the production was the same Andreas Weininger, who once participated in Schlemmer's productions in Germany, a performer of dances, musical and humorous improvizations.

His vivid, captivating personality and his versatility made Weininger unforgettable mainly as a dancer, musician, and musical clown. He often played together with Schlemmer. Several photographs commemorated their joint stage appearances in pieces such as *Staircase Joke* and *Stage Elements*.

The evaluation of the pioneering role of the Bauhaus dance orchestra as the forerunner of multimedium shows of the present would be particularly timely. Weininger was one of the founding members of the orchestra in 1924. Their programme which they improvised themselves ranged from folk-songs, among them Hungarian, to chord and noise music. They balanced between the extremes of the strictness of the Bauhaus to the freedom of musical improvization.

Today Weininger is the only artist, who has first-hand knowledge of and the ability to reconstruct the Bauhaus scenery of sixty years ago. There is a film to help us to form a picture of this. Three puppet-like male figures in yellow, red, and blue symbolizing various human temperaments are mementoes of the concept and they also suggest a warning about the decaying of humanity. The masked, impersonal figures turn man into apparently sterile formulae. To square the circle, the mechanization of man is a concept that cannot be taken to absurdity. This is what the shot which goes off at the conclusion of the dance, the gesture of man breaking free of the world of colours, forms, numbers, and rules suggest. As long as these dances are seen as travesties, one also may appreciate them as forerunners to rewriting as parody, still fashionable nowadays.

Weininger's Utopian, spherical theatre design justly created a sensation among modern experiments in stage design at the 1927 Magdeburg exhibition. He placed the seats within a single sphere, open at the base; this was also the place where he wanted to organize a show of colour, form, light, and sound, something approached now by the multimedia shows.

Following his spherical stage experiments between 1923 and 1927, Weininger left the Bauhaus at the time of its reorganization with Gropius and László Moholy-Nagy. He too lived in Berlin between 1928 and 1938, where he worked as an interior designer. He married Eva Fernbach, a student of Marcel Breuer there. During the Nazi period he found asylum in Holland, and later, in 1950, he settled in Canada.

For the last quarter of a century, he has been living in New York. He has remained true to the Bauhaus in his work. Even if he has not become as important as László Moholy-Nagy, he maintained his constructivism in the Art Research Center and in the Anima group. New York was where he brought out his *Mechanical Revue* in 1971, which he designed in 1923, nearly fifty years after the birth of the idea.

ÉVA R. BAJKAY

MUSICAL LIFE

THE MUSIC OF LÁSZLÓ VIDOVSZKY IN LONDON

July 25th, 1982, marked the occasion of the first concert in London devoted entirely to the works of the Hungarian composer László Vidovszky. It took place at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in the MUSICA series, and gave the opportunity to a British audience to sample something of the impressive range of this remarkable composer, probably the most interesting and original composer of experimental music in Hungary today, and presented a good crossection of his works ranging from 1968 with *Kettős* (Double; 1968–72), *Autokoncert* (1972), *Schroeder halála* (Schroeder's death; 1975) and *3 hangú felgondolás* (3-part invention; 1980). It also provided me with the chance of having extended interviews with the composer, in which we discussed several of his works and the ideas behind them. It is interesting to note at this point that Vidovszky was present not just as the composer but as a performer as well (he took part in all four works). He likes to be in control of the performance and he notates nearly all his compositions exactly in matters of pitch and note-duration. This reflects, perhaps, the workshop idea of the New Music Studio (Új zenei stúdió) of which Vidovszky was a founder member in 1970, and which has sought to ally far more closely a composition to its performance. In an attempt to make such control easier, the New Music Studio has its own ensemble trained to play the type of works it produces.

Vidovszky was born in Békéscsaba in southern Hungary in 1944. He studied composition with Gézai Szatmári in Szeged between 1959 and 1962 and then went on to the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music in Budapest where he studied with Ferenc Farkas. *Kettős* (Double) was the first composition Vidovszky worked upon after graduating, and it already shows the original and independent line the young composer was to take at a time when the majority of Hungarian composers were still writing along fairly traditional lines as regards rhythmic and formal procedures. It presents Vidovszky as a paradoxical figure, too: in the programme-notes he calls *Double* both "a summing-up and a negation of the musical ideas" that preoccupied him after leaving the Academy. That is: it is at the same time influenced by and a reaction against, his Academy studies.

The work's title does not just imply a duet although it is for two pianos. The Hungarian word also means 'double' (the translation which Vidovszky prefers). The piece grows out of two six-note chords, one in each piano, which present all twelve semitones. The material is based on hexachords throughout, sometimes in block form, sometimes in broken form. Although pitches are specified exactly, they are disguised by the preparation of the piano strings and so are heard only in a translated form; nevertheless they are there in the

background. Thus the piece works on two levels: that of the specified pitches of the original idea and that of their translated realisation on the prepared pianos, hence the title *Double*.

The special materials used to prepare the piano strings create an interesting array of sounds reminiscent of the Balinese gamelin orchestra. *Double*, therefore, calls to mind works such as the *Sonatas and interludes* for piano, by John Cage, who was also influenced by the gamelin. However, there the comparison ends. Although Cage was an influence on him, Vidovszky says he would be unable to name a specifically influential work; it was, rather, Cage's writings which have made such an impression upon him. It would certainly seem that Cage helped Vidovszky and his fellow-composers in the New Music Studio escape from traditional notions of melody and form and to enter previously unexplored regions. So *Double* has no melody-line, but it is exactly notated and does not contain chance elements like so much of Cage's work; however in rhythm (also) it is untraditional in approach, lacking the rhythmic shapes of the early Cage Sonatas. The listener, therefore, is free to concentrate upon the sounds drawn from the pianos, and beguiling sounds they are.

In its overall form, *Double* sounds curiously unstructured: linear passages are contrasted with chordal, sections in free metre are contrasted with strict, some sections are skilfully dovetailed while others are separated by pauses. The piece ends with an *accelerando* of increasingly shorter chords alternating between the two pianos. Even the predictability of this gesture is foiled by a pause half-way through, and the expected climax is never reached: the chords merely come to a halt, quietly, high up on the keyboards. Yet despite the unpredictability of its overall rhythmic structure, the piece works extremely well, simply because of the imaginative use of contrast and the fascinating keyboard sounds. The listener never knows quite what is coming next, but he is not disappointed with the new ideas when they arrive. In this performance, Vidovszky was joined by Gusztáv Fenyő.

It was during the composition of *Double* that the New Music Studio was set up by Vidovszky, Sáry, Jeney, Péter Eötvös and Albert Simon. The first work to be produced by Vidovszky after this time was *Autokoncert*. If Cage had shown that it was possible to explore new territories in musical composition, then the result in Vidovszky's case was the use of visual, or, as he prefers to call them, theatrical, elements in his works. *Autokoncert* is completely theatrical. The audience is not confronted with a group of performers playing from musical scores. Instead the work seems to happen by itself (hence the title 'auto[matic]"). A number of instruments, including bamboo rods, accordion, drums, music box, cymbals and bells, are suspended over the stage by unseen nylon wires, and are made to sound or drop down when these wires are manipulated from behind the scenes. The music box is amongst the last instruments to sound, and the work ends when it winds down completely. The tune it plays should be well-known and cliché'd. At the London performance it was 'Lara's theme' from the film *Doctor Zhivago*. A particularly delicious moment was achieved when it stopped exactly on the penultimate note creating an eternally unfinished cadence: in fact the composer prefers the *Blue Danube* walse which his original music box played.

The notion of musical instruments played by an unseen agent is, of course, not new: it reaches back to the Aeolian harp and wind chimes. But the paradox in this work is that there is nothing haphazard in the way the instruments are made to sound. Everything that happens is carefully planned both as to the order of events and the actual sounds created. The only factor over which the composer has no control, is exactly when the music box will wind down. Natu-

rally the whole notion of the piece strikes the spectator as humorous, but there is something uncanny about these 'self-playing' instruments as if they have suddenly come to life. The viewer's unease is increased by the sight of a stick suspended over a large bass drum—will there be a loud crash when it falls? Tension is maintained by waiting for the music box to wind down—and there is something sinister in the fact that a mere machine is controlling our feelings and commanding our attention, perhaps a warning of the automated future to come. Thus Vidovszky presents us with yet another paradox: an apparently humorous work with a more serious side to it.

