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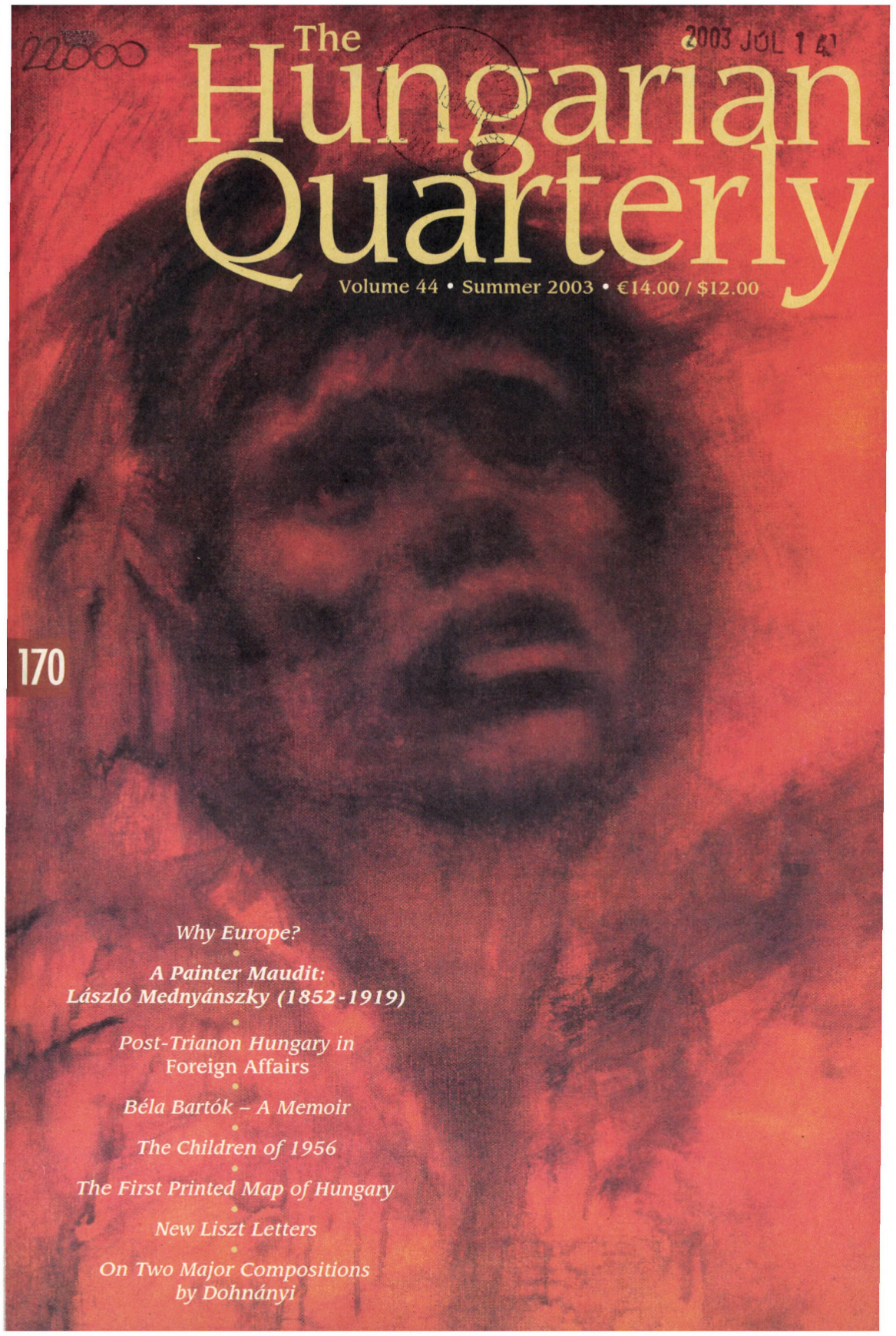

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Cover design: *Péter Nagy, from László Mednyánszky's* Head of a Tramp, *c. 1910. Photo: Zsuzsa Bokor.*

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Béla Kádár

Why Europe?

Given the chance, every nation must prepare for its rendezvous with the future. Surely it is beneficial to consider time and again what kind of Europe we are about to join, who we are and what we want.

Europe is not some mythical concept, it is not a geographical entity reaching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Ural Mountains. Nor is it the nucleus of world power, as designated by the founding fathers of geopolitics, or the symbol of historical power drainage, aging or decadence. Europe is the greatest historical meeting place in the world. For thousands of years, it has been the scene of the most intensive meeting of peoples and cultures, of human, economic and political movements. On no other continent do we find such a high level of demographical, cultural, economic and institutional intertwining: the combined creative energy of Greek philosophy, Roman law, English pragmatism, French nationalism, German efficiency, Austrian joviality, or, for that matter, of the dashing Hungarian spirit of old.

What makes Europe European? A short answer would be its evolutionary heritage. To put it simply: Europe consists of the areas where, historically, Roman law or English common law was applied, where the organic developments of the last thousand years led to the creation of constitutional monarchies, democratic forms of national and social governance, mechanisms of market economics, where the Gothic and Renaissance cathedrals were constructed, where Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, Beethoven, Chopin, Leonardo and El Greco are all part of a common cultural heritage. To be sure, culture is always a local and not a global development, but within the common European heritage, the individual national cultural identities have lived on. The Spanish have remained Spanish, the English English, and this is just as true in the European Union as it has been.

Béla Kádár

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As opposed to other regions, historical interconnections have also led to the development of similar or shared interests in Europe. In terms of economic analysis, the high status of competitiveness, individual freedom and social solidarity within the European system of values is of crucial importance. In the English speaking world, individual freedom and competitiveness are fundamental values, much more so than social solidarity. In the Asian system of values, individual freedom is restricted by competitiveness, performance and solidarity within the family. For centuries, the coexistence of competitiveness, individual freedom and social solidarity have only been characteristic of Europe. This is reflected in the social dimension of the EU, and the need to create solidarity and cohesion in its system of strategic objectives.

Despite the intimacy of economic, cultural and institutional interactions, the European market economies developed a number of unique features, which have survived to this day. The various versions of the European economic model are clearly exemplified by the differences between what are called the Thames, Rhine, Danubian or Iberian forms of capitalism. The European countries belonging to the common social, legal, and institutional framework of the European Union continue to carry the marks of their historical heritage, whilst also preserving certain features that are unique to their model, similarly to their cultural identity. Unity in diversity is not a catchphrase, it is reality.

Globalisation and the scientific, technological and information revolution of the second half of the last century have gradually loosened the traditional framework of the nation states and have created unfavourable conditions for the development of small countries and those with less bargaining power. For them, the framework of the nation state became a limiting factor. With European integration, the scope of action for small European countries expanded. With its eastward enlargement in 2004, the population of the European Union will exceed 400 million, and its GDP will be similar to that of the United States in magnitude. Intra-EU commerce will account for more than a fifth of international trade, and foreign trade with non-member states will amount to a quarter of the total, approximately twice the share of the US. Today and in the foreseeable future, the EU constitutes the largest market in the world economy with a harmonised framework and with common laws and regulations.

From time to time, at present, too, some say that the old continent has lost its vitality and its dynamism, and that its present state shows that Oswald Spengler was right more than eighty years ago when he wrote about the decline of the West. Undoubtedly, the European Union is conspicuous for the absence of statesmen of the first order such as Adenauer, Schuman, De Gaulle or De Gasperi. At the same time, however, it is undeniable that in institutional terms, the EU today is the most rapidly changing region in the world.

Following the resurgent Western European economic cooperation after the Second World War, Monetary Union and the creation of the European Payments

Union, the Treaty of Rome was signed in March 1957 by the six founding members. That established a common market. Strangely enough, this process was accelerated by the events of October and November 1956, when the Americans forced the British and French to end their occupation of Suez and tacitly approved the Soviet military intervention in Hungary. These events sent a clear signal to the Western European decision makers of the time concerning pending Soviet-American arrangements. In this respect, Hungary's role indirectly served as an important catalyst for the process of European integration. The common market, which essentially meant a free-trade area, was developed into a customs union by 1968, a single internal market by 1993 and an Economic and Monetary Union by 1998. On 1 January, 2002, the common currency of the European Union, the euro, was introduced, and work began on a common foreign and security policy and the establishment of a joint European army.

In 1971, the six founding members admitted North-Western European states into the Union, when the United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark were allowed to join; in the 1980s, Southern European states, Greece, Spain and Portugal becoming members; and in 1995, it was the turn of the neutral countries, when Sweden, Finland and Austria acceded. Now we are witnessing the fourth wave of enlargement, towards the East, which will put an end to the effectiveness of the Yalta agreement of 1945. From a historical point of view, the purpose behind eastward enlargement, its significance, is to eliminate the structure formulated at Yalta and consign that era to the history books.

The process of European integration is by no means free of the historic trauma that Europe has had to endure in the last hundred years. For about five hundred years, Europe was the nerve centre of international relations, the focal point of economic, cultural and political affairs in the world, and the most influential civilisation on the planet. But with the two world wars, two self-destructive European civil wars, the old continent destroyed its own international role and prestige, or at least weakened it. In order to avert the danger of Soviet Communism, it assumed a position of enduring dependence on the United States in terms of security and the economy. In the course of its historic development, it has transcended the phase and the illusions of empire-building—at no small cost to itself. Its strategic interests are to ensure international stability, social consolidation, and, as a pre-eminent foreign trade power, economic development, peace and security.

For countries that share the common elements of the European evolutionary heritage but are not yet members of the European Union, the European connection, or accession to the EU, reduces the costs and risks of belonging to a globalised world without frontiers. It requires no further evidence that within the framework of cooperation between countries that share the European heritage, not only geographical distances, but institutional, cultural and mental dissimilarities are also considerably smaller than those existing vis-à-vis Asian or overseas

countries. But the European Union will become fully conscious that the presence or the absence of a common European evolutionary heritage is not a historical, but rather a practical problem of integration. The costs as well as the results of integrating various countries into the EU, of developing and modernising them within the Union, will be determined by their share in this common evolutionary heritage. It is not difficult to forecast that this aspect will receive considerable attention when it comes to planning and realising future enlargements.

EU interests in eastward enlargement

The almost decade-long postponement of enlargement by EU member states, the continuous deterioration of the terms of accession and the less than enthusiastic response to eastward enlargement on the part of the Western European public make it necessary to discuss the interests motivating the European Union in the current enlargement.

On the level of power politics, some of the current member states and their most influential interest groups have long been opposed to the eastward enlargement on the assumption that it would create a "German" Europe, since Germany is not only closest to the East-Central European countries geographically, but is also their principal trading partner. The targeting of Europe's scarce resources towards the east also seems perilous from the point of view of Latin Europe and resource distribution; it is felt that it might happen at the expense of the region's own needs and the development and stabilisation of the Southern Mediterranean region, which is of crucial importance. Earlier development concepts had marked the axis of European development between Hamburg and Seville. The eastward shift in the hub of the EU and of NATO, movements along the Paris-Berlin-Warsaw, Munich-Budapest and Milan-Riga lines directly damage significant business interests. The eastward extension of the European Union's borders has also prompted fears in the countries that have so far benefited from their role as border nations.

Beyond geographical and national implications, there is clearly discernible opposition by certain target groups and sectors. Western European industrial employees' organisations considered a migration of jobs and capital eastward and the resulting rise in unemployment as the main drawback of eastward enlargement. Farmers felt it would contravene their interests by reducing the level of agricultural support available to them and by increasing competition. Small and medium-sized businesses and artisans feared a flood in imported commodities, as well as the appearance, due to the free movement of labour, of Central European competitors capable. Although the costs of eastward enlargement will amount to a mere 1.5 thousandth of the EU's annual GDP between 2004 and 2006, politicians are often keen to emphasise their efforts to safeguard taxpayers' money in their bid to find favour with voters.

Implications in terms of party politics are complex as well. The Socialist and Social Democratic parties, which are allied to trades unions, also share some of the economic reservations, such as those concerning migration of workers. Political forecasts for the Conservative and Christian Democratic forces, on the other hand, are gloomy as the accession of the Central European countries, most of which have a left-wing majority, could from their point of view have an adverse effect on the balance of power in the European Parliament, which had tipped in their favour so far.

It is, however, easy to dispel some of the earlier reservations concerning Europe turning into a "German" Europe if we examine actual economic processes in recent years. Hungarian economic relations with France, Spain, Portugal and Belgium have developed much more dynamically recently than ties with Germany and Austria. The freedom of movement for labour and capital within EU member states has also resulted in the creation of jobs and opportunities for more exports. The European Union has become a net exporter of agricultural products towards East-Central European countries, with the exception of Hungary. No matter how they are calculated, the financial burdens of enlargement cannot be regarded as excessive. At the same time, Western European decision makers, the individuals and organisations formulating public opinion and public opinion itself are not easily persuaded concerning the mutual benefits of enlargement. Under these circumstances it is nothing short of a miracle that the decision concerning enlargement was taken at all. It is not surprising that some of the Western European and international opponents of enlargement will be hoping that at least a few of the Eastern European countries will reject accession in the course of their national referenda, thereby curtailing or thwarting enlargement.

Naturally, those Western European political, business and intellectual circles who think and act on an international scale are aware that eastward enlargement will boost the potential and the competitiveness of the EU with relatively highly skilled and motivated human resources. The accession of ten new countries, some of which are in a phase of more dynamic social and economic development than current member states, could breathe new life into the old continent.

The eastward extension of the European Union's borders will also have strategic implications for the continent, given the enlargement of the European region of stability and security. From the point of view of culture, the European historical and intellectual heritage will be enriched by the diverse dowry of the accession countries. In terms of international relations, enlargement will strengthen the European identity in the America-centred globalised world, promote the need to tackle the burning problems of developing countries and the consequences of the rapid development of the Asian region. It would, however, be misleading to overestimate the numbers of those thinking in terms of European strategies. Therefore, ratifying accession by all parties involved and gaining Western European political support for enlargement will still need persuasion.

Hungarian interests in accession

Hungary's accession to the European Union will create a new environment and new conditions in virtually all fields of life. We can easily distinguish areas where accession will have clear advantages or disadvantages, or, in other words, where one side overwhelms the other. In terms of discussing the fate of the country, however, our judgement must be based not on the fine points but on entire processes, on interests in favour and those against.

Besides the great range of diverse aspects in our analysis and judgement, let us not forget that we live in a world where, ever since the Second World War, consumption and welfare have become social values. Most people assess systems, governments, processes and policies on the basis of their own social well-being. Hungary is a small country with a small economy. It is unable to provide the products and services it needs competitively. It caters for a high proportion—more than half—of its needs from imports. Therefore, Hungary needs to export goods and services to counterbalance imports and these exports need to be competitive, which means that economic development will necessarily be export-oriented.

Today, three-quarters of all Hungarian exports are bound for current EU member states, and an additional 8 to 9 per cent for countries that will either join at the same time as Hungary, or within a few years. The fact that Hungary will belong to a group of nations constituting the world's largest foreign trade market will have a beneficial effect on the country's strategic position and international standing. An ancient maxim amongst merchants is that you should build up the closest possible links with your most important partner, preferably family relations. Accession in this respect is akin to a marriage.

The settlement received by Hungary as a result of this marriage is not to be dismissed lightly. It is true that the level of support earmarked for Hungary between 2004 and 2006 is considerably less than expected, averaging a mere 0.7 per cent of the country's GDP. But in the next budgetary period, beginning in 2007, Hungarian representatives will also be participating in the allocation of EU funds. True, at the beginning of the 21st century, the economic position and the interests of EU member states differ considerably from what they were during earlier enlargements, but the Southern European countries and Ireland received resources equalling about 3 to 5 per cent of their GDP from the various funds of the European Union. Today it is impossible to predict the exact level of financial support that will be available in the budgetary period lasting from 2007 to 2013 but the level of available support is likely to be in the order of 2 to 4 per cent of Hungarian GDP.

The funds provided by the EU to its various countries, regions, micro-regions and cities are crucial for their development and competition for such moneys is increasingly intense. The last half-century has shown that there is a direct con-

nection between the development of the various countries and the level of foreign working capital that they have managed to obtain. Hungary's accelerating economic development after 1996 depended on the fact that on average, it had the highest share of foreign capital investments amongst the former socialist countries between 1990 and 1994. Annual working capital investment amounted to an average of 4 per cent of GDP throughout that period. In addition, most of this was not linked to privatisation but was green field investment. In the last three years, this figure has been halved. If this trend continues, it could slow or curtail development. The economic support received on account of accession will result in new resources becoming available for development. Furthermore, in the eyes of foreign investors, Eu membership enhances a country's appeal (if all other factors remain unchanged).

Membership will increase the Hungarian economy's rate of growth by one per cent each year. It will also assist in the country's rapid modernisation and in eliminating its relative historical backwardness, something that is crucial for Hungary's future.

As a result of thirty years of European integration, Ireland, once a British semi-colonial area, surpassed the United Kingdom in terms of per capita GDP in the year 2000. In the three Southern European countries, the gap that had existed between them and the rich Northern European countries has narrowed considerably.

In grand European strategy, membership of the EU makes it possible for Hungary to utilise the comparative advantages arising from its geopolitical position. Following the decline and the eventual disappearance of the medieval Hungarian state, the country's geopolitical position deteriorated considerably. Its territory became a battlefield, a buffer zone between East and West, between the Habsburg, Ottoman, and Russian empires. As a result of accession to and membership in the EU as part of its eastward enlargement, Hungary will no longer serve as a guardian of the borders of Europe or as a sort of advanced post, but will play an important and enduring mediatory and organisational role by utilising its geographical position, historical know-how, relations and faculties, as well as by serving as a link to the Hungarian minorities in neighbouring countries.

The implications of membership in terms of national and social security are more difficult to quantify. European integration will improve the country's standing, it will make its various processes more computable and more transparent, it will limit the irrationality of potential shifts in party politics and governance, and will reduce the country risk surcharge. In their accession treaties, the ten new member states also sign up to the objectives of the Economic and Monetary Union, with the introduction of the euro among them, and undertake to fulfil them over the medium term. Reducing the budget deficit, inflation and interest rates will undoubtedly exact a high price in terms of development. At the same time, however, the costs of maintaining a national currency and of exchanging currencies will disappear with the introduction of the euro, and

foreign trade will expand as a result of lower real interest rates. In the long run, all this could increase the rate of growth in Hungarian GDP by an additional 0.6 to 0.9 per cent.

It is always a risky business to try to quantify forfeited profits or losses that may have been. Nowadays all small countries with their own national currency are vulnerable to waves of outside speculation aimed at making a profit or exerting some kind of influence. Under existing conditions, it is easy to amass 5 to 15 billion dollars of hot money on the global money markets. This is enough to force a small country to bear significant financial losses or to bring it to its knees altogether. Membership of the euro zone is the only true protection against such attempts, since the likelihood of success against the economic potential and the foreign currency reserves of the European Union are rather slim. Gunboat or nuclear diplomacy are no longer the greatest threats to the interests of small nations. The need for economic, financial and market security and a firm stance against organised crime and terrorism have become much more important within the framework of national security. Thus the protection afforded by EU membership also brings indirect economic benefits as well as advantages in terms of national security.

By the turn of the century, the Hungarian economy, which is highly dependent on foreign trade, had practically been integrated into the international and the European system of economic cooperation. Participation in the—albeit not too efficient—work of international organisations can be interpreted as a sign of institutional integration. It is one of the peculiarities of the last century in the history of Hungary that all major international decisions shaping the fate of the nation—Trianon, Yalta, Malta—were taken by foreign powers, with Hungary itself excluded. Membership of the European Union also entails integration into the international structure of decision-making. Hungarian MEPs will sit in the European Parliament and its committees. Their room for diplomatic manoeuvring will have expanded and they will have the chance to conclude various coalitions and temporary alliances with partner nations.

Integration also promises improved chances in pursuing the national interest. Hungarians and a responsible Hungarian leadership can never forget the traumatic consequences of the country's partitioning under the Treaty of Trianon. The events of the post-war period clearly show that small countries or those with a weakened bargaining power have had much more success asserting their distinctive national interests through international or regional organisations than on their own, through bilateral relations. Small as Hungary might be, as part of a global power group, it will have enhanced opportunities to represent and defend the interests of Hungarian minorities living in non-member states, and aiding their efforts to catch up with the rest of the world.

Naturally, membership of the European Union is not a horn of plenty. It also has its disadvantages. The price of membership is the surrender of certain ele-

ments of national sovereignty. It also entails strict and rapid adaptation to the legal, economic and regulatory framework of the more highly developed nations and an increase in the requirements relating to performance and competitiveness. Adoption of the common foreign trade policy, for example, is a requisite of membership, including the EU's lower import duties. Hungary also has to accept the Union's contracted partners, sign up to its common policy concerning the provision of aid and international cooperation, and cancel or modify certain free trade agreements. As a result, the country will have to cope not only with the more intense internal competition of a large economic area, but also with the consequences of increased competition from developing nations receiving various trade concessions from the EU. There will not be any benefits or concessions available to make up for Hungary's performance deficit. It will be impossible to carry on with cheap, structurally outdated industrial and agricultural activities, which require only a low level of skills. There will be no further postponing of the crucial decisions of economic policy.

Undoubtedly, not everybody will be able to meet the requirements of accelerated adaptation and performance. Putting one's faith in better chances for those look-ing to escapist TV shows, drugs, and pleasure seeking instead of ongoing further training and the development of skills just won't work. Nor will things be easy for the unskilled or semi-skilled, or for small and medium-sized enterprises, in agriculture as well, who are up against the problems of undercapitalisation and limited access to market information. Retired people, who make up precisely thirty per cent of the population, will not have much of a chance to determine their own fate. Their living conditions will depend on the country's performance and income levels. Towns, villages and districts that are run by relatively inept or slowly reacting local authorities or those that are handicapped for some other reason, may also experience mounting problems. The advantages of membership will not manifest themselves immediately, and will certainly not be apparent to all social and economic groups to the same degree, and this is also a potential source of tension.

In the absence of more EU support, the proportion of the population that will likely be able to exploit the advantages of accession is estimated at around 20 to 35 per cent. It would, however, be an unjust mistake to link the falling behind of any part of the population to accession. If this were to happen in the near future, it would reflect Hungarian peculiarities and the lack or the adverse nature of the proper conditions for development in Hungary. Would it be fair to let slip the chance to improve the opportunities of the majority because the minority is unable to take its fate into its own hands? Is that a question of economics, politics, or ethics?

Let us also not forget that in today's increasingly globalised world, the aforementioned tensions and challenges would emerge in a few years' time anyhow, regardless of accession. But a non-member nation state will not have any out-

side resources at its disposal to ease adaptation. There is a greater variety of means available to combat social differences in a dynamic economic region. In the era of globalisation, cooperation within the framework of international organisations also entails the curbing of national sovereignty. Small nations have accepted this in the past: the experience of bygone decades has shown that the member states of international or regional organisations have greater opportunities to assert their interests than non-aligned countries.

Hungary's accession to the European Union is a historic reversal of fortunes. In historical terms, it is a farewell to Hungary's rather gloomy past, as expressed in the Hungarian national anthem, even if this farewell has not been long, nor passionate, judging by recent manifestations of public sentiment. Membership also means bidding farewell to the backwardness that has characterised Hungarian history, increasingly so in the 20th century. It is a vehicle for modernisation and development, and a farewell to an unalterable, bleak future. Membership of the Europe *sans frontières* means bidding farewell to the trauma of Trianon, even if the experience itself will never be erased from Hungarian memory. Membership means bidding farewell to Yalta and its heritage, farewell to shuttling between East and West, to being a ferry amongst nations. Hungary is now moored firmly on the West bank.

Last, but not least, membership means bidding farewell to Hungary's status as a small country, to the constricted framework of the small nation-state and the national economy, to barriers to growth, to the disadvantages of the so-called economies of scale. After the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the country's scope of action is expanding once again, and this time, the expansion is infinitely greater. Within this expanded space, Hungary will no longer be as small as it used to be on its own. Based on population, it is ranked ninth amongst the 27 current and future member states of the EU, and has every chance of forming successful coalitions with other small member states. For the first time in a long while, the number of votes it will wield and the growth in its economic potential resulting from modernisation will have a positive influence on the prospects of Hungarian national interests. Consequently, membership of the European Union will not only mean bidding farewell to a part of Hungary's troubled heritage, it is also a rendezvous with the future. ❧

Pál Békés

A Lesson in Aspiration

(Short Story)

– Thirty crowns per class? It's not excessive?
– Sorry, but...
– Sir. I am a high ranking naval lieutenant. The customary form of address is...
– I beg your pardon. I'm not good with naval ranks. As for the fee, I'm sorry, it's not negotiable. Your own commander, Captain Ripper, paid no less.
– You must mean Rear-Admiral Ripper.

Conceited imp.

– So, your superior. His rate was thirty crowns. What can we do? Expensive times.

If Pubi Kemenczy hadn't
insisted that this scoundrel
was the best English teacher

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in Pola, I'd… of course
I must remember Ripper too…
Well, he's certainly no
gentleman. Just look at
that suit! And those glasses.
Seedy little runt.

– Really?
– Really.
– Hm.

Upstart. How old can he be?
Does he even have a degree?
What's he so proud of? Being
English?

The city's crawling with these
pomposities. Ringding din of the
Franzjosephs on their breastplates.
Copperjoeys, goldenjoys. Echte
K. u. K. Kukkold. Must keep an eye
on Nora. One of them might
smuggle in his k.o.c.k.

– So, I believe that issue's settled.

Well, if that Ripper miser
didn't miss his thirty crowns,
there may be something in it.
Though I don't see it. These
English are so cocksure! That
second officer in Constantinople
was the same. Nose in the air
like he was the British Empire
itself. Openly offended that I
hit a better nine iron.

– You English always…
– Excuse me, I myself am Irish.

Ireland. Question 42. Longi-
tude, West 6–10, latitude,
North 52–55. Or thereabouts.
Northernmost: Malin Head,
southernmost: Clair Head.
Never been there. Pubi Kemenczy
was. Where was he not? Lickarse

type. What did he say? Hated the country? Or Newfoundland? Disgusting place, bald, cold, empty. Nothing but potatoes, whiskey and beggars. Good whiskey. Colony. Deserves no better. Slips off the edge of any proper map of Europe.

– Irish? O pardon me. And where is this Ireland?

Going too far perhaps. No officer would stand for such an insult. Still, it's a good question: Where is this Ireland?

O isn't he clever! Warning shot across the bows. Pitiful. I wish I knew. Perhaps it doesn't exist. Never did. Never will for me. Emerald Aisle... Even your Ireland's eye is blinded. A fiction, the whole thing. Should be torn out of the atlases, some madman's nightmirish marsh. Good question: where is it?

– Between longitudes six and ten degrees West, latitudes 52 and 55 degrees South. Northernmost point Malin Head, southernmost Mizen Head. Capital city Dublin, or, in the language of the aboriginal Celts, Baile Atha Cliath. I imagine that's enough for a first acquaintance.

Celts? Didn't they die out long ago?

– Perhaps we should resrict ourselves to English.
– Well, it would help if I was aware of the precise extent of your knowledge of the language.

Adaptable, fawning, thick-skinned Irish.

– My English is rather good, I think.
– You won't be offended if I correct you? In sentences such as this the good is preceded by fairly rather than rather. I believe you wished to say 'quite good'. Otherwise, your pronunciation of the 'th' was, to be fair, rather bad. You Germans always have difficulty with that phoneme.
– The Germans might. I myself am Hungarian.

I'll knock that out of you soon enough, scrawny teacherman. If ever you wander under my jurisdiction, I'll soon show you what Hungarians are made of.

Bull's eye! Accidental but accurate. Could be just as deucedimportant a nation as the Irish. Something I read somewhere. Kossuth... Is that a name?

– Ah, I see. Hungarian. Well, that's entirely different.
– That really is entirely different, sir. All the same, Hungarians...
– Excuse me for interrupting again, but your pronunciation of that th was unmistakably German. Please pay attention while I do it. Loosely interpolate the tip of the tongue between both rows of teeth.

Are you stealing my time? Is it my thirty crowns your drivel is directed at? On my money you're hissing? If he doesn't cut it out I'll smack him so hard on the chin he'll

bite his tongue off. Knock him out. Like Hochengraetz in Fiume at the officers' games last year. Right hook. Montecuccoli congratulated me afterwards. Wipe this filthy bedchamber with him. What took me in here? How long more is he going to hiss?

– I'm not here to learn pronunciation. My 'th's may not be the most perfect, but they suit my purposes as they are. I merely wish to brush up my English and improve my conversational skills if possible.

What in hell do thou and I have to converse about, O mine enemy?

– If you've no objection then we can get down to the English right away.
– No problem! What do you want me to talk about?

Nothing wrong with that construction. Perfectly put, that's for sure. So. So, what's your answer. Teacherman is sulking. Of course what could you talk about with this one? Devious rascal. When Pubi Kemenczy first mentioned him I thought of bringing along the kids. English wouldn't harm them. Pity I already said it to Magda. Have to make up some excuse back home. Magda would have invited him to her whist evening, she's too

What to talk about, your pomposity? Think I know? Who wants you to talk? Humiliating enough that for your miserable thirty crowns I put up with you at all. This low have I sunk. If I get a job with Berlitz, you'll hear no more of me, don't fear. My days in the wild with Cercopithecus... You're no better than my fellow Dubliners. And your phizog bears an ineffable likeness to O'Shea's. But you still have your lovely

good-hearted. Only if it suited
of course, just as well. Well.
It doesn't suit.

legs, while his languor beneath
a winch. Sailor's fate, ay!
A dirk trigidy! Be best if you didn't
utter a blind word, Fortuna's
favoured, you yet bipedal collection
of ring-ding-a-ling. To despoil this
anniversary on such as he! Nora
on the bridge, Nora on the
beach. Ah, that turbulent Thursday,
this flaccid Friday.

– Well, we can talk about your work if you don't mind.

His Lordship deigns to speak at last...