This combination of humour and seriousness is carried on into *Schroeder's Death* for piano and three assistants. It is a lengthy work: the pianist begins by playing a three-octave semitone scale which gradually changes note by note into a series of arpeggios. On reaching the last arpeggio, he goes backwards to the semitone scales again and then plays from the beginning once more. Exactly four minutes and sixteen seconds into the piece, the three assistants begin to prepare the piano strings until it is eventually reduced to complete silence. The pianist must keep playing despite this, until at the end, all the audience can hear is the empty rattle of the piano keys. It takes a pianist with a steady eye and nerve not only to sustain these rapid *perpetuum mobile* scales, but also to play them while three people are 'hovering about' over the piano; Zoltán Kocsis was the able interpreter at the London performance, (he gave the work its premiere in 1975), and the assistants were Vidovszky, Fenyő and Harris Playfair.

The Schroeder of the title refers to Schroeder, the character in the *Peanuts* cartoon series, who is forever playing the piano. Vidovszky said that he was not alluding to any particular episode in the *Peanuts* series, however. Schroeder was merely a symbol for him, a symbol of a figure who is both heroic and comic, a character who can do no other than keep following his own desire, despite the changes taking place in the world about him. Vidovszky takes the situation to an absurd conclusion: Schroeder continues to play even though the piano is reduced to silence, apparently unaware of this fact. We are powerless against the changes in the world around us, but there is something heroic, yet at the same time ridiculous, about a figure who persists in continuing in the same way despite them. The combination of serious and amusing elements in the performance of the piece reinforces this message. The three assistants look quite comic as they fuss over the piano strings (each 'preparation' must be achieved very rapidly), yet, in their loose black jackets, they have a sinister air about them as if they were carrying out a live dissection without anaesthetic.

Schroeder's Death is problematic for an audience because of its length. It lasts between thirty and forty minutes, since it takes a long time to reduce a concert grand piano to silence. Unlike other Vidovszky works, the concept of the piece becomes evident quite soon during its execution, and therefore it lacks the element of surprise which is what makes many of his other works so successful. Nevertheless the idea itself is most enterprising and the work clearly deserves to be heard.

The theme of a hero unable to do anything but pursue his own desire despite external circumstances which dictate a tragic outcome should he do so, occurs, is another Vidovszky work: the little musical farce *Nárcisz és Echo* (Narcissus and Echo; 1980) for small instrumental ensemble, solo voices and girls' choir. This work is really more comic than tragic, based as it is upon the idea of a nineteenth-century Viennese-style cabaret using the theme of Orpheus in the Underworld (influenced, no doubt, by Offenbach) Vidovszky originally took this cabaret-idea from the Hungarian

film Psyche, directed by Gábor Bódy and based on the life and work of a fictitious early 19th-century Hungarian woman poet, the invention of Sándor Weöres.* Why choose a comic idiom for this particular story? Despite its tragic ending it is a rather absurd tale. Narcissus perishes although he is quite innocent. He is a victim of circumstances about which he knows nothing and over which he has no control. The comic effect of the work is heightened by the music which seems to be a send-up of late German Romantic traditions. It is also sung in German, which reinforces this notion. Vidovszky says, however, that the piece is not intentionally satirical, there are no actual quotations in the score. But undoubtedly the music owes something to the late nineteenth-century atmosphere which inspired it and because of this, it sounds quite different from Vidovszky's other works. It is a highly entertaining piece in an approachable style and makes a nice foil to the more 'serious' works.

The *3 Hangú felgondolás (3 Part Invention 1.)* is scored for three electronic organs of the same type. The Hungarian title cannot be translated precisely. Its meaning is not clear even to Hungarian speakers. Vidovszky found the word in an eighteenth-century dictionary as a translation for the Latin word *inventio*, but it is not used today. It is, therefore, ambiguous to Hungarians, who may be reminded of several similar-sounding words such as *elgondolás* (plan, notion) or *feldolgozás* (in music: an adaptation) and so on.

This is the first of a projected series of pieces in which the tempo is to be exceedingly rapid. Vidovszky states in the programme notes: "They might well be preliminary studies for the creation of 'very fast music'." In this piece ten notes are to be fitted into each second and the overall effect is of a *perpetuum mobile* although there are short breaks within the individual parts. The work moves from *legato* textures in each part at the beginning to a closing section with a *quasi hoquet* texture. Despite its rapidity, Vidovszky demands the attention of the listener to every detail, there is no question of a surface melody arising out of the detail as there is in Ligeti's style of micropolyphony. What does emerge from the detail is a kind of surface rhythm. This rhythm is pointed by causing certain simultaneities of pitch to occur more frequently and for several repetitions. At first, the group A, C♯, E recurs, always repeated three times. This then gives way to F, G, B♭ and then to E, G, B♭ and so on. But it requires an accurate and quick ear to appreciate this structure. Vidovszky himself admits that for this reason it is a difficult piece to which to listen.

One of the work's other interests is its special effect caused by the redistribution of the repeated chords throughout the three instruments, so that, for instance, in the A, C♯, E group organ 1 might play C♯ first, then C♯ might appear in organ 2 and then in organ 3. In order to appreciate this, the audience should ideally be placed in the centre of the three loudspeakers, but there is a problem since the three performers must also be positioned in the centre, because coordination of the parts is a real problem in performing this work. This difficulty was not resolved for the audience at the ICA concert—they were situated between each pair of speakers. Hardly an ideal solution. The only way round the problem would be to place the speakers near the ceiling, put the performers on a platform in the centre of the auditorium and the audience round them. This would not have been possible in the limited space of the ICA.

Special effects occur in another Vidovszky piece: *Souvenir de J* (1977) for a minimum of 64 players (or any square number in excess of this). The performers stand in the formation of a square and each has a pipe which plays one pitch. The first player in each row plays his pipe then turns to his

* *NHQ* 82.

neighbour who plays his pipe, and so on up and down the row. At a prearranged signal one person in every row turns to face the row behind, so that eventually the sounds are passed up and down the square and not from side to side as at the beginning. The pitches of the pipes within each row are close to each other, but, as the players gradually turn round, so the intervals between each pair of pipes increases. Unlike other Vidovszky compositions this work requires no particular instrumental technique nor even the ability to read music and can be used as a 'game' for children, (although it is necessary to obtain 64 specially-tuned pipes first!). It is written with amateur musicians in mind.

Although the bulk of Vidovszky's output has been written for small ensembles or solos, he has written orchestral music too. His *Induló* (March; 1980) was given its première during the Budapest Music Weeks in 1981. Unfortunately the performance lacked any sort of understanding of the work's structure, but, despite this, it sounds a most promising piece. Since it lacks the theatrical elements found in other Vidovszky works, it would be possible to produce it on record, and it it to be hoped that this will happen so that we can appreciate it at our leisure.

Apart from those compositions he has written as an individual, Vidovszky has also collaborated with his fellow-composers in the New Music Studio in joint works. These are not the result of joint improvisation sessions, nor do the composers work together in the same place. They decide beforehand the length of the piece and the instrumentation of each part, and then the composers go their separate ways. I asked them how they could compose apart in this way and yet produce a coherent work. They felt that their own experiences and outlook were so similar that such pieces could be successful. I also asked Vidovszky how he could accept the random element in bringing together parts of a work which have been written separately, when in his own compositions he demands exactness both in notation and in performance. He pointed out that it is possible to have different degrees of precision in notation without affecting the success of the work, and compared a Boulez to a Bach score in this respect. He also felt that the decision beforehand of the type of work and its length, lent a degree of precision. I know only two such compositions involving contributions from Vidovszky. These are: *Gaga* (1976) for clarinet, cello and piano, written with Jeney and Sáry, and *Hommage à Kurtág* (1975) for various instruments and tape, written with Eötvös, Jeney, Kocsis and Sáry. Neither impressed me as being particularly coherent, I regret to say. However, the performance of *Gaga* was not given by members of the New Music Stuio, and therefore may not have been especially understanding, and *Hommage à Kurtág* I heard only on a mono tape-recording which did not permit any appreciation of its spacial elements which are very important. I may, therefore, be misjudging this style of composition, but it does strike me that the initial premise is a curious one, since composers are generally noted for their individuality rather than for the similarity of their outlook.

Vidovszky's interest in theatrical and visual elements has taken him into the realms of cinema and the visual arts. He has produced two experimental films at the Balázs Béla Studio: *A fejedelem üzenete* (The Prince's message; 1976) and *Aldrin* (1976), and two audio-visual art-objects: *Zopf* (1979) and *Hang—Szín—Tér* (Sound—colour—space); 1980 in which he collaborated with his wife, the artist Ilona Keserü.