– Alright. I am a ... unfortunately I'm still not completely sure of professional navy vocabulary. The reason being I studied under a diplomat in Constantinople.
– Conversation?
– Of course. Conversation. So, how do you say Manoeuvres Officer?
– As I mentioned, I'm not well-versed in the ranks, nor in other areas of the naval discipline. What does a Manoeuvres Officer actually do?
– It depends on his superior.
– On Captain Ripper.
– On Rear-Admiral Ripper.

Ripper, ripple, riposte, unripe,
Pardon me, rippardon me.

– Pardon me. Let's say Exercise Officer.
– So I am an Exercise Officer on Sankt Georg armoured battleship

under the command of... How do you say Rear-Admiral?

– We say Rear-Admiral.
– Ah! Rear-Admiral. Rear-Admiral.
– I suggest you write down all the new words.
– Thank you, it will be unnecessary. I have an excellent memory.
– But the spelling...
– I wish to converse, not scribble.

Offensive scamp. Imagine inviting him along! Four o'clock now. Five when I get home. Bath, talk to the aide de camp. I'll be barely in time for the whist. Magda will receive the first guests. She's good at that sort of thing. If Ripper shows I'll drop a word about this boy. I wonder if Magda bought that inlaid table? Schönweider's wife was after it too. If Magda collared it from under her nose we'll play on it this evening. That will cause Schönweider a fit. Which would leave a space open. A promotion with luck.

There's another piece of ring-a-ding-ding. Scribbling is bad for you. A superfluous luxury for a society man. The ire of the writer in the ear of the reader. Clearly threatening. But Irish ire won't feed this hungry Magyar. You're not illiterate, you're just ill. God of the sea, ferocious Manoeuvres Officer! Your fart is the North wind, your piss the snotgreen swill!

– I suppose we could talk about your country.
– You mean Ungarn.
– In English your homeland is Hungary, not Ungarn.
– Naturally. I am fully aware of that. Don't elaborate.
– Excuse me. Elaboration was not even in my mind's vicinity. It was you who said Ungarn.
– A bad habit. What about Hungary?
– I was just suggesting that if

the navy is exhausted as a
topic of conversation, we
could talk about your homeland.

About Hungary? With you?

– No, let's stay in the Adriatic.
I rarely make it home these days.
– O really? You too are an emigré?

Now that's too much. That's the last straw. If the rules permitted I'd have you right now. Blackguard! Lucky for you you're unfit for a duel. A little bayonet practise wouldn't go amiss.

Janey, some fool I am. I overshot. Popping his eyes are. My thirty crowns endangered. I should know these over-decorated Christmas trees are always blood-dyed patriots. Beating their breasts till they break. I must know something about Hungary... Kossuth... Isn't that his name?

– Just because certain individuals
run away from home, no matter
how much of a dirty little
godforsaken promontory
it may be, does not mean that
gentlemen are equal to such
behaviour. You understand me.
Allow me to inform you that I
am an officer of the navy of the
Austro-Hungarian Monarchy,
posted to the Dalmatian coast-
towns of Trieste and Pola by
direct order of His Royal High-
ness the Emperor. I live here.
My residential villa is here
in the officer's district in
San Policarpo. Do I make
myself clear?

Emigré? What does Ireland have to emigrate from? Potatoes? Whatever, an emigrant is a coward.

Poor fool. Another dressing down from the good officer. Godforsaken filthy nest. What

When all is said, all emigrants are traitors. This stuffy bedroom was suspicious alright. But I see it all now. I wonder how Ripper never caught on. I'll enlighten him this evening at whist. That'll give him something to splutter about. One can't be too vigilant. An emigrant can even be a spy.

else would it be? If I thought any different I'd be snuffling around there myself. What is unbearable is to sympathise with the boor. Best to think nothing of this. Nothing at all.

– Very clear. You say your villa is in San Policarpo?

Some Eastern saint must be. Policarpo. Ponycarrot. Pottycarpet.

– That is correct.
– I arrived only recently. I barely know the town, but if I find myself out that way I'll certainly drop in.

What is he playing at? You think your smart? I'll soon give you something to write home about.

What am I playing at? I'm out of my mind.

– Unfortunately I should not say, sir, that I would gladly receive you as a guest in my house after this.

Let us save what is salvageable. Swallow that and get back to the English.

– Nor would I gladly receive you, sir, but for the moment I live on language classes so I cannot afford to be overly choosy about who I accept.

Is he mad? Well, that's that, over and done. I'll have you kicked out of Pola so fast your feet won't

Am I mad? That's it, all done. I can throw my hat at his thirty crowns. Can't pay the rent this

touch the ground. This is a naval base. No room here for dubious vagabonds. Least of all obscure four-eyed emigrants. You won't forget this day, Friday June 16, 1905, note it well, the day you made an enemy of me, and through me the entire officer class, the Empire itself...

month as it is. Ripper's loot gone on Nora's new dress. This tinsel bauble was to be our next golden egg. Scotched egg, rotten egg. Ordinary bumpkins hide their earth dumbness in mud muteness. This customer's aggression is something different. Deep-seated insecurity about his self-worth. What does he think of himself? Just as well his officer's pom-pom protocol prohibits fist-fights.

– I don't believe there's any point in continuing.

Elegantly does it, the way one leaves a casino. I shan't lose my temper over some nobody. How dare he insult an officer of the royal Emperor? I'll have you thrown out of Pola, you'll fly. I'll talk to Karl-Heinz this very evening, to put a word in with the mayor. Karl-Heinz will know how to do it. This sort ought to be interned. To deport them is a kindness.

The rent to be paid, that old bag will put us out on the street. Eviction on the horizon. Second in three months. Nora can whinge, she'll leave me like the clappers and run off with some over-blazoned prick. Ah well, flee this flea-jumped town. After all, why Pola? Why here? Peppered with sea-harlequins, brineful. K.u.K. Of the Kuk Lux family. Back to Trieste, didn't Svevo mention some bank official job in Rome? Terrible. Ten hours a day, accounts, currencies. Whatever. Better than this. His eyes are still popping. If they jumped from his skull.

– I believe you're right.

Reminds me of someone, this worm. With his profile turned to the side now... If that nose was a little more hooked... Ah, I see! A Yid!

Now, go. Go now, don't abide with me, High Ku Kock, Coxcomb von Trotha.

– Do you know who you look like? I've been thinking it over and it's just come to me.

No question. I look like Frankie-Joe. So they say. Svevo spent a week ragging me about it. My kisser looks just like your senile swine king's. So Att! En! Shun! Can't say that, that's High Kock territory. Eviction's enough, deportation is not required.

– No, I have no idea. And probably no desire to know.

You'd like to get off lightly, eh, Mr cunning teacherman? You've come to your senses! You're scared! And so you should be. But too late.

– My father had a creditor in Szombathely, a certain Leopold Blume. He naturalised, of course, to Lipót Virág... If you call that natural. His constant hounding nearly caused the family estate to vanish. The extortioner was a Jew, what else? And you look decidedly similar. No, don't deny it... just tell me this: you're not Jewish, are you?

Now, what are you grinning at? What in hell are you so pleased about, you shit-eater.

Fantastic! You've done it again! Magnificent chappie! Top-notch! And now, shall I collapse beneath this onerous accusation? Or throw down the gauntlet for the mere insinuation? This character is so believable he could be Irish! I

must follow up these Hungarians a little... perhaps we're related. Kossuth... was that his name?

– To my deep regret, milord, I am not Jewish. But believe me, it is thoroughly involuntary. Believe me: it was not my choice.

If I don't leave in the next second I'll do something I'll regret.

If he doesn't go now, I'll say something that will end the lesson in tears.

– Enough of this, sir.
– I am in complete agreement.

You'll remember this!

We'll pack our things tomorrow.

– Godspeed you, Mr Joyce.
– And you, Herr Horthy.

Translated by Stephen Humphreys

Virág Erdős

Poems

Translated by George Szirtes

A Lying Tale

Hazudós mese

Virág Erdős
is an idiomatic phrase employed in the south of Buda
like "bungee jumping",
people tend to say it when
they can't think of anything else to say.

Virág Erdős
is a natural disaster,
perpendicular,
twelve letters.

Virág Erdős
is a telecom subscriber package
providing your call
is what you chose to call about.

Virág Erdős
is a multi-purpose group of products:
it is in fact up to you what you do with her.

Virág Erdős
is an amphetamine-derivative
the only hitch being that it is difficult to stop using her.

Virág Erdős
recently graduated from Eötvös University, Budapest, in Hungarian literature, and already has four volumes of poems to her name.

Virág Erdős
is a post-traumatic stress disorder,
the kind that might cause a man sitting in front of the TV, for example,
to think of something,
leap to his feet
and do something really...wow!

Virág Erdős
is a government bond that pays interest,
but whatever you say
I'll blow the lot, no argument.

Virág Erdős
is a 'freestyle T-shirt'
bearing the message
'NO'.

Virág Erdős
is an ever more ardently protected species
like the Storkfinch, the Meadowchick and the Dwarfhawk:
to kill one, to catch one,
to disturb her natural habitat,
to collect her brood or her eggs
is expressly forbidden.

Virág Erdős
is the notorious doyenne of programme hackers,
but relax, they've tracked her down.

Virág Erdős
is "only human".

Virág Erdős
is a member of the Alliance Insurance Consortium
so it will not surprise you to know
that she guarantees you a secure long-term future.

Virág Erdős
is a Fiery Pokemon.

Virág Erdős
is a dangerous worm in your programme
you just have to click on her
and you're in deep trouble.

Virág Erdős
is a feral mutant
and I can't understand how they let her on our TV screens.

Virág Erdős
is what is called an Xtreme Sport
the kind where you find a sponsor
then smash your head against a wall.

Virág Erdős
is a wholly new remix
the only problem is
elements of hip-hop are included in the package.

Virág Erdős
no such brand name.

Virág Erdős
is one of the best known Hungarian writers
but sadly she is dead,
or rather, not dead, it's just that
she always gets home very late.

Virág Erdős
is the other *best-known Hungarian writer,*
she writes texts for sweatshirts and windscreens,
apparently, it was she who wrote:
'I love Budapest'.

Vision

Jelenés

"Woe, woe, woe" (Rev 8.13)

The first angel *is, I think, the Mirage 2000. The extent of its knowledge is enough to bring all heaven crashing about our ears... I am not a thrill seeker but that's why I'd like to see it. I zip here and there about the sky, cast my eyes round, dumping, while under me the bridges break up like pretzels.*

The second angel *is, I think, His Highness, Wacko Jacko. What I like about him is that he never ages. He's as old as my great-great-grandad but he looks barely*

twenty. Of course there's a trick involved: music certainly helps. The trick is that he is so to speak purifying part by part. Even his colon is pure surgical gold. When I think about it I can see this is the way the world works. Have fuck all to do with shit of any sort.

The third angel *is, I think, the Doberman bitch. Not the flat-arse kind, but the other one. The most recent breed that comes with replaceable dentures that you can whip out at night and slip into a little bag... and, should you feel an overwhelming desire to screw her for instance, you can bang away without worrying. She won't bite your neck while you're at it.*

The fourth angel *is, I think, the electronic woman. Her advantage is that she has a meter on her back which will tell you exactly how effective your blows are. Of course you can do plenty of other things with her besides hitting her. She costs relatively little to run. You can plug her in the mains and she is completely sterile.*

The fifth angel *is, I think, Testicle Baked in the Oven. In the Admiral Bar apparently they use male apes, but I have a suspicion they add a little something extra. I particularly like them a touch overdone.*

The sixth angel *is, I think, the new Renault Mégane. The gimmick is that it has no brakes. However much people jump up and down there is no need to stop. And it makes no difference if you lose your temper. You can easily wash the blood off the grille.*

The Seventh Angel *is, I think, a fucked-up little yellow zombie. You attack it, thinking to beat it to a pulp, but it slips through your fingers again.* Zero credit, *it proclaims with finality. It judders, ticks, waits a while longer, then turns off. And the bastard produces a message that says you have no more lives left.*

Csilla Markója

A Painter Maudit

László Mednyánszky (1852–1919)

László Mednyánszky was the most prolific and puzzling of all Hungarian painters active as the nineteenth turned into the twentieth century. The scion of an aristocratic family with its roots in what was then Upper Hungary (now Slovakia), he cared little about money, giving away his entire inherited fortune. The greater part of his huge oeuvre of several thousand paintings remains untraced to this day, since a painting was only of interest to him until he had completed it, and he was more than happy to part with it to a sitter, if he thought that might be of any assistance. Those who sat for his pictures were peasant lads, Gypsies, coachmen, suburban tramps, Bohemians and the like. A belated heir of the harrowingly "naturalist" approach of the Juseppe de Ribera, his own pictures of vagabonds were a new genre, a series of monumental figure-paintings in which there is not a trace of the false pieties or sentimentalism of the then fashionable portraiture of the poor *(Armeleutemalerei)*. His landscapes may seem to be straightforwardly naturalistic or realistic, but they are in fact surreptitious self-portraits and symbolically-laden pictures of mood. Besides the portraits and scenic views, there have also survived a group of bizarre pictures, not fitting into any known nineteenth-century genre, which deal with the nature of violence, depicting elemental forces and passions, now in action, now in a passive, suffering state. There are hundreds upon hundreds of drawings in pencil of prisoners, victims of torture and lynching, of battlefield dead. However, it was not the First World War which triggerred this odd, belligerent subject in Mednyánszky, he took it up when the *fin-de-siècle* Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was basking in luxurious display.

Ernő Kállai was one of the most perceptive of art critics of the period between the wars, whose work as a theoretician is inextricably bound up with mod-

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Csilla Markója

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ernism, helping pave the way for the emergence of abstract art not just in Hungary but, as an editor of Bauhaus publications, in Germany too. It was this pioneer of the progressive in art who, in 1943, chose to write a book on Mednyánszky, that strange, solitary giant of nineteenth-century Hungarian painting. Yet Kállai made it clear that what excited him was the singularly innovative, covertly modern character of the oeuvre. Thus, even if one's purview is restricted to the works on permanent display at the Hungarian National Gallery in Budapest (henceforward HNG), it is legitimate to ask whether Mednyánszky's paintings should more properly be hung along with painters of the nineteenth or the twentieth century.

It is startling to notice, for instance, how Mednyánszky was already applying a blot or drip technique to a stock subject of Romantic mood painting like a forest scene (*Forest Detail, c.* 1885–90, HNG): the foliage of the trees is all trickles and rag-wipes, the treatment of the surface rendering almost abstract a painting that, from a distance, looks like a 'regular' Barbizon picture. Set against nineteenth-century academic notions, not only is his choice of subjects daring (e.g. his strange portraits of tramps) but so are his technical innovations: more and more, his pictures were worked over with a palette knife, which endows even such seemingly insignificant subjects as a rock painted on a tiny canvas (*Detail in a Landscape,* HNG) with a singular grandiosity and rawness, whilst on larger canvases he paints foregrounds and their accessory figures with delicate contours and the meticulous care typical of miniatures (*Encampment, c.* 1914, private collection), yet in figure-paintings he uses sweeping painterly gestures, expressive and trenchant brush strokes in place of a sketch, to secure a monumentality of composition (*Tramp, c.* 1911–13, Damjanich János Museum, Szolnok).