The very diversity of Vidovszky's output makes him a difficult composer to define. This is not to say, however, that he is a mere eclectic with no voice of his own. Far from it—he achieves this diversity within his own highly personal style, only

Narcisz és Echo is at all derivative and that for a particular purpose. His ideas and their execution are highly original. Some might lay the criticism at his door that his compositions are not 'music', dependent as many of them are on the theatrical or visual elements as well as their traditional musical ingredients. But his musical ideas too, are carefully thought out and, as he says, exactly notated. Most importantly, his compositions achieve what works of art should: they stimulate and entertain while, at the same time, provoking thought. The theatrical gestures provide the non-musician with a way into his works and for this reason his music can be appreciated by layman and trained musician alike.

MARGARET P. McLAY

NEW RECORDS

When a new batch of records comes in containing on the one hand a new *Don Pasquale* and on the other János Vajda's prizewinning one act opera *Barabbas*, it's almost automatic to reflect on the conditions of modern opera which help make the Vajda work what it is. For it would be hard to imagine a work as far from the idea of opera as *divertissement*, in the Donizettian sense, as this unremittingly earnest allegory about Christ recrucified. So far as I can see, *Don Pasquale* is an opera impossible to interpret as metaphor; it is a stock piece whose considerable merits rest entirely on the skill, wit and charm of its execution. *Barabbas*, by contrast, is only one of the latest in a long line of symbolic modern operas; its actual subject matter is familiar, but only because its preoccupations are today commonplace, not because the authors have used a stock situation *per se*. In this particular version of a story first suggested (I think) by Dostoevsky in *The Brothers Karamazov*, humanity is given a second chance to call out for Christ's release rather than Barabbas's; but while individually they speak for Jesus, collectively they cannot renounce the viciousness for which Barabbas stands. So Christ is led away once again to Calvary. The significance and relevance to us of such a story is obvious. The question is, what kind of an opera can it make.

The first thing to say about *Barabbas* as a score is that, while it may not be particularly original or individual (Vajda has changed his style since he wrote it in 1977), it is a competent and reasonably effective piece of work on its own terms. But as drama, judging only from this record it is heavy and airless; indeed it almost lacks dramatic interest altogether, since the outcome of the story is obvious and built-in from the start, while characterisation is sacrificed, as so often in modern opera, to the schema of the allegory. Vajda is here merely following a pattern of recent Hungarian opera; if one thinks of Szokolay's *Blood Wedding*, Ránki's *Tragedy of Man*, Durkó's *Moses* or Balassa's *Man Outside*, one can see only too well how the medium has become weighed down by its own earnest self-importance. Theatricality – the idea of the good story well presented in stage terms – has everywhere been displaced by the idea of the 'significant statement'. These are all gloomy works, operas in grey and sepia with densely textured music into which the sun never penetrates. And indeed the problem is not confined to Hungary. Today it almost seems that most new operas by leading composers are dark and portent-

ous in some such way. No doubt this is partly in line with the prevailing concern in modern theatre with 'issues of the day' coupled with the indubitable fact that the world has many problems which it is the artist's duty—as it is everyone's to confront. *Don Pasquale* could not be written today, this argument would presumably continue, because it is no longer possible for the artist to delude himself so thoroughly about the real nature of the world in which he lives.

This is a worthy argument and one which sounds plausible. But it falls down on the simple and apparently obvious point that *Don Pasquale* is a minor masterpiece which still carries meaning (of some kind) now, nearly 150 years after it was written, while most recent operas hardly survive their premiers, and soon come to seem dated and even shallow. A crucial point in all this is that Don Pasquale was Donizetti's sixty-fifth opera (or so). On the other hand all the Hungarian operas so far mentioned, except the Ránki, were first operas. For their composers the opportunity to write for the theatre was a rare accolade, and one can quite see that the temptation to write something 'momentous' at all costs must have been hard to resist. But while it may be true that all art is propaganda, it can only be so insofar as it is art first and foremost; it is inconceivable that it could succeed purely by virtue of the ideas it contains. In any case audiences must by now be roundly fed up with going to the theatre to be told that the world is in a mess. They know this already, and it is the artist's job to tell them, by way of his art, something more subtle that they do not know.

The sheer didacticism of *Barabbas* is typical. Without exception the characters are "types" who simply occupy their allotted role in the scheme; there is no question of them stepping out of it, influencing it, showing it in an ironic light. They are little more than terms in a moral disquisition. Moreover the disquisition is as naive intellectually as it is stiff dramatically. There is hardly an attempt to convince us that this crowd which is rejecting Christ might well be made up of the same sorts of individual as have just been assuring him of their devotion and support; we simply observe the one thing followed by the other, while the melodramatic tone of Vajda's writing works on our sensibilities to try and bully us into agreeing that the outcome actually matters and is in any way unpredictable. To be fair *Barabbas* is obviously an immature work, and since then Vajda has written a most attractive, if rather derivative, *Stabat Mater* (the subject clearly obsesses him), in the style of Stravinsky's Mass—a style much brighter and sharper than that of the opera—and an orchestral work called *Farewell* in a somewhat related idiom (the works are all coupled on this disc). But I still find it disturbing that it should seem automatic for a young composer writing his first opera to choose a heavily allegorical and abstract subject rather than one with an authentic flavour of the stage. The fact that this routine piece of work won prizes at two major television opera festivals merely confirms me in my opinion that modern opera has sunk into a rut, from which it is only likely to be rescued by a composer of real dramatic flair.

A Donizetti would help, and after all this isn't really asking that much. *Don Pasquale* is a sparkling piece, but it is hardly an opera of the absolute front rank; what it has is sheer mastery of the theatrical and musical genres it deploys. Everything comes off, nothing is overworked, the tunes are good, the orchestration excellent. The new recording conducted by Iván Fischer has of course to be judged in context as a purely Hungarian venture into a market dominated by international specialists. But as such it survives surprisingly well. The Norina is weak, but there is a sound Malatesta (István Gáti), a lively if occasionally pinched Ernesto (János Bándi), and above all József Gregor unfailingly musical and personable

as ever in the title role. Fischer's pacing is perhaps on the slow side, but he is a sensitive accompanist and allows his singers room for manoeuvre. The main problem is slack rhythm here and there; and the recording is on the thick side.

A more truly international effort, in point of quality, is the new Puccini *Suor Angelica* conducted by Lamberto Gardelli. Again the cast is Hungarian; but this is not a piece which makes fierce demands on local casting, provided only that one soprano of distinction is available for the title role, and Hungaroton have this in the shape of Ilona Tokody, who gives a radiant performance, well backed up by minor castings, by the reliable Mr. Gardelli, and by polished orchestral playing by the Hungarian State Opera Orchestra.

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Recently Hungaroton have made something of a special subject of Haydn, taking their cue of course from the Esterházy connection and no doubt from the fact that much source documentation for authentic Haydn performance is in Hungary. This has led them naturally to authentic performances as such, and here they are often breaking genuinely new ground. For example Adrienne Csengery's recording of the English canzonets with Malcolm Bilson is possibly the first to offer this collection complete with accompaniment played on a contemporary fortepiano (though there is also a Telefunken version, sung by James Griffett, which has not yet reached me). Bilson's wonderfully discriminating playing helps bring these songs to life to an extent rare, to say the least, with a modern instrument (or, I should say, a modern-type instrument, since Bilson's piano is in fact a modern copy of a Stein). Moreover Miss Csengery is unexpectedly successful in achieving the freshness of style best suited to these unpretentious and now and then rather sentimental songs; and her English is not half bad.

There is a fortepiano also accompanying Éva Bártfai-Barta in Haydn's solo cantata "Arianna a Naxos"—this time a genuinely contemporary instrument (a very pretty 1790 Dulcken, illustrated on the sleeve) played by Nicholas McGegan. Again the colouristic advantages of the early instrument more than make up for its limitations of volume, and perhaps it even gives the lyrical voice more apt support. Miss Bártfai-Barta is anyway at her most affecting in the tender lament early in "Arianna," where McGegan accompanies exquisitely, while she is inclined to force her tone under the increasing weight of feeling of the final aria. The cantatas with orchestra on the other side, "Scena di Berenice" and "Miseri noi" are well sung but less cleanly accompanied, by the Savaria Symphony Orchestra conducted by János Petró.