To put it another way, he painted in several different styles at any one time. This is not to say that there was no stylistic development, or that Mednyánszky's works do not belong to discernible periods—that would be stretching the point. It is unquestionably more a case of his having various modes in which he expressed himself, modes that matched his chosen motifs, which in itself goes back a long time in academic painting but it gained peculiar significance with Mednyánszky. He has a dark, 'bituminous' manner, for example, a Rembrandtesque style that he reworked in Munich—dark brownish pictures referred to as a 'gallery tone', on a dark background, out of which glow carefully formed, sharply illuminated heads (e.g. *Bearded Old Man, c.* 1900, HNG). He went on to produce a whole series of portraits of old men and rabbis, with multiple references to Rembrandt's *Portrait of an Old Rabbi,* now in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence. Amongst the venerable bearded heads is also the occasional roguish or feeble-minded or nasty physiognomy. That alone is a genuine and significant gain: to be able to perfect a mode, in itself already historical, which is a highly individualised cross-section of a general style. But over and above that, at

the moment of painting his portraits of tramps in this style, he ultimately reformulated the quotation to appropriate it as his very own. One of the outstanding pieces amongst the more smooth-surfaced, academic variants in this Rembrandt gallery is owned by a private collector in Budapest. In it a sly-looking face gleams forth from the sombre background: the tramp, even with one eye swollen, a self-rolled cigarette end loosely dangling between slackly drooping lips, scornfully musters the viewer. The picture's dainty, enamel-like smoothness, perfection and finality does not sit with its coarse, vulgar subject, whilst the Rembrandtesque 'inner light' is at equally strong odds with the dissolute countenance.

Mednyánszky's approach, then, should be understood as being at once ironic and yet also deadly serious. For that very reason, however, it is no easy job to find words to describe that face; the manner in which that somewhat debauched, dissolute but, above all, insolent expression is lighted lends it a child-like frankness, innocence and holy simplicity, and now the portrait confronts us in a complex diagram that expands not just the scope of the suppositions we make about this figure, or the complexity and contradictoriness of the human features that he embodies, but also the boundaries of possibility of portraiture as such, regenerating the genre by endowing it with a new subject and a reinterpreted and, moreover, recycled mode of expression.

To what extent can this be said to be a new subject? A portrait of a tramp is not a portrait of a working man, and being a portrait, rather than a conversation piece, it protects itself against certain sentimentally moralising messages. For all his social sensitivity, and maybe even against his own views, Mednyánszky's artistic instincts protected him against moralising. Admittedly, as a young man and again during the spell of depression that followed his father's death, he tried his hand at an allegorical mode of expression; he abandoned it precisely because he considered it exaggerated, lifeless and disagreeably didactic. As far as his much-discussed activities in setting up social groups are concerned, he wrote in his journal after a particularly active period: "I have been building castles in the air, social and patriotic castles in the air, but at least it did no damage insofar as I nevertheless reached a slightly better understanding of one or two issues."[1] One might suppose, given the conventions of the time, that to depict a tramp was an act of social criticism in its own right, but in many cases the figures are just a bit too haughty and self-assured, whereas many of the frank and forthright figures in the portraits of peasants produced in conjunction with them, in an intermittent fever as it were, look decidedly weak-minded and at times almost doltish (e.g. *Peasant Lad,* after 1885, HNG). If, however, one thinks of the Biedermeier costume vagabonds and posed tavern scenes in Mihály Munkácsy's output, it has to be conceded that the working-class or peasant genre pieces fashionable in the Hungary of the time, which were to flood the

walls of exhibition halls from the middle of the first decade of the twentieth century in particular, had little to do with social criticism.

The turning-point here was to come with the growing presence in the Műcsarnok, the *Salon* of the times, of painters of the Great Plains school. In the long run, however, Mednyánszky made no attempt to hold with Millet (though there was a time when he was happy enough to imitate him[2]), who in his depictions of the fringes of society placed the emphasis on portraying work, even though he asserted that work "is no merry matter". During his period of painting canvases with pathos-laden social messages, Millet had met with near-total rejection. The reception that *The Gleaners* was given by the public at the Paris Salon in 1857 has been described in the following terms:

> Connoisseurs and artists were enraptured by the work's grandeur. Some influential critics, however, took a different view: they read the faces of the women who followed in the tracks of reapers, picking up fallen grain, as a tacit accusation on behalf of the destitute and downtrodden, whilst others declared that they were savages who represented a threat to society. Millet was greatly distressed by that injustice, which also handicapped the selling of the pictures.[3]

To defend himself, Millet wrote a letter to one art critic in which he protested against being labelled a socialist:

> I am being called a socialist, yet I would like to respond: I am no such thing, I do not even know what a socialist is!... I see the halo of light wreathing the flowers and the sun's rays tumbling through clouds onto distant worlds. But I also see the horses steaming on the land as they draw the plough, the exhausted labourer, on his feet the whole day long, as he snatches a moment's rest to gather renewed strength. Light wreathes the drama.[4]

If polite society found the spectacle of work so threatening, what would it have made, one wonders, of provocative idleness? It is hardly by chance that after his first (and only) one-man show, characteristically mounted in Paris in 1897, Mednyánszky seldom dared to exhibit his pictures of tramps, particularly in Hungary.[5] Yet how did he arrive at this strange, indeed for his time almost unique, subject?

Due to meningitis, this prematurely-born child of an aristocratic family with its roots in Upper Hungary, the northern Hungarian highlands, and thus the future heir to the estate of Beczkó castle (Beckov, Slovakia), was privately tutored. He was still a child when he was allowed to accompany the aged Thomas Ender, a renowned water-colourist, on sketching trips to the Nagyőr (Strážky) Mountains that ringed the Mednyánszky family seat, and it was from copying Ender's landscapes of the Tatras and plaster casts sent from Vienna that he acquired basic artistic skills at a very early age. He was already then breaking free from the conventions associated with his aristocratic birth, forming his first

great attachment when still an adolescent to one of the estate's coachmen. On family advice, he began studying engineering at the Zurich Institute of Technology in 1871, but the next year found him at the Munich Academy as a pupil of Strehuber, the successor as director to the celebrated Peter von Cornelius. The formal courses of the Academy bored him, however, and he felt no better in Ludovico Seitz's private school either. In 1873 he became the pupil of Isidore-Alexandre Augustin Pils, a painter of historical battle scenes at the Paris Académie des Beaux Arts.

It may have been Pils who aroused Mednyánszky's interest in a subject that was to figure in the war sketches of his later years, though in all truth the young baron needed little encouragement for it, quite apart from his social sensibilities, he had a natural curiosity for dramatic fates and events of every description. He was drawn to catastrophes: whether a flood, a volcanic eruption, an epidemic or a street disturbance, he had to be there. He recorded every moment of his life in the Greek script of his coded handwriting in one or another of several thousand notebooks. His restless nature drove him on from place to place, and it was not uncommon for him to rent studios in Budapest and Vienna simultaneously. In 1896, when Hungary was celebrating the thousandth anniversary of the arrival of the Magyar tribes in the Carpathian basin, Mednyánszky was roaming the streets of Parisian slums, passing himself off as a rag-picker, at a time when his pictures were hanging in the Millennial Exhibition at Budapest. He shared out everything he possessed, supporting numerous tramps with his dwindling income from the Beczkó estate and the trickle of money he earned from his work. Mednyánszky owed that extraordinary mobility between castes and classes which was a condition of the portraits of tramps not just to his need for independence, his legendary itinerant itch, and his critical stance towards society but also to his homosexuality, which impelled him into a promiscuous, highly mobile way of life that allowed him to hide himself in his vagrancy. In his case, homosexuality was the pledge of inter-caste mobility, of the attitude that made it possible for this scion of an aristocratic "hothouse" upbringing to form genuine relationships with those on the margin of society, which were not derived from vicariously experienced sentiments. He was in no need of initiations and no longer struck a sentimental tone; his experience of the margins, interiorized as it was, was a good deal more general than any critique of society. He writes uninhibitedly to Dávid Klein, storeman to his patron, the art-loving publisher, József Wolfner, who was the link to his own class and, simultaneously, to an assured living:

> I am still having a spot of bother with my accommodation: I am unable to use the flat I have had up to now, because a sewer has gone burst and the stench is horrendous. There is no money for a new flat, so for the last 10 days I have been sleeping here, in the cold studio, fully clothed, like a right and proper down-and-out; if I had a big

enough mirror, I would paint myself, no need to look for a sitter. I am beginning to find myself good-looking.[6]

Though meant facetiously, the communication is replete with expressions that betray an underlying seriousness: "like a right and proper down-and-out... I am beginning to find myself good-looking." The down-and-out is splendid, or to be more precise, elemental; or, to be even more precise, strong. "Anyone who wishes to be strong, let him be a medium of the strong,"[7] as he reformulated the Rilkean axiom of "in the proximity of a stronger existence." Besides down-and-outs, however, "the strong" also included peasants, fishermen and coachmen with whom Mednyánszky would have been happiest to spend his youth, and later indeed spent his life:

> Today I painted the whole day, and in the evening I went to Pest. I bought brushes, canvas and turpentine... I went on from there to Pista Varga's place, in Aradi utca. In that connection, it passed through my mind what it would have been like, when I was really young, to have had a friendship like this and been able to make friends with lots of young coachmen in big stables. How splendid the human and painterly aspect would have been.[8]

What attracted him in 'the strong' was the 'animal' essence: "Today I noticed that I have to see people as akin to animals... if I wish to have any sympathy towards them."[9] A version of the same thing, as applied to the technique of portraiture:

> In order to find what is interesting in a head, the soul that is to say, one must first search out the various fundamental parts. The corresponding animal beneath the external form. Then one has to investigate what the expression of that head would be at the highest possible degree of spiritual emotion for him.[10]

The animal in the absolute sense is, for Mednyánszky, a positive attribute as is apparent from one of his numerous notes on the nature of melancholy:

> An awareness of transience, therefore, is produced by certain physiological effects. Without this melancholy and this awareness of transience only purely animal moods are possible. Animal moods only produce joie de vivre, without any thought directed to future and past, and derive totally from consonances.[11]

Mednyánszky, who—not little influenced by the books he read, by Schopenhauer and Nietzsche in particular—regarded melancholy as a 'weak' and at one and the same time 'contemplative' state, in contrast to the joyful and uncontemplative, pure world of the strong, frequently imbued his landscapes with that melancholy; his figure-paintings, however, tend rather to depict constellations of force, forces at rest or in action. The critic Lajos Fülep's declaration that Mednyánszky's landscapes resemble Rembrandt's self-portraits thereby gains full clarification. His landscapes are indeed portraits of a transfigured

Nature impregnated with the images he formed of himself, or the mental state that he sensed as being dominant. It is indicative that one of his few presumed actual self-portraits depicts a figure with the head brooding, lost in thought, with his face buried in the palm of his hand.

At least as important, nevertheless, were the artistic influences that bore on Mednyánszky. In Paris, for example, the iconographic tradition of *'le chiffonier philosophe',* the ragpicker sage, that was transmitted to him, in part by high art, in part by the caricatures and drawings appearing in the press and popular prints, the pictorial traditions of the Bohemian underworld of Eugène Sue and Henri Murger or Baudelairean refuse collectors and absinthe drinkers as distilled into panoramic illustrations by the likes of Daumier and Gavarni. Little wonder that the one and only one-man show Mednyánszky had during his lifetime, the aforementioned exhibition at the Georges Petit Gallery, had a good critical reception: his absinthe drinkers, his nocturnal scavengers prowling the streets of the outer suburbs with sacks on their backs (*Two Tramps,* 1897, HNG; *Old and Young Tramp,* 1897, Kiscell Museum; *Street Assembly,* 1897, HNG) follow in the steps of Manet's *The Absinthe Drinker* of 1859, *The Beggar* of 1865, or *Rubbish Collectors* of 1869. Manet, who like Mednyánszky also came from an upper-class haute-bourgeois family, moved into a poor district of Paris and painted much the same portrait gallery of the Bohemian world as Mednyánszky. Itinerant Gypsies, beggars asking for alms, the Wandering Jew—these figures, emblematic in their homelessness, are transformed into 'real allegories'. In studying and copying the works of Millet, Mednyánszky combined that tradition of the *'allegorie réelle'* with an Austrian adaptation of the Barbizon tradition: "Today, I came upon the old notion of the Classical," he wrote in 1901:

> A certain mood fits certain forms of landscape, and certain types of landscape call for different actions. In themselves these are unarticulated, so one has to articulate them artificially. They have to be raised, humanised, out of absolute objectivity. Something else struck me on this occasion: the way in which a realistically rendered, tranquil background appears when figures are set before it. Sometimes it endows them with a grand, monumental feature because it points to an ineluctable dependence on the material. This is the slave in his chains, the agony of the crucified with his cross.[12]

This artistic arcanum, smouldering with the tension between a susceptibility to dramatic affinity, sadism and tragedy, on the one hand, and a meditative, doom-laden melancholy, on the other, is made up of incompatible elements of monumentality and mood painting. In his efforts to tame his own physical desires and emotions with theosophical lectures, the writings of Madame Blavatsky and Franz Hartmann, Buddhist and Rosicrucian theories, Mednyánszky compares himself with the alchemists when he writes that what is most important of all is "something in the picture that mesmerises one. A kind of 'philosopher's stone'."[13]

Mednyánszky was visiting Barbizon by 1877, and he was to return there on several occasions, but his encounter with the pre-Impressionism of the Viennese *Stimmungsrealist* school has to be regarded as at least equally important. Thanks to a brief yet highly influential interlude in Szolnok, a town on the Great Plain, the mountainous vistas and tumbling brooks of the Tatra were augmented with the flat, marshy landscapes of the Great Plain (*Marshy Great Plain Scene, c.* 1890, Damjanich János Museum, Szolnok; *Farmstead, c.* 1905, HNG, and the motif of the River Tisza winding endlessly to the horizon (*Infinite, c.* 1905, Kecskemét Gallery). Here too he was following in Austrian footsteps, for the artists' colony at Szolnok, founded by the former Imperial army officer August von Pettenkoffen, was frequented by the likes of Eugen Jettel and Tina Blau—two names that crop up time and time again in Mednyánszky's journals. He travelled with the latter to Italy in 1879–80,[14] and he was still recalling her with great respect decades later, during the First World War:

> I requested permission to go to the Isonzo, that is the only solution: there one can really see war. Around noon I went to look at Tina Blau's pictures. Wonderful! She was a great artist. Looking at all the splendid works, the days of my youth came to mind. They are caught in the manner of those times, but in many respects they remind me of the painting of László Paál, Munkácsy and Schindler.[15]

In 1887 he spent a summer with Wilhelm Bernatzik, later to be a founder of the Vienna Secession, one of whose pictures, *Winter* (*c.* 1888), on permanent exhibition at the Upper Belvedere, bears an uncanny resemblance to Mednyánszky's watercolour *Christmas* (*c.* 1883, current location uncertain). During this period, the dominant subjects of his pictures were the sylvan rapture of gloomy forest scenes, woodcutters, and illustrative, Symbolist compositions with nebulously diffuse figures, spirits, gravediggers, and the allegorical figure of Death (e.g. *Dream on the Meadow,* private collection) that he began to produce after striking up a friendship with Mihály Zichy at the Munkácsy studio. Robert Russ was another of the Viennese *Stimmungsimpressionists* who influenced him with his virtuoso handling of surface, but the most significant of the Austrians was Emil Jakob Schindler, the father of 'poetic realism' and founder of the Plankenberg school. He played a major role not only in mediating the Netherlandish painting tradition, since Mednyánszky, with his admiration for Rembrandt, was already familiar enough with that, thanks to the abundance of Dutch paintings in Hungarian and Viennese private collections, but also on account of his own affinity to Nature and a palette that made it possible for him to capture subtle, gentle, atmospherically 'ambivalent' moods (transient states such as mists and the like). "Nature is more beautiful and more poetic than man," said Schindler; around the same time Mednyánszky was saying, "Man is loathsome." Landscapes came into being without the accessory figures of "the great predator".

Mednyánszky, like Monet, thought in terms of series and sequences of pictures, though he was not so interested in the appearances of a given subject under changing light conditions as in the synaesthetic process whereby it was possible to assign moods and feelings to landscapes and seasons, in the way that Schindler planned to paint every month of the year in a different mood.[16] This synaesthetic process too, it emerges from the journals, is not without a foundation in theosophy, for in her 1888 book, *The Secret Doctrine,* Madame Blavatsky, in accordance with esoteric practice, ascribes elements, colours and tones to every planet. From the turn of the century, though, Mednyánszky was to set off on his own radical trajectory, and his notion of pictorial series became replete with bold and astonishing flights of fancy:

> The motif of heroism, depicted so often, is now only feasible if it is accompanied by some pathological feature. (A merciless brutality, though, that can easily degenerate into tastelessness.) All in all, we can say that the time of pure action and representation has gone, and the time of symbolism has not yet come. What is left is sadistically nuanced action and mood. Both can make an impact of maximum intensity if one skillfully carries them over into symbolism... Since thoughts often give rise directly to feelings, one is able to paint thoughts and chains of thoughts.[17]

The choice of wounded figures and prisoners, treated in the iconographic tradition of St Sebastian, appeared early as subjects in Mednyánszky's work. Hanging in the Slovak National Gallery, Bratislava, is a picture of two life-size prisoners, hands bound together, which Slovak art historians date to before 1895, yet canvases depicting injured fishermen, expiring figures and kneeling prisoners were already being produced around 1877. Prisoners, martyrs, casualties, acts of violence, lynchings and waylayings *The Murderer, c.* 1911, Damjanich János Museum, Szolnok)—in short, images of sado-masochism and violent death—were to accompany him throughout his life. If he was looking for a magic spell, a philosopher's stone, he found it in that: counting from the marbled rusty colours of landscapes that evoke strange, animal innards (e.g. *The Iron Gates, c.* 1895, HNG), pinkish-crimson caves (e.g. *Dusk,* 1898, HNG), monsters with smouldering, bestial gazes, and the triumphant outcasts that he produced at the very end of the nineteenth century, it took but a few years until the development of his solitary art, comparable to no-one else's, that between 1900 and 1914 gave rise to a sequence of such masterpieces as *After a Fight* (*c.* 1898–1900, HNG), *Poveerty Stricken* (*c.* 1905, Kecskemét Gallery), *Head in Hands* (*c.* 1911, Kecskemét Gallery), and *Head of a Tramp (Wounded, c.* 1914, HNG), or the expressionist period between 1911 and 1913, with works like *A Lynching* (*c.* 1911, Damjanich János Museum, Szolnok), *Tramps in the Night* and *The Tramp,* which in all respects can be regarded as the very peaks of his art.

Much the same goes for Mednyánszky's utterly idiosyncratic notions about motifs. He thought in terms not only of sequences of images (he took, and made

use of, photographs from an early date) but also of repetition and variation of formal motifs. One and the same motif or formal figure—like a tune or phrase in a musical work which vanishes only to reappear as variations—would be reworked in further pictures from time to time. Yet he went beyond even that. One can observe the traces of a peculiar hybridising, translating technique in his oeuvre, the full significance of which has yet to be explored and taken stock of. The group of three figures in *A Lynching* is present in a quite different context in the sketchbooks. There the aggressors become supportive: the grouping is formally identical, with two men flanking a third, but whereas in one case they are leading off a prisoner, in a second they are holding up an injured man, a drunk, a cripple, and in a third persecutors tear apart a victim. That grouping of two holding a third between them is re-encountered in 1909, and luckily a Greek-script caption below the small sketch on the right reveals that in this case we are dealing with a "supportive" scene: two companions are propping up and "guiding a drunk" (*Sketch for a Diary,* 1909, HNG). The small sketch on the left is the more violent. This scene, for which the caption is no more than "at night", is now beginning to look very much like *A Lynching,* that most expressionistic of Mednyánszky's pictures. The composition of the latter is unambiguously present, only inverted, in a 1911 or 1912 sketch for *They Caught One.* The motif of being found dead which featured in works of his younger days, also crops up on the same page: the caption given to this Pietà-like composition is "A wounded man found in the stable".

The posture of the principal figure, which can be traced back to a languishing formal motif in *Wounded Fisherman,* turns up again in a sketch of the extraordinary subject matter for *The Stocks* (1911–12, HNG). Still more extraordinarily, the motif of the figure bending over the languishing form, who is either inspecting the person locked in the stocks or else coming across him either wounded or dead, is also on the same page in a 'benevolent' role as someone rousing (or reviving) a resting (or flagging) companion. That 'wakening' theme recurs in a number of sketches, as if the finding of a corpse were just a 'baneful inversion' or malign subcategory of it. Likewise, the scene of propping up a drunk shows up on the right-hand side in a motif of practically identical form but opposite intent in what is clearly *Arrest.* During the First World War, however, the same frontal grouping transforms into *Old Man with Helpers.* There is no caption to give us immediate assistance here, but the tottery posture of the central figure and the stick he is holding point unequivocally in this direction. A more dynamic concept of this same trio grouping, given the caption *Fire-Raiser* (1917, HNG), has affinities with *A Lynching* yet again. The device in itself appears to have excited Mednyánszky so greatly that even six years after *A Lynching* can be presumed to have been completed, now in the midst of the war, he returned to it once again to put the three-figure grouping into several crowd scenes. In one of these the prisoner is as yet only an object of pursuit, but in the second the pursuers cut him limb from limb. The odyssey taken by this motif, and its transfor-

The Stocks, *n.d., 16 x 10 cm, pencil, ink, paper. Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest.*

mations on the way, demonstrates how Mednyánszky started out with an isolated, passive figure *(St Sebastian, Prisoner)* then placed it within a 'setting', a scene of action, but envisaging that one and the same image of pathos be realised now in a positive sense (a wounded man being succoured), now negatively (a lynching). During the war he made the suffering individual part of a crowd scene, thereby stripping the violent act of its individuality.

At the same time, motifs intersect and interact with one another. Such cross-fertilisation was long a fixation for Mednyánszky. As early as 1892, he felt that conventional genres could only be salvaged through hybridisation, and in any case, not a little influenced by his theosophical beliefs and his search for the artistic 'arcanum', he generally classed inversion as one of the higher-order procedures:

> Inversions and hybridisations. This question preoccupies me exceedingly, because one has to find a rule, a law, under which certain things are inverted or under which certain things are cross-fertilised in the conceptual world. The formula of higher operations.[18]

Hybridisation, after 'baneful inversion', is one such higher operation: crossing the three-figure grouping of *A Lynching* with the motif of *They Found Him Dead* results in a new configuration, also known in the form of *Standing Over a Grave,* a sketch made for the painting *Grave in the Carpathians* (1906–10, HNG).

Mednyánszky was quite probably unique, and not just in Hungary, in his daring handling of these inverting and hybridising motifs. Over and beyond the fact that he created a perfect symbiosis of form and content in his use of motifs, his recourse to inversions and hybridisations hints at, and pictorially embodies, Heraclitus' concept that every form is merely a transient, momentary vessel for diverse contents that may, on occasion, be diametrically opposed to one another. Mednyánszky's sketches express nothing less than the fact that contradictory interpretations may co-exist simultaneously for one and the same configuration; that there is no form for which the content is not a matter of interpretation. Moreover, just as modern (and indeed post-modern) poets invoke multiple significations of one and the same word in their poems, Mednyánszky introduces a pictorial syntax in which polysemy and ambiguity receive a privileged place. That is an audacious step on which even the post-Impressionists did not dare to embark; indeed, to raise the issue at all is, in principle, more characteristic of modernity. Admittedly, for the time being the only evidence we have that Mednyánszky approached what, from another perspective, might be seen as a technical issue in such philosophical depth exists in the form of his notebooks and sketches.

It is still just conceivable that finished pictures in which, on the one hand, a surgeon dresses the wounds of an injured man seated on a chair whilst, on the other, the same figure, now as interrogator or torturer, binds his prisoner may yet come to light. As yet, however, we know this fresh 'baneful inversion' only from a sketch which likewise came into being through a process of cross-fertilisation. In the upper left-hand corner of a page in a notebook containing rescue scenes from flood and conflagration is a tiny vignette that amalgamates the motif of the discovery of a corpse and that of awakening, with a helping man bending over an inert seated figure. Judging from the posture in the next incarnation, a sketch captioned *Naked* in a 1917 notebook, it is probably a surgeon who is bending over his injured patient, removing a piece of shrapnel or dressing a wound. From the aggressive gestures of the two figures on either side of the seated man in the 1912 sketch, by contrast, it is clear that here we are dealing with a violent act.

This was not the first time that a torture scene had appeared in the sketchbooks. The compulsive interest that he displayed in the nature of human violence can be likened only to that of Goya. A lengthy passage dealing with the theoretical aspects of sadism, which is accompanied by illustrative drawings of torture scenes, provides an overall exposition of the artistic reasons for that interest:

> Application of this theory [i.e. the theory of sadism] to art.
>
> These observations are very important from the standpoint of art since they offer a clarification of the sort of emotional impact that I am in any case often seeking to touch on in my paintings.
>
> Through precise definition of these emotional elements it will be easier for me to evoke pure, and thus strong and not composite, effects with my pictures.

Bokor Zsuzsa

After a Fight, *c. 1898–1900, 85 x 65 cm, oil, canvas, Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest.*

László Mednyánszky (1852–1919)

Peasant Lad, *after 1885, 41 x 29.5 cm, oil, canvas, Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest.*

Bokor Zsuzsa

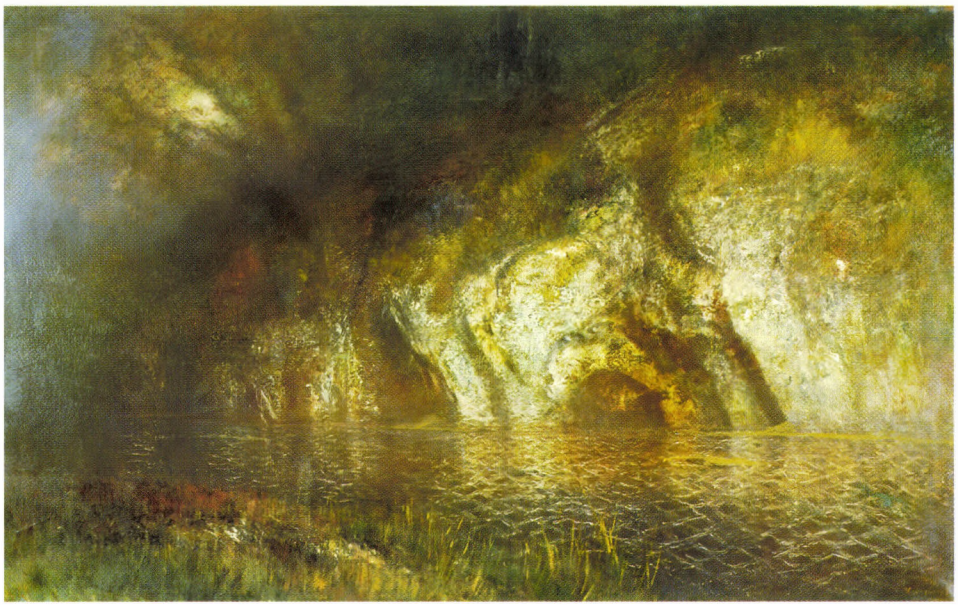
Two Tramps, *1897, 35 x 22 cm, cardboard, Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest.*

Mester Tibor

Bokor Zsuzsa

In the Woods, *c. 1885–1890, 85 x 69.5 cm, oil, canvas,*
Hungarian National Galery, Budapest.

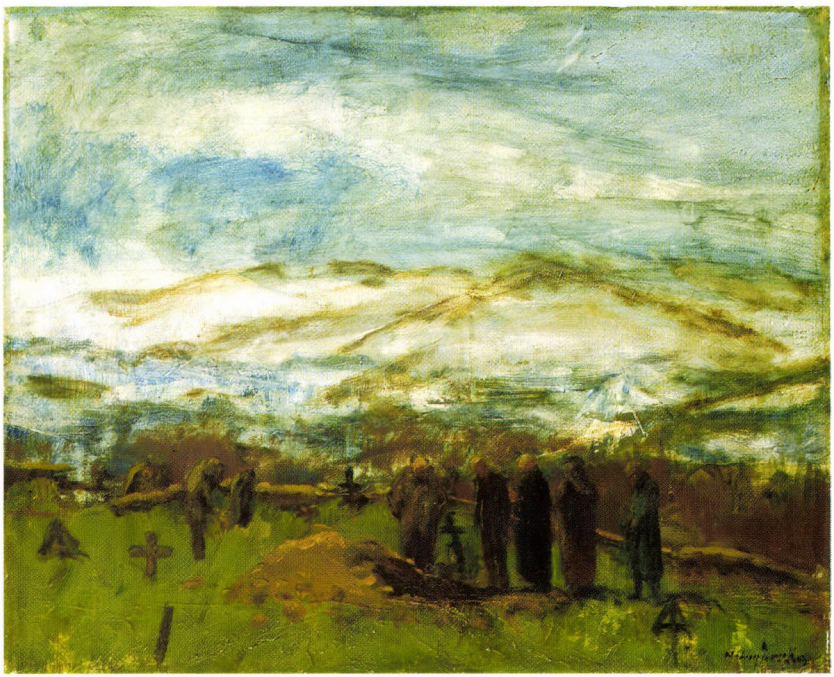
László Mednyánszky (1852–1919)



BOKOR ZSUZSA

Dusk, *c. 1898, 200 x 320 cm, oil, canvas, Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest.*

Grave in the Carpathians, *c. 1906–10 (?), 53 x 43 cm, oil, canvas, Hungarian National Galery, Budapest.*