Another worthwhile Haydn record—though its contents are more abstruse—brings together the so-called "Ten Commandments" canons and the various choral canons by Mozart—in sprightly performances by the Győr Girls' Choir conducted by Miklós Szabó. These are pieces which seem to fit in well with the Kodály *a cappella* tradition. But before I pursue that line into the final part of this review, I must mention one other early music record: a somewhat eccentric compilation of early baroque Hungarian Codex songs and dances, together with Handel's cantata "Mi palpita il cor", a G minor Trio Sonata by Telemann and a lute "aria" allegedly composed by Joseph I, played on contemporary instruments by the Collegium Musicum of Budapest with the remarkable American alto Drew Minter. The consistent purpose of this record seems to be to enable us to enjoy the sound of the instruments—flute, recorder, gamba, lute, harpsichord, percussion and of course voice—in various combinations; and that being so it seems a pity that the pieces with flute or recorder should be so badly balanced that at times the wind instrument is barely audible. Even so the quality of the playing and

singing makes it an interesting record, worth investigating if your tastes lie in that direction.

The sheer range and inspiration of Kodály's finest music for unaccompanied choir are amply shown by two new releases in the series "The Choral Music of Kodály." The major pieces included here are the "Hymn of Zrínyi", "Jesus and the traders", "The Aged" (surely one of the most touching choral works by any composer this century), and—on the second disc—the "Mátra Pictures". It isn't clear whether this is the start of a project newly to record all of Kodály's enormous output in this medium, or merely a selection of the most characteristic pieces. But we may hope for a complete cycle, since it does really seem that, whatever his exact stature in general, Kodály was outstanding in the choral field. Yet most of these works are still practically unknown outside Hungary.

The claim that Kodály more or less reinvented polyphonic choral music as a vehicle for personal expression is borne out by these discs. Not only does the music show a constant flow of strong musical ideas that are genuinely choral in themselves. But there is a continuous sense of the verbal imagery stimulating vigorous and effective techniques, just as it did in the madrigalian style of the late Renaissance. Kodály was a master of this technique. Look at the way the words "Esik eső" overlap in the song of the "Norwegian Girls" to set up an almost tangible wetness in the air, or—to take a more traditional piece of counterpoint—the way the aimless dashing hither and thither of the Hungarians under the Turkish occupation is turned, in "Hymn of Zrínyi" into a piece of Handelian All-we-like-sheepery, brilliantly composed for the voices, and incidentally, superbly sung here by the Hungarian Radio and Television Chorus (with Lajos Miller taking the declamatory baritone solo), conducted by János Ferencsik; Kodály was is fact always good at miniature choral dramas, like the one in "Jesus and the traders"; he knew how to keep a choral texture ventilated and the lines clear and properly balanced; and he knew how to express words lyrically through the vocal medium, as in "The Aged", or the bitterly regretful Endre Ady setting "Too Late". In none of these works is there any of that falling away into the conventional which spoils most modern music for unaccompanied choir (based either on a lack of feeling for the voice or a fear that it will not do what is required of it). The only other modern composer I know who had all these gifts is Benjamin Britten, and I suppose in the end I still regard him as Kodály's superior as a sheer inventor of vocal inspirations. But I don't expect any Hungarian to agree with me; and anyway what does it matter?

DONIZETTI: Don Pasquale. Soloists, Hungarian Radio and Television Chorus, Hungarian State Orchestra (Iván Fischer. Hungaroton. SLDP 12416—18; VAJDA: Barabbas; Farewell, Stabat Mater. Soloists, Hungarian Radio and Television Orchestra and Chorus, Géza Török, Géza Oberfrank. Hungaroton. SLPX 12263; PUCCINI: Suor Angelica. Soloists, Hungarian State Opera Orchestra (Gardelli, Hungaroton. SLPD 12490; HAYDN: English Canzonett. Malcolm Bilson, Adrianne Csengery. Hungaroton. SLPD 12374; HAYDN: "Ten Commandments" Canons; MOZART: Canons. Győr Girls' Choir) Miklós Szabó. Hungaroton. SLPD 12373; HAYDN: Cantatas. Éva Bártfai-Barta, Nicholas McGegan. Savaria Symphony Orchestra, János Petró; Hungaroton. SLPD 12432; BAROQUE MUSIC ON AUTHENTIC INSTRUMENTS. Drew Minter, Collegium Musicum. Hungaroton SLPX 12193; THE CHORAL MUSIC OF KODÁLY 1–2. Hungarian Radio and Television Chorus, Lajos Miller, János Ferencsik, Ferenc Sapszon. Hungaroton SLDP 12352, LPX 12398.

STEPHEN WALSH

THEATRE AND FILM

A FORGETTABLE SEASON

Gábor Czakó: *Karcsi* (Charlie); Valentin Kataev and Géza Beremény: *A Werthert már megírták* (Werther is already written); Gábor Görgey: *Komám-asszony, hol a stukker* (Who has the gun?); György Moldova: *Titkos záradék* (Secret clause); Miklós Hubay: *Római karnevál* (Roman carnival).

The 1982/83 season is over, and this is the time when critics are faced with having to decide which was the best new Hungarian play of the season, the most outstanding production, the best actor, and so on.

The critic is not to be envied. In fact it would be a blessing if the critics were allowed to give awards for the worst this and that. At least there would be no argument here, since we have seen recently a flop so complete and scandalous, the like of which we haven't had for a long time. A private company, formed not very long ago, the Hőköm Színpad, rented the new Sports Hall in Budapest (a seating capacity of 12,000) for their second production. Their play was on the unhappy state of Hungarian football, and they had planned an eight-night run. A recent and still topical scandal involving frauds on the football pools running to millions of forints, created a favourable atmosphere for the production; add to that two humiliating defeats of Hungary at the hands of England and Greece and the atmosphere, as the sportswriters say, was electric. The booking offices were swamped with the demand for the rather hotly priced tickets. But the second performance finished in a near riot. In brief, the former football players taking part tried to ham it up, otherwise good actors could only kick the ball with the speed of retired snails, and near chaos was the result. Everybody did what they should not have done. Allegations were soon flying of a paid claque of troublemongers, that the public address system had failed as a result of hostile action, that the actors, who finally fled the arena, were threatened, and so on.

Undoubtedly an overall prize would present no problem to the critic if he could only know into which category he should write in the show. The show is, of course, *Cats*, a production rehearsed for six months, with eight hard hours' work each day in the Madách Theatre: a splendid critical and popular success. During a brief visit to Budapest, Andrew Lloyd Webber paid tribute to the brilliant work of the director, Tamás Szirtes, the choreographer, László Seregi, and the cast, most of whom were straight actors with a contingent of ballet dancers from the Opera. It is unlikely that was mere courtesy. A Hungarian public which is used to seeing the big musicals sometimes a decade late, had a near miracle here: an international hit arrived comparatively early—the first production on the continent—and the production itself mobilized considerable artistic anf financial energy to become worthy of the work in every way. But since the musical is a separate category from that of the more "classy" dramatic theater, possibly nothing else can be done other than to give a special critics' award to *Cats*.

The jury sitting on the year—if there

were such a body—would really have their work cut out had they to decide on the best new Hungarian play. Not only a "best" did not exist—as most people expressed their opinion in various contexts—but even the "new" was not much in evidence. The theatres produced well-tried, old and more recent plays again and again (not too bad in itself, of course), and filled the rest of their programmes with the classics of the world: besides Shakespeare, Chekhov, going through his umpteenth renaissance, and some of the naturalists and the absurdists. The great loser of the season of conferences, polemics, debating articles thus became the Hungarian drama, even though plenty of people know that a number of worthwhile new plays lie hidden in desk-drawers and other inaccessible places.

Nevertheless, two reworked plays called attention, but could they be regarded as new Hungarian dramas? Tibor Gyurkovics, who flirts with the absurd theatre in his own plays, sensitively dramatized Dezső Kosztolányi's novel, *Édes Anna* (Anna Édes), a Hungarian novel considered one of the best of our century. The girl of the title is an angelic maid who works like a slave for her master and mistress and represents every care of soul and body, every humiliated human in the world. The quiet girl, who puts up with all of the intentional and unintentional smothering of human dignity, grabs the knife in an unexpected, but psychologically brilliantly prepared moment, and kills master and mistress in the matrimonial bed. The servant administers justice. István Horvai directed a memorable production in Veszprém. He set the story closely into the Hungary of the years after the Great War, but he paid as much attention to the mysterious vibrations of the soul, to the eternal human.