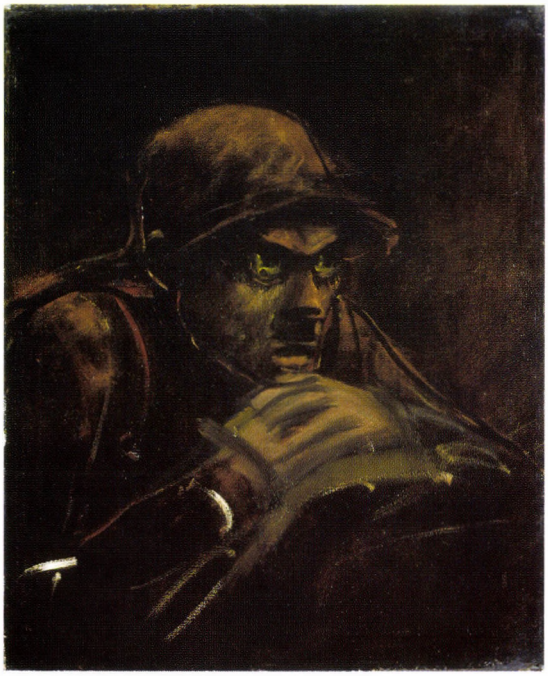
BOKOR ZSUZSA

Bearded Old Man, *c. 1900, 70,8 x 57.5 cm, oil, canvas, Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest.*

Bokor Zsuzsa

Poverty Stricken, *c. 1905, 123 x 137 cm, oil, fibre, Kecskemét Gallery, Glücks Collection.*

Mester Tibor

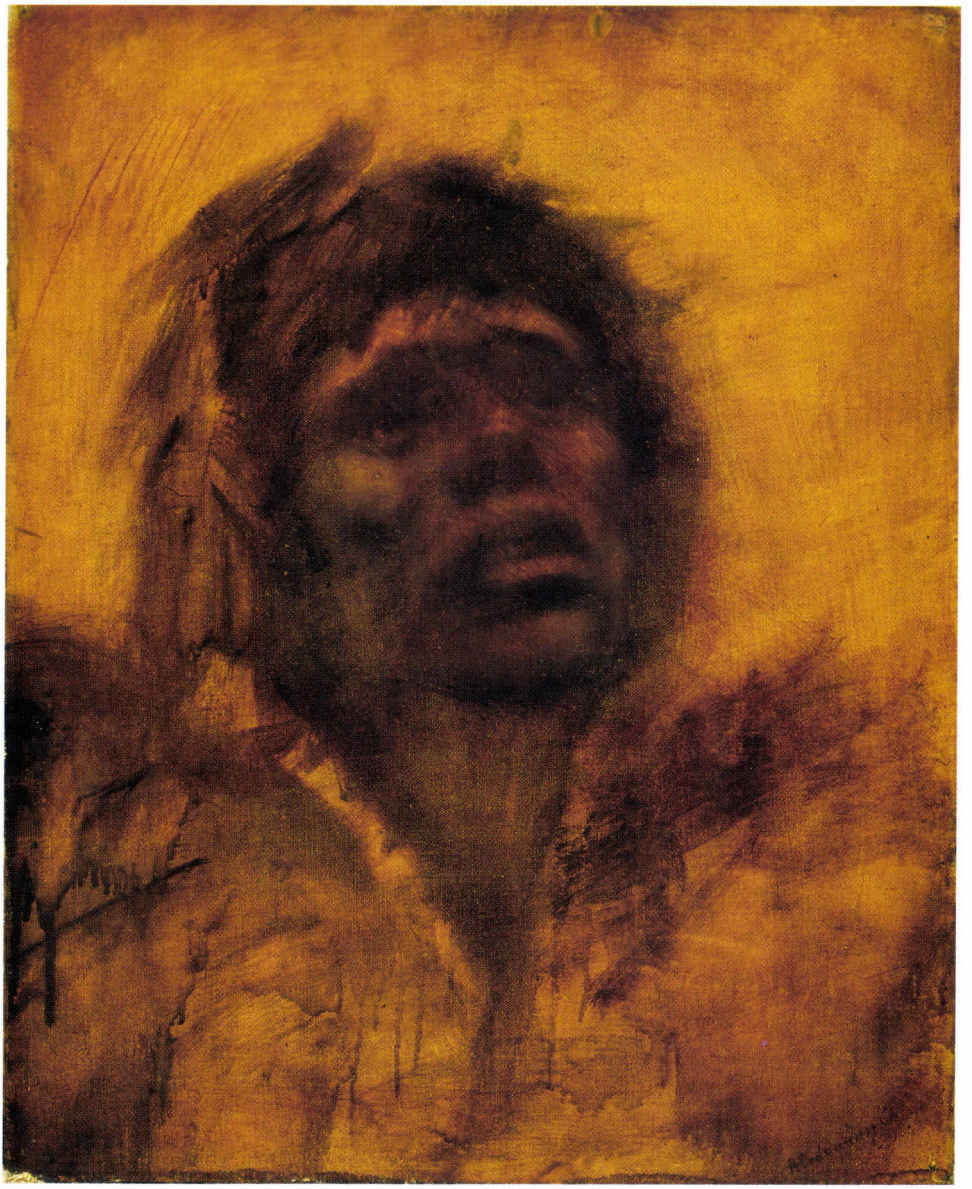


Head in Hands, *c. 1911, 84 x 68 cm, oil, fibre, Kecskemét Gallery, Glücks Collection.*

Mester Tibor

Bokor Zsuzsa

The Murderer, *c. 1911, 73 x 102 cm, oil, canvas, Damjanich János Museum, Szolnok.*



BOKOR ZSUZSA

Head of a Tramp, *c. 1910, 61 x 45 cm, oil, canvas,*
Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest.

László Mednyánszky (1852–1919)

BOKOR ZSUZSA

A Lynching, *c. 1911, 23.5 x 31 cm, oil, canvas, Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest.*

Bokor Zsuzsa

In Serbia, *1914, 67.6 x 100 cm, oil, canvas, Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest.*

MESTER TIBOR

Decay, *c. 1917, 70 x 100 cm, oil, cardboard, Kecskemét Gallery, Glücks Collection.*

MESTER TIBOR

Soldiers Resting, *1916, 64 x 80 cm, oil, canvas, Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest.*

MESTER TIBOR

The Wounded Man, c. 1917, oil, wood, 40.5 x 29.5 cm, Hungarian National Gallery.

Both the subject (the act) and the manner of the concept and its depiction have an important role in this respect.

In any event, the highest rank is generally due to those in which the aspiration exercises its impact in the sense of evolution, or in other words intellectuality. The impact, however, naturally also depends just as much on the way it is painted. From the point of view of the general art loving public, what is most interesting these days is what aims in the horizontal direction of self-annihilation. Especially if there is something of the sacrilegious about it. E.g. vivisection in the presence of a sadistically roused spectator.

The carrying out of an excruciating sentence in which one of the judges shows unmistakeable signs of sadistic and emotional arousal.

The subject has to be depicted in such a way that the mental process is made clearly visible...

With landscapes an atmosphere in the sense outlined above may be achieved indirectly through the physiological impact of colours, lines, forms.

With representations that aim in the horizontal and crudely sensual direction the strictest realism is necessary, with regard to both the principal subject and the accessories.

With representations in the ascendant or intellectual direction it is necessary to take advantage of every artistically permitted liberty. In this case, a lack of primitive, still-life realism is in no way disturbing; indeed, there is a need for that freedom in order to achieve a concordant and strong impact.[19]

These peculiar preoccupations with the nature of force and violence were destined to achieve a vindication in the First World War, in which the 62-year-old painter was a volunteer war artist. He visited the front lines to make sketches of the fighting and was himself wounded. Exhaustion and progressive illness took their toll. He died in 1919 in the penurious surroundings of his Viennese studio. The war brought Mednyánszky's art to a full fruition, a consummation (*In Serbia,* 1914, HNG; *The Wounded Man,* 1917, HNG; *Trench with Dead Soldiers;* Modern Hungarian Gallery, Pécs; *Standing in Line,* 1916, Damjanich János Museum, Szolnok). His initial enthusiasm for it addressed a long-felt attraction, a realisation of thematic concerns that pushed his art towards the representation of catastrophes and the at times demonic forces that are at work in men. In his battlefield pictures the corpses merge in morbid harmony or, one might say, sensual rapture with Nature (*Decay, c.* 1917, Kecskemét Gallery).

Those sketches stand for nothing less than the idea that contradictory interpretations may co-exist simultaneously for one and the same configuration; that there is no form for which the content is not a question of interpretation. In advancing this notion, Mednyánszky anticipated not only the Hungarian plein-air school and the progressive art of the early twentieth century but also, to some extent, modern art as we now understand it. The intention of deliberately using specific formal motifs and configurations over and over again to produce more condensed expressions of the interplay of energies and forces, yet without having to renounce fidelity to reality and the landscape tradition of Barbizon in the

process, led Mednyánszky to make a number of compositional discoveries. He learned how to paint monumentally, and through his monumental art he came ever closer to his artistic ideal of all-embracing, sweeping, painting for painting's sake. The first discovery that he made *en route* to this monumental style was in the domain of scales and horizontal lines:

> It was always one of my ideals to picture a chunk of Nature for myself fantastically enlarged—enlarged so greatly that people are able to stroll beneath the leaves of strawberry plants. That is how I had to put myself again into the mood in which everything seemed so large. Displacement of the point of view. The horizon has to be either lowered or raised higher. In that way everything can be enlarged to a fantastic size, quite arbitrarily, and it is strange that then we get it right, because everything that surrounds us really is big. What is trivial and ridiculous—that is the appearance. Every person is a miracle of grandeur.[20]

That journal entry discloses virtually all there is to say about Mednyánszky's frame of mind and artistic disposition. He sets out from a whim, a painter's vision, and by envisaging this concretely by dealing with issues of painterly technique he ends up at the most general philosophical questions of how the world is viewed. His strength as an artist, his arcane secret, derives fundamentally from this attitude of an ever child-like fantasising or confabulating: his remorseless self-criticism associated with a tendency to aggrandise and his conscious holding fast to reality as experienced ensured that, even as he stayed at least partially within conventions, he was able to bring off something that the greatest of his contemporaries in Europe, the post-Impressionists, discoverers of a monumental, synthetic, utterly simplified mode of expression in painting, were able to accomplish only through confrontation with accepted schemata.

Mednyánszky's art is truly extraordinary, and the fact that it is not more widely known, even within the countries of the one-time Austro-Hungarian Empire, is only partly explained by the Iron Curtain or the provincial context of their domestic art. Mednyánszky did not set a new trend; he came across things to develop further in pictorial conventions that elsewhere were deemed obsolescent, played out, ready for the scrap-heap. He was not in a hurry. Notions of rapid development and competition were foreign to him. He trimmed off the hyperbole of Romantic painting, crammed the snapshot images of the Impressionists with enduring content, raised the *intime paysage,* the inner landscape, to the monumental, and he fashioned an expressionist drama from genre painting by omitting the superficially picturesque. Yet he also painted out-and-out post-Impressionist pictures that show hardly any trace of his roots in naturalism (*Old Man, c.* 1914, HNG). He was a virtuoso of a kind who is capable of arousing our interest time and time again, not so much with large masterpieces—though paintings such as *After a Fight, Poverty Stricken* or *In Serbia* are masterpieces by any standard—as by the profound otherness of his way of looking at things, the protean variability of his forms.

It is high time that Mednyánszky was rediscovered. One way to do that will be to view the retrospective exhibition, embracing some 500 of his works, that is due to open at the National Gallery, Budapest, in October 2003, and will move on subsequently to the Slovak National Gallery, Bratislava, and finally, in the autumn of 2004, to the Upper Belvedere in Vienna. ❧

NOTES

1 ■ Dated Beczkó, Monday, September 16th, 1910, in: Ilona P. Brestyánszky, *Mednyánszky-kiolvasások. Eredeti, a kihúzott részeket is tartalmazó gépirat* (Mednyánszky Readings: The Original Typescript, Including Deleted Passages). Hungarian National Gallery Archive 21849/1983.

2 ■ "Paris... A few sketches, inspired by Millet" (these have been tentatively dated to 1890–91), in: Ilona P. Brestyánszky, ed.: *Mednyánszky László naplója* (The Journals of László Mednyánszky), p. 65.

3 ■ Nándor Lepnik: *A barbizoni művészek* (The Barbizon Artists). Budapest, Lampel Róbert (Wodianer és fiai), n. d., p. 49.

4 ■ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

5 ■ He sporadically exhibited pictures of tramps at the Műcsarnok (Exhibition Hall) in Budapest, but it is clear from the press of the day that these were subjected to withering criticism on more than one occasion.

6 ■ Letter to Dávid Klein, dated Vienna, September 19th, 1912.

7 ■ 1913 journal entry (Notebook 19). Rózsffy Legacy, 50.

8 ■ Ilona P. Brestyánszky, ed.: *Mednyánszky László naplója*, p. 55.

9 ■ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

10■ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

11■ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

12■ Spalato, (Split) June 8th, 1901, *ibid.*, p. 72.

13■ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

14■ "Twilight, by a bridge under which a marshy brook flows between white poplars with still completely denuded boles, was particularly marvellous. The sky displayed that pearly dark-grey that I have tried so often to imitate. The boles of the trees were light, flecked with black. The water was a curious cold greenish-blue and shining; to the right of the field of view a warm-coloured marshy-green, covered with dry sedges and other aquatic plants... Whilst I was looking for Tina Blau, I made the acquaintance of Giuseppe Sava. Today I was at the Palatinus with Fräulein Tina Blau. I saw a very pretty motif." From: Zsófia Kiss-Szemán, "Mednyánszky László naplója, 1877–1881" (The Journals of László Mednyánszky 1877–1881), *Enigma* No. 24–25 (2000): pp. 336–337. (The original is held by the Slovak National Gallery Archives, Bratislava).

15■ Monday, September 10th, 1917, in: Ilona P. Brestyánszky, ed.: *Mednyánszky László naplója*, p. 144.

16■ *Natürliche Natur. Österreichische Malerei des Stimmungsrealismus.* Kunsthaus, Mürzzuschlag, 1994, pp. 218–222.

17■ Written *c.* 1895. "Az önmegsemmisítés vízszintes irányában. Válogatás Mednyánszky László kiadatlan naplófeljegyzéseiből (In the Horizontal Direction of Self-destruction. A Selection from the Unpublished Journals of László Mednyánszky)," *Enigma* No. 24–25 (2000): 79.

18■ Ilona P. Brestyánszky, ed.: Mednyánszky László naplója, p. 19.

19■ Diary entry for August 17th, 1917, in: Ilona P. Brestyánszky, *Mednyánszky-kiolvasások...*

20■ Ilona P. Brestyánszky, ed., *Mednyánszky László naplója*, p. 68.

István Örkény

One Minute Stories

All short literary genres—epigrammes, aphorisms, parables, anecdotes, etc.—are as old as literature itself. Legend has it, however, that the one-minute short story is István Örkény's (1912–1979) own creation. In the late fifties, in total isolation, barred, as a renegade Communist, from publishing because of his affiliation with the 1956 Revolution, he gradually felt his way towards the genre of the one-minute story. The label followed later, the first collection appearing in 1968 and establishing itself in the public mind as Örkény's patent.