But could this adaptation be regarded as a new Hungarian play? The question is relevant since the novel has been with us for almost sixty years, and its transfer, ambitious and worthy in its own right, adds nothing to it. The adaptation by Géza Bereményi properly adapts the novel by the Soviet writer Valentin Kataev, still productive in spite of his advanced years. Bereményi openly admits that the play is not his but Kataev's.

Nor was it easy to find a production worthy of the prize for best production. In my last review I found myself describing a "half-melody" in most productions—most were ambiguous, uneven, wavering—and this feeling had only been confirmed by the end of the season; the unevenness left its mark on the whole season. Under this heading, a leading Hungarian critic reviewed Tamás Ascher's production of *The Homecoming* by Harold Pinter in the József Katona Theatre: "The experiment is over, let us forget it..." What he found intolerably bad, was resoundingly praised by an illustrious colleague of his. It is not merely the eternal subjectivity of criticism, the necessary differences of opinion at work here. Most plays provoke widely different criticism, and it is a matter of taste whether one reacts to the positive or the negative features.

A relative exception among most recent new productions was *A Midsummer Night's Dream* directed by László Marton at the Pesti Theatre. The pattern which has dominated since Peter Brook was not essentially changed but this was a distinct, suggestive and fast, production emphatically played within the space of theatre. Puck himself fastens the naked light bulbs hanging from the stage bridge at the beginning of the play, and the row of lights glimmering in front of the blackish-green background seems to symbolize the ups and downs of our fortunes, especially in love. The lighting was the star performer here. The people are also stars, far-away, throbbing, vibrating, dying down bodies of the firmament. Bodies in a glow. The nostalgic, confessional quality which the director saw in Oberon, the central place of the fairy-king besides Puck; evidently he had least enthusiasm for the line of the artisans.

Another new Shakespeare production, *As You Like It*, in the József Katona Theatre, also deserves praise. It became sort of a Mid-

summer Night's Twelfth Night in the hands of the director, Gábor Székely. The fickleness of fortune, relativity, changeability, conditionality came over well in the production. We dream, and we do not dream what we would like to. This is not because neither of the two possible worlds: the Court (living in society) and the Forest (the free life of the outlaw) is the field and framework of human accomplishment, individual or common success. Székely created the symbolism of the Court and the Forest in the play with notable force of visual and compositional talent. Two candle-lights shine in the rather sombre darkness of the vision: the unbroken womanly optimism of Rosalind and Celia, their playful, noble will. They are inextinguishable souls.

After this running survey let us turn to the promised new Hungarian plays, the first of which really is new. New? It was knocking about from theatre to theatre for at least ten years. Just as it was difficult to understand how planned openings were always prevented by this or that, its emergence in the repertory of Kecskemét was equally unexpected.

The play *Karcsi* (Charlie), by forty-one years old Gábor Czakó, fastens on a problem that turns up more and more in Hungarian cinema and fiction. The topic is the unhealthy stratification between generations in our society. The younger generations are unable to grow up in the social sense of the word; there are people unwilling to pass their positions (already burdensome to them) to those coming behind them. The actor playing the title-role, Karcsi, and his contemporaries are on stage in shorts and middies even though they are in their thirties. Their emotional lives are infantile, and so is their vocabulary; they are playing at Mummies and Daddies instead of living an adult life. The other side shows the faded school-mistresses, the headmasters, and the Great Men mumbling as confusedly as infants. This dry, grotesque play shouts out the misery of the vast abyss between one generation retarded into infantilism and another that has outlived its time. Precisely because of these two extremes, a generation of responsible people in their prime is lacking. Czakó has built his play primarily on the level of language: his characters speak in stereotype, in formulae and jargon characteristic of various groups (class, teaching staff, and so on), and movements (the pioneer movement). This provides wonderful entertainment for a while, and then it becomes mechanical, calculable, tired. Some vigour is given to the play when the director, Ádám Balázs, produces an occasional felicity on the level he regards most important, that of the spectacle. (Needless to say, it is funny to see ageing actors carousing about in shorts, or the same actor playing several variations of the same types.) But when all is said and done, *Karcsi* increases the number of promising half-successes. The idea behind it is more mature than the execution.

Valentin Kataev's recently published novel inspired Géza Bereményi to write a stage adaptation for the Kaposvár company, a company ever-ready to experiment. Infantilism is important here also. *A Werthert már megírták* (Werther Is Already Written) takes place in the chaotic period after the October Revolution. Dyima, the over-protected offspring of a military family, barely over his salad-days, blunders into the salad-days of the revolution. He renounces his more-or-less counter-revolutionary background, and fired also by a love-affair, enthusiastically sides with the young Soviet state. But the revolutionaries are inclined to see in him only an enemy, the class-alien. He is nearly executed after false accusations and owes his escape to a complicated stroke of luck. However, even though he has escaped execution, his name appears on a poster bearing the names of those executed—merely for the sake of bureaucratic order. Dyima can never be himself since he came to the threshold of adulthood, immature even for a youth. Life found him as unprepared as History did.

As in Bereményi's earlier plays and tra-

gicomedies, a young hero stands in the centre here also. He finds himself in a Revolution trying its first steps: the merciless music of guns, slogans, marches, anarchy, and over-enthusiasm. There is no revolutionary today, who would not be outdone by tomorrow's more radical revolutionary; the latter already stands the former up to the wall, unaware that he himself will soon take his turn there. The *Death of Danton* is already written, this is the association the audience cannot escape. The other leading character, the writer, Seraphim Los, makes frequent references to Goethe's Werther, the melancholy young hero. Los is a part of the story he tells. The huge fans spread out sweep away the sets in a matter of moments, creating an uncanny experience of the transmutations of fortune, the as yet undeveloped values. Seraphim Los is always quick to gather up his little table with his battered typewriter. He shifts quarters, saves the Writing and is the chronicler, until such time when his life comes to an end facing gun barrels together with those, who had before been unmerciful deliverers of judgement.

It is a ballad that is being performed at Kaposvár accompanied by sorrowful passages on a solo piano, on a stage shrouded in semi-darkness, darkly furnished to the very end. An elevator moves up and down among the horizontal elements of the fan-like background. Where does it come from? where does it go? Concrete history, motives processed by Kataev mix with a vision which attempts to generalize. Péter Gothár, perennial director of Bereményi's works on stage and screen, does not deny the historical importance of the October Revolution, its heroism, or its significance for all of the twentieth century. He does raise his voice against any bureaucratic process, prefabricated concept, rabid abuse which causes irreparable damage to the cause anywhere and any time mocking the noble principles in whose name it acts. Bereményi and Gothár use the play to state that history is human only when it considers the individual, when the free community can develop as a mass of persons.

The absurd comedy of Gábor Görgey, *Komámasszony, hol a stukker* (Who has the gun?), has turned up here and there on Hungarian stages ever since its *première* in 1968. Everybody is senile here. Indeed, they are imbeciles, and frightful ones at that. The playwright—as he himself admits—followed various foreign models in sketching the situation. Five people squat in a dark, windowless room. One of them, Cuki, an out and out underworld figure, keeps the others in check with a loaded gun; even though the huge (symbolic) key of the room hangs right above their heads, he has no intention of letting anybody out. Not even to the toilet, where every one of them would like to go.

Cuki is a collector and thus the half-witted aristocrat, the operetta-peasant who could be shown in some make-believe village, the cowardly intellectual, and the spineless lower middle-class time-server are all relieved of their possessions. Thus they donate their letters patent of nobility, their lover, their dreams to a Cuki who becomes more self-conscious at every command of his weapon. Fate, however, knocks it out of the hand of the criminal, and the gun itself, the equalizer sets out on a round. Whoever has possession of it, turns out to be no better than the one before. They all torture and humiliate the others. Not surprising, if they stay here locked up forever in the waxworks.

The only shortcoming of this well-constructed, stylish, and witty play is simply that it plays it safe. Görgey wanted to caricature certain classes and strata, people from the recent and remote past. It is easy to laugh at those who have already left the stage of history, it is quite pleasant to laugh at them, but... Today's anarchist terrorist is far more timely and menacing than the over-stylized, almost romantic underworld character stripes. The ruthlessly calculating elderly gentleman is also more so than his soft-headed counterpart. Görgey sketches the idiocy of his figures in a brilliant

manner, but he refrains from dealing with the present. He provides us with what was, and is no more. Péter Huszti, praised here for last time his brilliant performance in Gyula Háy's play, has organized this production well in this his second attempt at directing; his colleagues are given to perform exquisitely in their minor roles. The sense of playing it safe lingers on.