There is some truth in Örkény's alleged pioneering role in the discovery, so much so that nowadays none would dare write one-minute stories, because Örkény shaped the self-discovered genre entirely to suit his own talent. Still, he did mention models and predecessors, one of them being Kafka, his aphorisms and parables, the short allegorical stories in his first volume, Betrachtung *(Observation), and he also liked to mention the short portraits in some of the newspaper reportage in Dezső Kosztolányi's volume* From Cradle to Coffin, *and the lyrical, aphoristic notes in Jules Renard's diary. One could as well quote Tzvetan Todorov who, when asked where do the different genres originate, said "Well, quite simply, in other genres."*

Nearly all short literary genres can be found among the sources and antecedents of Örkény's one-minute stories, but more important is the fact that they are ostentatiously, provocatively reduced ad absurdum, and parodised. This is the same kind of reduction that Beckett applies in Godot: *it removes the age-old paraphernalia of the genre, thought indispensable: conflict, action, character, catharsis, etc. are all gone. In fiction, Örkény likewise does away with narrator, story, description, and, as parody is never finicky, he may borrow from anywhere from folklore to the armoury of popular culture. His one-minute stories are often objets trouvées that encapsulate some of the absurdity of the age in a succinct and hilarious manner. The text printed, for example, on the back of a Budapest tramway transfer ticket finds its way into the collection untouched by the author—to become a tiny monument to bureaucratic stupidity.*

What makes the collection unique is the essence of twentieth-century Central European history, memories of the world wars, revolutions, occupations, dictatorships, forced labour and POW camps, the Holocaust, failed reforms, empty slogans and all the enormous misery and suffering that these entailed, the total, unfathomable absurdity of it all exploding in our face in little human situations presented in the simplest possible way which is, however, sometimes the equivalent of considerable sophistication.

Miklós Györffy

Handling instructions

Despite their brevity, the pieces in this book are fully fledged short stories. They have the advantage of saving us time, since they do not require our attention for weeks on end. While the soft-boiled egg is boiling or the number you are dialling is engaged, read one of these One Minute Stories. General malaise or shattered nerves are no objection. You can read them sitting down or standing up, in fine weather or foul, even on a crowded bus. Most can even be enjoyed on a walk.

Do pay attention to the titles, though. The author strove for brevity, so he had to choose meaningful labels. Before boarding a tramcar, we check the number. The title is a likewise important appuartenance of these stories

Which does not mean, of course, that just gloucing at the titles will be enough. First the title, then the story. It's the only proper manner of handling.

Attention! If something is not clear to you, reread the story in question. If it is still not clear to you, the story is at fault. There are no dim-witted readers, only badly written One Minute Stories!

Official statement by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

Thanks to long and heated struggle championed by the Board of our Society, the Rabbit Stew and Fish Soup Plant has just inaugurated a new workshop called the Can Opener.

There the newly canned tins of rabbit stew and fish soup are reopened, drained of liquid, and the chunks of meat and fish are reconstituted and returned to their original habitat, where they are released.

We herewith wish to express our sincere gratitude to the management of the Rabbit Stew and Fish Soup Plant, who have finally come to interpret correctly the true meaning of humanitarianism!

In memoriam Dr H.G.K.

"Hölderlin ist ihnen unbekannt?"[1] Dr H.G.K. asked as he dug the pit for the horse's carcass.

"Who is that?" the German guard growled.

"The author of Hyperion," said Dr H.G.K., who had a positive passion for explanations. "The greatest figure of German Romanticism. How about Heine?"

"Who're them guys?" the guard growled.

"Poets," Dr H.G.K. said. "But Schiller. Surely you have heard of Schiller?"

"I have," the German guard said.

1 ■ "You're not familiar with Hölderlin?"

"And Rilke?"

"Him, too," the German guard said and, turning the colour of paprika, shot Dr H.G.K. in the back of the head.

A quick lesson in foreign affairs

I'd been to all the fuel depots in the neighbourhood. I even went to the timber-slide. But in vain. It is so difficult to obtain anything these days. Then somebody called my attention to a basement on the outskirts, whose manager—a resourceful guy quick on the up and up—was said to be able to get you anything, provided you took him some rum.

I didn't even have to buy any; we had rum at home, real Cuban rum! I found the basement. There were eight steps leading down to it. I hadn't gone half way with the rum in my briefcase, when a man called from below:

"We're out of German Democratic briquettes!"

I finished my descent, greeted the man, and put the rum out on the sheet-iron table covered in coal dust.

"I don't want briquettes," I said.

"What do you want, then?" the man inquired with a quick glance at the rum.

"I'd like to buy some fission material," I said.

Wherever I'd been till then, I was told in no uncertain terms that they didn't have any. But this time, the man stepped closer to the rum, read the label, allowed his eyes to rest on the sugar-cane printed on the label, then said:

"Maybe I can scrape a bit of pitchblende ore together for you."

That made me laugh.

" You've got to be kidding! "I said. You don't really expect me to start hutching at home, in my own kitchenette?"

I grabbed the rum and put it back in my briefcase. That did the trick.

"What's your hurry?" the man said. "Just tell me exactly what it is you're after. Who knows. Maybe I can help after all."

"As if he didn't know," I thought, but I explained to him anyway—patiently, I might add—that I needed the usual radioactive element, namely, the pure uranium isotope 233.

"Of course, if you don't have any," I added, "a bit of plutonium 239 might do the trick."

I took the rum out of my briefcase once again and placed it on the sheet-iron table covered in coal dust. I said nothing. Neither did he. But he took the bottle of rum with him to the back and put it inside a rickety file cabinet. What's the use of all the talk? By this dumb-show we made it mutually understood that the deal was on. The coal-merchant was being captious just for the sake of appearances.

"Do you have a carrier rocket, if I may be so bold?" he asked.

"I do." I answered curtly.

I didn't furnish the details. I knew that if I were to tell him all the trouble I went to until I happened upon a small co-operative in nearby Csillaghegy where they managed to piece together, with some difficulty, a medium-range rocket for me—I had to part with an English-action pianino and six bolts of rough linen, and not just a bottle of rum to get it—I'd drive up the price of the fission material. My calculations were correct. The coal-merchant quoted me a surprisingly low price, and I counted the money out on the sheet-iron table.

"Did you bring a container?" he asked.

"I don't have one on me," I said.

"In that case, it's gonna be two forints for the bottle deposit."

I paid him the two forints.

"Cork?" he asked.

I didn't have a cork on me either.

He sighed. Then he tore off a bit of newspaper, rolled it up, and used it to block the neck of an unwashed mineral water bottle. He'd taken it from the rickety cabinet where he'd hidden the rum just before.

"Want it wrapped?" he asked.

"Don't bother," I said.

"Come back soon," he said, then cordially led me up the steps. When we reached street level, he commented:

"I hope it is for peaceful purposes."

"Naturally," I said.

"I only asked because you seem like such a joker," he said, and wagged his finger at me.

Meat loaf

Grind the meat, combine with an egg, a roll soaked in milk, add salt and black pepper, shape into patties, and fry in hot lard or oil.

Please note: For us mammals it is not coincidental whether we grind the meat, or we end up in the grinder.

Appetite

Far, far away, beyond the double barbed wire fence, a sled came into sight. Like in a fairy tale, it was drawn by two small hairy horses, it was driven by a small man in a big fur hat, and it was laden with loaves of lovely dark bread even from a distance.

It came three times a week, and all eight thousand of us watched it every single time. Sometimes it brought skinned horse heads that grinned at us, yellow toothed, from a distance. Sometimes it was salted fish or millet or tinned food. It felt good to watch, even if watching did us no good, because as it reached the

camp gate the sled turned in the direction of the warehouses, where a hefty portion of the food was invariably stolen.

That day, though, things took a different turn. A miracle, but the gate opened up, and the small man in the fur hat made for the *lagerstrasse,* the main road of the camp. Instantly, the camp came alive with a great rumble, as if the earth had split in two.

The camp had four streets. The barracks were squatting in eight rows deep in the snow. The doors opened, the roads filled up with people, black ants teamed towards the main gate.

It didn't take a minute.

The black ants heaved themselves on the sled from all sides, billowing and surging on top, like the clashing of the waves in a sea of worms. They swarmed over each other for a couple of minutes, trampling each other under foot, then they headed back over the main road in droves, dispersed along the side streets, and disappeared inside the barracks.

Only the sled remained, but the bread was gone, and so were the two little hairy horses, and the little driver in the fur hat. Only the empty sled, the whip handle and the parts of the horse gear not made of leather remained—a couple of chains and buckles and rings. Oh, and also a cluster of keys.

Information

He's been sitting inside the main gate, behind a small sliding window, for the past fourteen years. People ask him only one of two questions.

"Which way to Montex?"

And he says:

"First floor, to the left."

The second question is:

"Where can I find Elastic Gum Residue Recycling?"

To which he replies:

"Second floor. Second door to the right."

For fourteen years, he has never erred. Everyone was given proper instruction. Only once did it happen that a lady walked up to the sliding window and asked him one of the two usual questions:

"Can you tell me please where I can find the Montex offices?"

But this time, exceptionally, he gazed into the far distance, then said:

"We all come from nothing, and to a great big fucking nothing shall we return."

The lady complained to the management. The complaint was investigated, debated, then dropped.

After all, it was no big deal.

Perpetuum mobile

Auspitz said that back home he was a bakery apprentice on Veress Pálné Street. He told us that he'd eat a two-pound loaf of bread in the morning, tucked under his arm. He weighed two-hundred pounds at that time.

"How much do you think I weigh now?"

We couldn't say. As things stood, he didn't even go to the latrine any more, which was a bad sign, and he only drank water, which was even worse. He kept drinking water. He wasn't even thirsty, but he kept taking it in like a drain.

His clothes were full of nits—another bad sign. The only way to curb lice is to keep killing them. Otherwise they multiply and fill the folds of your garments with their nits, especially around the warm parts of the body. Auspitz's armpits had turned grey from the nits. We didn't say anything. At such a juncture, words are of no avail.

One night he was twisting and turning so much, I woke up.

I asked him:

"Tell me, Auspitz, what are you doing?"

He said:

"I'm eating."

I asked:

"What are you eating, Auspitz?"

He said:

"I'm eating nits, you see. And, you see, lice."

I lit a match, but blew it out right away. The front line had moved very close, we weren't even allowed to smoke at night. But I caught a glimpse of his face. It was calm, with a sense of near-satisfaction. I said to him:

"Don't talk nonsense, Auspitz."

"Should I wait for them to suck my life's blood?" he asked.

We have two weeks at most to hold out, he explained, and if he eats the lice, he'll manage the two weeks with ease, because nothing will go to waste. Every drop of blood they suck from him is ingested back in, and he won't get weaker or stronger.

"In which case, you have invented the perpetuum mobile," I said to him.

He didn't know what that was. I told him it's something that doesn't need energy. He didn't understand that either. While he was eating the nits, I explained the perpetuum mobile to him. At last, we fell asleep. In the morning I tried to shake him awake, but he was gone.

Choice

"Good morning, madam.

"Can I help you, sir?"

"I wish to buy a brown hat."

"What type would you like? Sporty? Traditional? Wide-brimmed?"

"Which would you recommend, madam?"

"Let's try this one. It's light, not too dark, and not too light. Have a look in the mirror."

"It doesn't look half bad."

"It's got your name written all over it."

"Still, if you don't mind, could you show me another style?"

"Naturally. This one, too, would look perfect on you."

"Indeed. It looks very good. I don't know which one to chose."

"How about the third? We get many compliments on this one from our customers, and it looks just as dashing as the first two."

"You're right. What's the difference in price?"

"They cost the same."

"What about the quality?"

"I can safely say that they are of equal quality."

"In that case, what is the difference between the three hats I just tried on?"

"Nothing, sir. I don't even have three brown men's hats."

"How many have you got?"

"Just this one."

"The one I tried on three times in succession?"

"Yes, sir. Which one will you take?"

"I can't quite decide. Maybe the first."

"It looks the best. Not that the other two look any the worse."

"True, true... still, I think I'll stick with the first one."

"As you wish, sir. Have a nice day."

Tulip in crisis

Who would have thought?

It never complained. It was in the best of health. Its bulb had just yielded flowers for the seventh year in a row, in the window of a couple, both of whom were retired teachers. It was in full bloom, the previous night it had thoroughly fertilised its pistils, then peacefully slept through the night. But at five in the morning—flowers are early risers—it flung itself into the street from the fourth floor window.

At first the police assumed that someone had pushed it with intent to kill. They questioned the retired teachers, who denied the charges. They watered it, they insisted; they loved it and shed profuse tears over its untimely death. The lieutenant-colonel who lived below them substantiated their testimony. A couple of days later, the charges were dropped.

The suicide-bent tulip was purple in colour. It was introverted by nature, and according to people of the neighbourhood, it lived only for itself. Consequently,

it couldn't have been disillusioned or disturbed. Why, then, did it want to throw away its life?

The answer came one week later, when the wife of the lieutenant-colonel was doing her spring cleaning and she found the tulip's farewell note on her balcony. She took it up to the fourth floor, where the former teacher read the garbled letters scribbled on the paper.

"When you read this note, I shall no longer be among the living. Dear sir, dear Aunt Irma, forgive me. I couldn't help it. I don't want to be a tulip any more."

"What could it have wanted to be, poor thing?" Aunt Irma wondered.

"There's nothing about that here," her husband said.

"A tulip," said Aunt Irma with a shake of her head. "The very idea!"

Survival

As one of the lesser defendents in a major political trial, and although innocent, he had been sentenced for life, and spent six years in solitary confinement. Jail had done in the other defendants, each having been hit in his weakest spot—the heart, the lungs, or his mental state.

Since he had an oversensitive nervous system, just into his sixth week in solitary, he already suffered a crying fit. But as he collapsed over the table top, he saw an ant. He was so fascinated, he even forgot to cry.

He watched the ant struggling with a tiny breadcrumb. With a flick of the tip of his nail, he rolled the crumb further and further away. He spent the morning making the ant crawl round the table.

For the night he put it inside an empty medicine vial, and the following day, he made it climb up a matchstick. He soon realised that it would be much easier to train the small animal with a shred of meat rather than a crumb of bread, and indeed, by the end of the eighth month, he managed to get it to see-saw on top of two matchsticks placed diagonally across each other. Though that hesitant crawling back and forth could hardly be called see-sawing even with the best of intentions, still, his achievement made him almost happy.

When he'd finished serving his third year, he was allowed to ask for paper, pen, and reading materials as a reward for good conduct. Proud and defiant, he rejected the offer. Besides, by then the ant could roll a poppy seed, which had remained from the Christmas noodles, back and forth. Still, he was not satisfied even with this remarkable feat, because it still lay within the limits of an ant's existence. The difference would begin with it standing on two feet... It took eighteen months, but he succeeded.

After a further eighteen months he was discretely informed that he'd soon be rehabilitated and discharged. By then he was ready with the great spectacle: while standing on its hind legs, the ant threw the poppy seed up in the air, then

caught it. In short, one could now safely say – even if only with the best of intentions, as before—that it had learned to play ball!

"Hand me a magnifying glass," he said to his sons with an enigmatic smile after their first dinner at home. "I have a trained ant!"

"Where?" his wife asked.

They turned the vial round and round. They examined it with a magnifying glass, even held it close to the lamp. Nothing. But strangest of all, he himself couldn't see it either any more!

Inquiry into the state of my health

"Hello!"

"Hello, there!"

"How are you?"

"Very well, thank you."

"And your health?"

"Couldn't be better."

"But what's that rope you're dragging behind you?

"Oh, that!" I said, looking behind me. That's my guts!"