György Moldova, one of the most popular writers in Hungary, had to be cajoled back to the theater after a gap of twenty years. After the failure of a musical of his he had frequently declared that he was not willing ever to write dialogue for actors again. Finally, he was persuaded to change his mind; one wishes that he had not. Moldova took hold of his satirical piece, *Hitler Magyarországon* (Hitler in Hungary), and on it based *Titkos záradék* (Secret Clause) for the National Theatre. The premise may not be bad. The body of the Nazi leader had been conserved and the time has now arrived to revive Hitler from suspended animation. The attempt is successful, and Hungary is chosen for the Führer to recuperate in. But Hitler, longing to return, to again rule the world, is dealt out a shameful fate. All that he experiences of corruption, ranting, militant aggression, perversion, and so on in Hungary is far beyond even his wildest dreams...

While admitting that some of the cabaret-ideas were really entertaining, the reviewers, almost to a man, condemned this rather rough-hewn play for its total lack of taste. Against the intention of Moldova, who seems to be almost entirely misinformed though uncompromising on dramatic techniques the audience would have to accept—directly because of the badly organized, self-contradictory text—that fascism is a living ideal in Hungary. Hitler, presented as a caricature, gesticulates as a ridiculous little character, a senile figure from the waxworks. He is embraced by whoever meets him as "Dolfi." When Nazi posters remain behind after a film had been shot in the small town where the play is set, the inhabitants believe a change of regime and hurriedly follow the swastika...

The critics were right to object to this very badly turned out play becoming part of the repertory of the National Theatre. It is a great pity that the investigative journalist and writer of so many fullblooded satires did not listen to advice from his peers in the theatre.

Római karnevál (Roman Carnival), written by Miklós Hubay some twenty years ago, had a new, and very successful presentation after many setbacks. I do not wish to go into the history of the would-be productions which were set out on and subsequently abandoned for personal, financial, and other reasons. Theatrical "corner-shops" are becoming increasingly numerous, these more or less one-show private ventures. The Vác Auditorium established in this small town close to Budapest is only one of many. Director József Ruszt was given an opportunity here to work again with his long-time associate, the splendid actress Éva Ruttkai and some of her colleagues.

The heroine, Margitka, is an aged actress, worn out by the theatre. She is not even fit to be an usherette. She drags out her wretched life in an old attic room: she is beginning to become senile, and infantile behaviour begins to dominate. She converses with her cats. Then she abandons even that: condemns herself to death by hunger, wishes to leave this earthly existence. This is exactly when she gets the unexpected offer, the great role. It is offered by her director, and Margitka has no idea that the whole thing is a bluff: they want to take in a great playwright who is passing through the town with the appearance of intensive rehearsals. That is that she cannot be put on the stage, she can only be introduced...

In Baroque Rome there once was a race for the lame, the one-legged, the crippled. This is the sort of race where the happily working Margitka, rejuvenated by the sudden opportunity, is "nominated." Faith,

passion for her profession and for life works a miracle. The tired playwright, who has aged himself enough to be his own father through alcohol and cynicism, even the playwright is caught in the magic circle of Margitka. Helped by the director of the theatre, and an old property man, the two of them recreate the world. They transform the fortunes of the artist to human fortunes. They make people believe that the lame can run.

The cruel joke is eventually revealed, but Margitka no longer can be prevented from singing out a hymn to activity, creation, rebirth. Even when she loses the sound, the words through her shock: the material means of her acting work.

The woman struck dumb, the silenced artist sits on the stage. Not a word can be pressed out of her larynx, yet she still articulates with awsome effort. Ejaculating unintelligibly rising, incoherent vowels and consonants from herself, she tries again and again to create a language for a more honest human relations.

TAMÁS TARJÁN

TWO NEW FILMS

Zsolt Kézdi-Kovács: *Visszaesők* (Forbidden Relations); Gyula Gazdag: *Elvesztett illúziók* (Lost Illusions)

Hungary's entry at the 1983 Cannes Film Festival was a recent film of Zsolt Kézdi-Kovács, *Forbidden Relations*. Various films from this director had created interest at international festivals, particularly his *When Joseph Returns* (1975). The critical reactions to *Forbidden Relations* were favourable, even if not overwhelming. Perhaps only my Hungarian colleagues were anxious about the view of Hungary which this film and last year's entry *Another Way* by Károly Makk may have presented to the festival. Makk's film described a love-affair between two women, arguing for the rights of the individual, and the entry this year depicted the incestuous love between a sister and brother, and—as the director stated—intended to support the rights of the individual personality. Of course, the continuity springs partly from chance, but more especially from the taste and attitudes of the French selection committee. The only thing that is Hungarian in this coincidence is the extension of creative freedom.

As it turned out, however, it was a feature of this Festival, or at least of the European offerings, that the various perversions, aberrations and peculiar relations within the family seem to be troubling the citizens of our continent (or at least our film directors). Accordingly, *Forbidden Relations* stood out in this setting, heavily and paradoxically morbid as it was, precisely because of its sober, non-idealized description, and a moderation, which seemed to be its pervading tone. Kézdi-Kovács does not argue for the rights of incest; rather he tries to arouse human understanding, tolerance and mercy for his hero and heroine. Their deviance was not originally conceived in sin, since they did not know at the time they fell in love that they both had the same mother. Both of them are downtrodden, and on the fringe of life. The woman's first husband hanged himself, the man has two unsuccessful marriages behind him at the time when they meet. On learning of the sinful nature of their relationship, it is because their love has a pu-

rity about it that they simply cannot appreciate its sinful nature nor tear themselves away from each other.

I see this as the director's intention and I am interested in discovering why this intention does not come off the screen far more vigorously, with greater cathartic effect, not in the peripheral and atypical subject. In other words, even if brother—sister relations are not common, condemnation of the different, the alien or the unusual obviously is. In this particular case the logical (whether it is logical, I cannot judge) repudation of this relationship meets a taboo based on the Bible. Kézdi-Kovács accordingly has selected a situation in which the denunciatory and critical reactions of the couples environment has supposed as well as real justification; this is precisely the reason why a distinction can be drawn between consideration and irrational emotion, which (always) turns inhumane.

The film demonstrates—and this is its most sympathetic feature for me—how cruel an environment can be even when it could, indeed, be called generally benevolent and enlightened, if it has no receptivity for fully appreciating the singularity of exceptional situations, if norms—however justified humanly, morally—stiffen into dogma. Almost everybody behaves fairly towards this unfortunate couple; the exception is their mother, who becomes almost maniacal in her shame and guilt. The people of the village, who would even conspire to keep quiet, the policeman, who would be glad to hush up the case, the court, which hands out the lightest possible punishment to the statutory crime of incest would ask the lovers in exchange only to refrain from what makes this relationship absolutely condemnable by society, the community, that is, from having children. They understand the sinfulness of their love, but their hearts are incapable of fathoming it and thus they are not prepared to forgo the fruit of this love. Thus they end up by compounding their crime and the film closes with the prison authorities suspending the mother's penalty to enable her to give birth to her second child at home.

In as much as the film succeeds in sketching this environment in a sensitive and vivid manner (and therein seems to lie the message of the director), the portrayal of the inner world, the psychology of the two lovers seems to be as simplified, problematic in spite of two excellent performances. Somehow the way they recognize their blood relationship, the way they stubbornly insist on having a "normal" family in their abnormal situation—fully understanding the biological risks—seems to be too easy, devoid of inner conflict, doubts of the conscience. I feel that it is not the state of mind of the heroine and the hero—who are simple though in no way retarded people—but the creative will behind the film that induces this behaviour. This will manifests itself also in the unlikely manner through which the film establishes its basic situation. One finds it hard to believe that half-brothers and sisters coming from the same village, indeed born to the same mother would not know each other, even if the ten year old boy was separated from his mother—presumably before the girl was born to her second marriage—or that they would not introduce themselves when they meet, or that the man would not reveal the links binding him to his village when he returns there. And I could still go on.

For these reasons Kézdi-Kovács' film leaves one with a feeling of half-success. Neither the profound professional care of the direction, the suggestive realism, nor the masterly photography (János Kende), nor performances from the excellent Miklós B. Székely, and Lili Monori, as the half-brother and half-sister, and Mari Törőcsik, who brings the figure and the unbalance of the mother to life with striking credibility can alleviate the roughness, the inconsequentiality of the script itself.

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Can one invite Balzac's classic hero, Lucien de Rubempré (alias Chardon),

from the first half of the 19th century to present day Budapest in order to lose again the illusions he had already lost at the time of the rise of the bourgeoisie?

Let us rush our answer. Have we not met Lady Macbeth in small towns, Romeo and Juliet in villages, can we even number the Ulysseses, Fausts, Hamlets, Don Quixotes, Svejks who have surfaced in different places and at different times? In principle, there is no barrier preventing mythological or classic heroes from entering regions far from their place of birth. Indeed, these invitations may even inspire new masterpieces.

Yet even if there are no barriers in principle, there can be regulations governing applications by these heroes for visas and for work-permits. If the really outstanding resurrections in literature and cinema are surveyed, almost without exception they have been successful only so long as they have complied with one of two conditions. Either they are archtypes who illuminate new situations in history with their powerful light (and Lucien de Rubempré is far too complex figure, too bound to his age to be suitable as the bearer of such a symbolic universality); alternatively they become satire, the vehicle for justifying the repetition of historical situations—as Marx had it—by repeating tragedy as comedy. (In our case, such a relationship between the two areas is lacking.) None of these resurrections has been able to fill both conditions at the same time. As long as the same characters bob up in the same situations, then only a picture of the same definite society could develop authentically.

Gyula Gazdag has paraphrased Balzac with great care and with great talent. However, this ambition for dual authenticity must be the reason why the film combines a witty description of the social world it centres on, brilliant in detail, yet still superficial as a whole, full of anachronisms and imperfections. The cynical careerism, the functioning of unprincipled ambition in our world is ripe for portrayal since it functions here with a vengeance.

But I think it is evident that this problem arises in different forms: one occured at a time of ravenous and unbridled individualism, free competition, when careerism and ruthless ambition were virtually legalized and accepted at least socially, if not morally; the second occurs in our world, which is bent on collectivism and which defines itself conceptually. The new emergence is, of course, no nicer, better, no more noble than the old one (ruthless ambition can never be appealing or moral, let alone socialist), but it is different, complying to different rules of the game, conditions of existence and uses different methods. Ours is a more covert, camouflaged, discreet and even Tartuffian careerism; it never becomes as open and self-revealing as it did in Balzac's world. The latter was admittedly built on the wolfish laws of free competition; ours has to adapt to a socialist definition in order to reach its goal. This is a fundamental difference with makes for unavoidable thematic and dramatic consequences if our world is to be properly portrayed.

My reservations on the story and on the hero, to Lucien Chardon reborn as László Sárdi, is therefore not that he has set out from Balzac, but that it is Balzac to whom he arrives. It does not matter that Gazdag dresses him in today's style, gives contemporary roles to the figures of the original novel, this turn of the mirror can give only the mirror image of Balzac's world, and that of ours, no matter how witty, how appealing to the intellect the play is in itself. The clothes hang loosely on these figures because social roles today are not analogous with their nominal precedents in the novel. The generation of Gyula Gazdag lost illusions different to those lost by that of Lucien de Rubempré, it lost them in a different way, faced different barriers to their careers and so on. Gazdag's film has little to say on the essence of the apparently kindred present day phenomenon, although that, in fact, seemed to be the intention of the director.

There is no space or opportunity here

to give a thorough analysis of the shifts between film and novel, period and period. But we should look more closely at two. Fortunes, careers, lives are decided in the world of drawing rooms and boudoirs in the novel. I am not denying that personal connections have an excessive role in our society too, or that much is decided here behind the scenes; I am not convinced there is any comparison between the importance of the great receptions that moved *tout Paris* with that of the informal parties thrown now and attended by one's friends and peers. In Balzac the promised land of success, of richness and power is the Press. Here and now, the Press bears no comparison. The clever and gifted careerist avoids the Press like the plague, he concentrates rather on overcoming the ramparts of the worlds of film, television, university or the Academy. The problems here are not the great abuses, transgressions and cynicism of a Press, debased in the defence of particular interests, but rather the shortcomings of the power status of the press. I could go on listing the shifts in proportion which shift this film back from 1968 to the 19th century. Consequently, whatever profit we derive from the film comes from Balzac himself and not from the adaptation.

Hamlet has been portrayed in full evening dress, in jeans, by women, and who knows what other ways during the history of the theatre. In the same way, it is possible also to appreciate artistic values in this *Lost Illusions* in jeans. The moral standards set by Gyula Gazdag, the brilliant direction of some of the scenes, some fine hits in some performances (and some misses), the ingenuity of style of the adaptation must be accorded their due. The film that tells us about the lost illusions of our age with Balzacian authenticity, however, is still awaited. I believe that Balzac's text is not needed for this but the modern equivalents of his realistic view of the world and his methods are. That Gyula Gazdag has the talents to cope with this is proved through this film, flawed as it is.

ERVIN GYERTYÁN

MARI KUTTNA

It was a great shock to all those who work at *NHQ* to hear of Mari Kuttna's recent and early death. She did a stint as visiting language editor in 1969–1970 and has been a regular contributor ever since. The Canadian critic Graham Petrie writes:

The Hungarian cinema has lost one of its firmest friends abroad with the tragically early death of the critic Mari Kuttna. Mari, who was Hungarian by birth, had lived in England for many years and was the film critic of *The Lady*. She always retained a particular affection for Hungarian cinema and wrote about it frequently for *Sight and Sound*, *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, and many other magazines. Mari is survived by her husband.

She was a warm, friendly, gregarious person anxious to share her knowledge and expertise and her love of cinema with others. I first met her at a Film Week in Budapest in 1977 and will not be the only person to miss her warm and easy companionship at any such occasion in the future.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

ANDORKA, Rudolf (b. 1931). Sociologist, on the staff of the Central Bureau of Statistics since 1962. At present heads the Methods Research Section. Main fields of research include the system of social indices, social structure and mobility, and the sociology of town and country. See "Hungary's Long Term Social Evolution," *NHQ* 75 and "A Cambridge Social Anthropologist in a Hungarian Village" (C. M. Hann: Tázlár) 84. Contributes regularly to the In Focus section.

BARABÁS, János (b. 1947). Deputy Head of the Section for International Information of the Central Committee of the HSWP. For many years headed the State Youth Commission. A graduate in sociology of the University of Budapest. Has published a number of articles on the problems of young people in social science journals as well as in magazines for the young.

CSOÓRI, Sándor (b. 1936). Poet, essayist, author of film scripts, script advisor at Hunnia Film Studios in Budapest. In addition to many volumes of poems, has published collections of essays and articles and a journal of a trip to Cuba. Wrote the scripts to several of György Kósa's films. Was awarded the Austrian Herder Prize in 1982. Has travelled widely in the US and Western Europe, reading to Hungarian audiences. Original titles of poems in this issue: *Hó emléke; Mint cigarettázó sírások; Kátrány-pecsét; Tizedik évfordulónkra; Meghalni járok a közeledbe; Aranyvasárnap; Kilátó.* See earlier poems in *NHQ* 27, 43, 64.

EMBER, Mária (b. 1931). Journalist, novelist, translator. A graduate of Budapest University in Hungarian and German. Art critic of the daily *Magyar Nemzet*. Her novel *Hajtűkanyar* (Hairpin bend), published in 1974, tells the story of the deportation of the Jews during the German occupation of Hungary in 1944.

ERDŐDY, Edit (b. 1946). Literary historian. Graduated in Hungarian and French at the University of Budapest. Works at the Institute of Literary Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences where her main field of research is 20th century Hungarian literature.

FERENCZI, László (b. 1937). For many years our regular poetry reviewer. This is his last article in that capacity but he will continue as an occasional contributor.

FODOR, András (b. 1929). Poet, translator, essayist. Vice President of the Hungarian Writers' Association. Studied at the University of Budapest and Eötvös College. Since 1959 on the staff of the National Széchényi Library. In addition to several volumes of his own poetry, has also published translations of Chaucer, Longfellow, Pushkin, Nekrasov, Auden and others. Has published a volume of essays on Béla Bartók and a biography of Stravinsky. See "Bartók — The Family Documents," *NHQ* 89. Hungarian titles of his poems in this issue: *Kőnyomat; Csőd; Görbült idő; Váltság.*

FRANK, János (b. 1925). Art critic, one of our regular art reviewers.

GYERTYÁN, Ervin (b. 1925). Our regular film critic.

GYÖRFFY, Miklós (b. 1942). Our regular reviewer of prose fiction.

HAJNÓCZY, Péter (1942–1981). Novelist, short story writer. One of his ancestors, the lawyer József Hajnóczy was beheaded in 1795 as member of the Marti-

novics Jacobin conspiracy against the Habsburgs. On the jacket of his first collection of stories, Hajnóczy wrote: "I finished my secondary schooling at an evening course, then became a rebel, a swimming bath attendant, devotional picture salesman, painter's model, boiler-man, stonemason's mate, an apprentice compositor, and a coal-heever, I have worked with dynamite, in raw material research, etc." Most of his short stories and novellas describe the world of dypsomaniacs, their troubles and brief moments of happiness and the pains of detoxication. One of the most promising prosaists of his generation; drink did for him at the age of 39. His collected works were published in 1982 in a seven hundred page volume, reviewed in this issue.

HALÁSZ, Zoltán (b. 1914). Writer and journalist. Deputy Editor of *NHQ* since its foundation. A graduate of the University of Budapest, on the staff of a daily in the 30s, became an editor and later Rome correspondent of the Hungarian News Agency (MTI); a free-lance translator between 1949-55, reader at Corvina Press 1955-60. Published a number of books on social history (among them on the renaissance chronicler Antonio Bonfini, on Louis Pasteur, on Sir Aurel Stein), as well as novels, the latest one on Chancellor Metternich. See "Transylvanian Gastronomy," *NHQ* 85, "Terra Australis," 88, and "An Hour with Dezső (Desiderius) Orbán at the Threshold of 100," 91.

HARCSA, István (b. 1947). Sociologist, on the staff of the Central Bureau of Statistics since 1972. Main fields of interest include mobility, the system of social indices, social structure. See "The Changing Social Structure of Agricultural Cooperatives," in *NHQ* 87.

HERNÁDI, Miklós (b. 1944). Writer and sociologist, a graduate in English of the University of Budapest. Has worked in publishing and on the editorial staff of various journals. Has published a novel, two books on platitudes in language, and a collection of interviews. See "Festive Behaviour in Hungary," *NHQ* 79, his interview with Ferenc Mérei, the psychologist, in 83, and " 'Accelerating Time' — A non-fiction paperback series," 87.

HOFER, Tamás (b. 1929). Ethnologist. A graduate of the University of Budapest. Section head of the Ethnographical Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and editor of *Ethnographia*. In addition to numerous books and papers on Hungarian peasant culture and society, he is the coauthor (with Edit Fél) of *Proper Peasants. Traditional Life in a Hungarian Village*. Chicago, 1969 and *Hungarian Folk Art*. Oxford, 1979. Contributes regularly to the In Focus section.

KÁDÁR, Béla (b. 1934). Economist, a graduate of the Karl Marx University of Economics, senior research fellow and departmental head of the Institute for the World Economy of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Has taught at the universities of Lima and Santiago. Five books and numerous articles discuss questions of comparative economic policy. See his "Preparing to Meet the Challenge," *NHQ* 88.

KUNT, Ernő (b. 1948). Ethnographer. Read ethnography and literature at Kossuth Lajos University, Debrecen. At present senior research worker on the staff of the Herman Ottó Museum, Miskolc. His field is folk beliefs about death, the dead and afterlife and their representation in folk art. His book *Temetők népművészete* (The folk art of cemeteries), Corvina Press, appeared in 1982.

McLAY, Margaret P. (b. 1949). Musicologist and teacher. A graduate of Glasgow University where she read Music and German. Currently completing a Ph. D. thesis

on the music of György Kurtág, for the University of Liverpool. and teaching at Chetham's School of Music, Manchester. Has lectured and written articles on contemporary Hungarian music. See "Thirty Years of Hungarian Music," *NHQ* 90.

LITVÁN, György (b. 1929). Historian, a graduate of the University of Budapest. He is research fellow at the Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. His field is modern Hungarian history, especially the study of radical movements. His recent books include *Magyar gondolat, szabad gondolat* (Hungarian thought, free thought), 1979; *Jászi Oszkár publicisztikája* (Selected writings by Oszkár Jászi), 1982 (editor).

NAGY, János (b. 1928). Secretary of State in the Foreign Ministry. Was Ambassador to Indonesia (1958–63), India (1963–67), and to the US (1968–71). Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs responsible for relations between Hungary and the developed capitalist countries (1971–1981). See his "In the Spirit of Helsinki," *NHQ* 64, "Belgrade and the Helsinki Principles," 71, and "Continuing the Policy of Détente," 79.

NYITRAI, Vera. Economist. President with the rank of a Secretary of State of the Central Bureau of Statistics where she has held various posts since 1949. Member of the International Statistical Institute and Chairman of the UN Statistical Commission. Has published a number of books and numerous articles on industrial analyses, comparative studies, and efficiency and structural surveys.

SZÉKELY, András (b. 1942). Art critic, a graduate of the University of Budapest. Worked for years as reader for Corvina Press, now on the staff of *Új Tükör*, an illustrated weekly. Author of *Spanish Painting* (in English, 1977); *An Illustrated History of Hungarian Culture* (in German, 1978); a life of Kandinsky in Hungarian, 1979. See his "Amerigo Tot Retrospective," *NHQ* 87, "Irony and Understanding," 89, "Homage to the Native Land," 90, and "Szervátiusz, Father and Son," 91.

SZÉKY, János (b. 1954). Journalist and critic. A graduate in English and Hungarian of the University of Budapest. On the staff of *Élet és Irodalom*, a literary and political weekly. See "The Sixties and the Seventies," *NHQ* 83, "Innovation — From Words to Reforms," 85, "Population Growth and Material Welfare," 86, and "'Entrepreneurial Socialism' at the Experimental Stage," 87.

SZUHAY, Péter (1954). Ethnographer. A graduate of the University of Budapest. On the staff of the Ethnographic Museum. His current research is on festive occasions in the country in present-day Hungary.

TARJÁN, Tamás (b. 1949). Our regular theatre reviewer.

TIER, Geoffrey (b. 1905). Lecturer in English (retired). Did post-graduate work at the University of Prague. Has lectured in English in Prague, Sárospatak and at the Swiss Mercantile College in London. Author of *Landmarks of English Literature* (forthcoming).

VADAS, József (b. 1946). Art critic. On the staff of Corvina Press. Writes regularly on art for various periodicals. See "Nature, Vision and Creation," *NHQ* 67, "Painting '77," 71, "István Farkas, Painter of Destiny," 74, "Art Nouveau from the 1900 Paris World Exhibition," 77, "An Art Course for Children in Budapest," 82, "Photo Balla," 85, "Becalmed — Hungarian Art 1982," 88, "Vasarely at the Budapest, Museum of Fine Arts," 90, and "Bookplates are in again," 91.

VÁRKONYI, Péter (b. 1931). Minister for Foreign Affairs. A member of the

Central Committee of the HSWP since 1975. A graduate of the Academy of Foreign Affairs. 1958–61 headed the Press Section of the Foreign Ministry: 1961–65 on the staff of the Central Committee of the HSWP; 1969–80 President of the Office of Information of the Council of Ministers; 1980–82 Editor in Chief of *Népszabadság*, the central daily of the HSWP; 1982–83 Secretary to the Central Committee of the HSWP.

VÉGH, János (b. 1936). Art historian, heads the Department of Art History at the Academy of Applied Arts in Budapest. Works include: *Sixteenth Century German Paintings in Hungarian Museums* (1972), *Early Netherlands Paintings* (1977), both from Corvina Press, Budapest, and also in English. See his reviews on "Renaissance North of the Alps, by Rózsa Feuer-Tóth," *NHQ* 73, "The Art of Master M.S., by Miklós Mojzer," 75, "The Origin of the Hungarian Crown, by Éva Kovács–Zsuzsa Lovag," 82, "A Concise Art History of Hungary," 84, "The Breakthrough to Modern Art," 89, and "Medieval Art from Transylvania," 91.

WALSH, Stephen (b. 1942). Musicologist. Read music at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. Since 1966 he has been music critic for *The Observer* and since 1976 a senior lecturer in music at University College, Cardiff. He regularly reviews records for *NHQ*. Publications include a book on the songs of Schumann and a book on Béla Bartók's chamber music for the BBC Music Guides, reviewed by János Kárpáti in *NHQ* 91. See his reviews on new records in *NHQ* 86, 87, 88, 90, and 91.

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