From a French perspective

"Excuse me for asking across the table like this and intruding on your conversation when we're not even acquainted. But are you Turkish?"

"No. We're Hungarian."

"Hungarian? What a coincidence! I have a friend that's Hungarian. From time to time, we play chess right here, in this bistro. Maybe you know him. His name is Jan Slavomir Strhach."

"I'm afraid not. But judging by his name, he's not Hungarian."

"Why? Which country do Hungarians live in?"

"They live in Hungary."

"The country whose capital in Bucharest?"

"No. The capital of Hungary is Budapest."

"Oh, of course, of course! Excuse me for the intrusion. Now I understand!"

Let's learn foreign languages

I don't speak German.

Between Budionniy and Alexayevka we had to push a bunch of cannons up a hill because they were stuck up to the hub in the mud. When it was my turn again for the third time and the heavy camp cannon started slipping when we were midway up the incline, I pretended I had to go urgently and made myself scarce.

I knew the way to our sector. I crossed a large sunflower field and found myself in the stubble. The greasy black soil stuck to my boots like the lead weight used by divers to reach the bottom of the sea. I must have walked about twenty minutes when I ran head on into a Hungarian corporal and a German, but I didn't know what he was, because I wasn't familiar with the German insignia of rank. It was bad enough that I'd run into them of all people, because the field was completely flat.

The corporal was standing, while the German was sitting on a small camp chair with his legs spread wide. The lance sergeant was smoking, the German was eating. He pressed some cheese cream out of a tube that looked like toothpaste on a slice of bread, and gave me a look, ordering me to stop.

"Was sucht er hier?" he asked.

"What are you doing here?" the corporal translated.

I told him I got cut off from my outfit.

"Er hat seine Einheit verloren," the corporal said.

"Warum ohne Waffe?"

"Where is your rifle?" the lance sergeant asked.

I told him I was in forced labour.

"Jude," the corporal said.

This much even I understood. I explained that I wasn't Jewish, but I was called in to a special forced labour company because I was the distributor of the newspaper *Népszava* in Győr.

"Was?" the German asked.

"Jude," the corporal said.

The German stood up. He brushed the breadcrumbs off his jacket.

"Ich werde ihn erschiessen," he said.

"The Feldwebel will shoot you," the corporal translated.

I could feel myself break out in sweat. My stomach was churning. The German twisted the cap back on the cream cheese tube and took up his gun. Maybe if I spoke German I could have explained that I wasn't wearing a yellow armband so I couldn't have been a Jew, and then events would have taken a different turn.

"Er soll zehn Schritte weiter gehen."

"Take ten steps forward," the corporal said.

I took ten steps forward. Meanwhile, I was up to my ankle in the mud.

"Gut."

"Fine."

I stopped. The Feldwebel aimed his gun at me. All I remember is that my head suddenly grew terribly heavy and my insides almost exploded. The Feldwebel lowered his gun.

"Was ist sein letzter Wunsch?" he asked.

"What is your last wish?" the corporal said.

I said I'd like to go.

"Er will scheissen," the corporal translated.

"Gut."

"Fine."

While I squatted, the Feldwebel kept his gun at the ready. When I stood up, he raised it.

"Fertig?" he asked.

"Ready?"

I told him I was ready.

"Fertig," the corporal said.

The Feldwebel's gun must have kicked upwards because he aimed at my navel. I stood like that for a minute or so. Then, as he continued to aim his gun, the Feldwebel said,

"Er soll hupfen."

"Frog leap," the corporal translated.

The frog leaps were followed by crawls, and after the crawls, push-ups. Finally, the Feldwebel said, about-face.

I did an about-face.

"Stechschritt!"

"Goose-step!" the corporal said.

"Marsch!" the Feldwebel commanded.

"Forward march!" the corporal translated.

I started marching. It was next to impossible to walk, much less march. The mud balls flew above my head. I could advance only maddeningly slow, and all the time I could feel the Feldwebel's gun aimed at the middle of my back. I could still point to the spot where the barrel of the gun was pointing. If the mud hadn't been there, my terror wouldn't have lasted more than five minutes. But as it was, it must have been half an hour or so before I dared lower myself on the ground and look back.

I don't speak Italian either. I have no gift for languages, I fear. Last year, when I went to Rimini on a ten-day package tour with Ibusz Travel, one night, in front of the luxury hotel Regina Palace, I recognized the Feldwebel. I had no luck. If I had reached there half a minute earlier, I'd have beaten him to an inch of his life. But as things stood, he didn't even notice me. He and his group boarded a glass-topped red coach while, for lack of speaking foreign languages, all I could do was scream in Hungarian:

"Stop! Stop! Get that Fascist son of a bitch off that bus!"

The doorman, a dark-skinned Sudanese who was half a head taller than I, threatened me with his finger and waved to me to get lost. I couldn't even explain to him what had happened, even though he might have spoken French and English as well as Italian. Not like me. I, alas, speak nothing but Hungarian.

Has anyone seen her?

On the 7th of this month, at 5:30 p.m., Mrs. K. Fehér, née Márta Flügl, went to the movies and hasn't been seen since. Mrs. Fehér, forty-one-year-old, domiciled in Budapest, has been described as tall or, rather, short, prone to gain weight, lean and lanky, that is. Her eyes are blue or green, possibly black. Her hair colour could be anything, her winter coat is dark blue or rust brown, though possibly grey with fur trimming. (Correction: the trim is not fur but velvet, though possibly the coat has no trim at all.) Special characteristics: she is a female.

Any leads will be highly appreciated by:

Her distraught husband

Thoughts from the basement

The ball flew through a broken window and landed in the basement corridor. One of the children, the fourteen-year-old daughter of the concierge, hobbled down after it. A tram had cut off one of her feet, poor thing, and she was happy if she could pick up the ball for the other children.

The basement was in semi-darkness. Still, she noticed something stirring in a corner.

"Kitty!" the concierge's daughter with the wooden leg called out. "What are you doing there, dear little kitty?"

She grabbed the ball, and hurried off with it as fast as she could.

The old, ugly and foul-smelling rat—for it was the rat that had been taken for a kitten—was stunned. No one had ever talked to him like this before.

Up till then everyone had hated him, pelted him with coal, or fled screaming for their lives.

And now, for the first time he thought how different everything would have been if only he'd been born a kitten.

Or better yet—how insatiable we all are—he continued weaving the web of his reveries—if only he could have been born the daughter of a concierge who had a wooden leg!

But that was almost too beautiful, and he couldn't even imagine it in earnest.

Give and take

1. *Receipt*

I, the undersigned Jutka Hallada hereby declare and attest that in the course of the day I have sucked eight decilitres of milk from the breast of my mother, Dr. Mrs. Ernő Hallada, who resides in Budapest. Since the milk was of good

quality and sufficient in quantity, I hereby declare and attest that I have no further claims of any sort on Dr. Mrs. Ernõ Hallada of Budapest.

Jutka Hallada m.p.
Infant

2. *Declaration*

I, the undersigned Dr. Mrs. Ernõ Hallada of Budapest hereby declare that the transfer of eight decilitres of milk to Jutka Hallada, also of Budapest, was not a burden to me but, on the contrary, a source of relief. Accordingly, I will demand no compensation of any kind whatsoever from Jutka Hallada, neither in the form of gratitude nor material remuneration, at any time, either now in the future.

Dr. Mrs. Ernő Hallada
Mother

A number of variations on self-realisation

I won't deny it. Like most children, I too had silly dreams for a bright future. I would have liked to be a pilot, a locomotive driver or, worst comes to worst, a locomotive. Sometimes I'd even overshoot the mark and decide that when I grow up, I'd become the Vienna express.

A distant relative, the titular abbot Dr. Kniza, who was an erudite and sober-minded gentleman, attempted to persuade me to become a pebble. I found the infinity and the round silence an attractive prospect. On the other hand, my mother was just the opposite. She wanted me to find a link-up with time. "Go and become an egg, dear," she'd say from time to time. "An egg is birth and death together. Passing time inside a fragile shell. Anything might become of an egg," she urged.

But life is unpredictable, and I am now sand in an hourglass, possibly so that they should both be right. Sand is timelessness itself, while the hourglass is the ancient symbol of transience. It is even found among Egyptian hieroglyphs, meaning: "The sun's on the way down," "Good Lord, how time doth fly," "The migratory birds are gathering for takeoff," and "What makes me so dizzy, doctor?"

Landing such a comfortable job is not easy, but it is to Uncle Kniza's credit that though he didn't approve of my compromising my principles in this way, he pulled some strings, and I was hired as casual sand. (I'm casual because they use me only for cooking eggs, and in this mother was again right.) Everything went smoothly for a time, and I was beginning to think that I'd managed to put my life in order, when the trouble began. From one day to the next, I got lumpy, which for sand is as catastrophic as a pot belly is for a dancer. (Except, with us, it's not a matter of growing old. Sand does not age.)

Presently, the situation is as follows: I can slip my legs through, but my backside gets stuck in the neck between the two bulbs more and more frequently. I've tried trickling down the other way around, head first. But the end result is the same; I end up struggling, hands and feet akimbo, sometimes for hours on end. The eggs stop cooking, the hour glass comes to a halt, and all the sand above me wait with nothing to do. They do not rush me. They do not say a word. But even with their bare presence they exert a mute moral pressure on me that rubs me the wrong way. I can't even say that it's not my fault, because it is. Clearly, I must have had a propensity for lumps all along. In short, I am basically wild, rebellious, and contrary—totally unfit for sand.

At such times, one has so many thoughts! Anyone who sees me today will find it incredible, but I could have become vacuum in an incandescent lamp. Also, just imagine. There was a girl, attractive, not too smart, her name was Panni, and she worked at the Batiste and Silk Works. Anyway, once she said to me, "Listen, why don't you come with me? We'll make a pair of ladies' panties out of you." My feelings were hurt at the time, but now, even that seems like unbounded joy. Being a pair of ladies' panties doesn't offer much diversity, but it's got a certain *je ne sais quois* to it just the same.

And now, here I am again, stuck in the bottleneck, from which place I wish to send word to all those who had expected me to make something of myself that although I received nothing but bad advice from my loved ones, I have no one to blame for having chosen this unadventurous but secure career but myself. Had I dared to take chances, with a bit of luck, and without anyone having to pull strings—because I was acquainted with the man who designed the world's largest ocean liner—I could have been somebody. If, for instance, he'd have thought of me instead of the seven-thousand tonne Queen Mary, instead of being forced to pull in my stomach in order to slip through this goshdarn isthmus, I could be proudly plowing the ocean now, riding over waves as tall as a tower, braving raging storms!

Sorry. It's okay. I managed to squeeze through. I'm trickling down.

On the nature of art

Just about every Molière play ends with a notary and his scribe being called, and a marriage contract or a will being signed.

It was thanks to this circumstance that F.O. could already take up his final position during the first stage rehearsal. The main characters had to move around furniture that was only indicated by marks, but he had a scribe's lectern, which had previously done duty in a number of Molière pieces, brought on stage for him. Though the baldachin of the sick-bed partially hid the small table from view, it was fully equipped with paper, an ink well, and in the ink well, two feather quills.

"You won't be up to your old tricks again, Feri, will you?" the director asked turning to him.

"What an idea," O. shot back.

He'd been with the theatre for twenty-six years. The previous year, which was his jubilee, he was given a diploma, a bottle of champagne, and some words of congratulation. The most he could achieve during the quarter of a century he'd spent with the theatre was to be allowed to say a sentence or two instead of proceeding with his usual silent parts. In the meanwhile, he'd tried repeatedly to make something out of nothing, but all his attempts in that direction had disastrous consequences.

This time he made up his mind to heed the director's warning. He sat down by the small lectern, and silently—indeed, practically invisibly—took down the will of the dying father.

During the sixth rehearsal, he began sneezing, hawking and hemming. He stopped writing, took out a huge red-chequered handkerchief, and blew his nose as loud as a trumpet. That much colour, he hoped, he could afford to sneak in.

However, when he blew his nose for the third time, the director caught on.

"A cold, Feri old boy?" he inquired.

"Seems so," Feri said. "I wonder where I got it."

He couldn't sleep for two nights afterwards. He blamed himself. He was sorry he'd turned to something as shallow and trivial as blowing his nose. He wondered how he could build up the figure of the scribe from inside him.

The answer offered itself, and on the third day he moved his lectern in just a bit. After all, only half his face could be seen from behind the brocade draperies even so. From there he first cast piercing, then disparaging, and finally, disdainful glances at the dying father. The fact of the matter was that as a result of the sleepless nights, the scribe grew up without a father, cast out, in the countryside, with never a kind word from anyone. He always envied anyone with a father. Consequently, he experienced dramatic moments by the dying man's bedside, for it was the first time he'd stood face to face with a heartless father who was disinheriting his son in his will.

He couldn't even get himself to write. He kept looking up, his glance full of hate.

The actor playing the dying father became unnerved.

"Why are you staring at me like that?" he asked.

The director came over.

"Up to your old trick again, Feri old boy?"

"I'm just reacting," he said, hurt to the quick, "to him being such a bad father."

"Well, write, what is said" the director shouted, "write! Not react!"

He took a deep breath, dipped the quill into the ink well, and wrote. For days he couldn't think of anything. But then something began to take shape. And then this something took positive form.

At first nothing happened. He sat with a deadpan expression and wrote what the dying father dictated. Then he made a show of annoyance. It wasn't his fault if the old quill pen got clogged up. He shook it. He put it in his mouth and licked the feather clean. But even so, there was an ink blot! He gave a pained shake of the head. He tried the other pen, but that didn't write either. The insiders, who were watching the rehearsal from the auditorium, were all looking on as he struggled with the pens. He took out a penknife and carved the quill. He was just about to test it when the father, who was on his last breath, raised himself on his elbow.

The rehearsal stopped and sharp, hard words were exchanged. But let's not dwell on these humiliating moments.

F. O. grew despondent. For days he wrote like an automaton, without making a sound. But on the opening night, something snapped. Just before curtain time, when he was still in the dressing room, a brand new approach to his role occurred to him, one in which, despite its daring, no one could possibly find anything objectionable. He asked for a piece of black tulle. He got linen. No matter.

On opening night, the scribe entered the scene with a mourning band on his arm. Since he was dressed in black, nobody noticed the narrow band. His face was the very image of serenity; no one would have guessed that he had just lost his only daughter, the consolation of his old age, his beloved Jennie... He sat down and wrote. His soul was in turmoil, for the sight of the dying father brought back memories of his own dead Jennie. When the father had breathed his last, it was all he could do to suppress a tear. But he controlled himself with admirable fortitude and, indeed, no one was the wiser.

The show was a resounding success. The critics heaped praises on the actors. But they only had eyes for the superficial and showy characterizations. They didn't even so much as mention the scribe. O. shrugged it off. What do they know about art! One must do something extraordinary even if no one is looking... But was it worth it? he asked himself. It most certainly was.

Slaughterhouse

First we were taken to an observation tower, from where we could see the full panorama. Next we admired the Renaissance court of the presidential palace. Then we visited a mineral spring where—encouraged by our guide—we tasted the sour but medicinal waters of the well. We got in the coach again, and the loudspeaker praised the beauty of the Inner City. We also stopped in front of the National Gallery. I looked at the sculpture collection, but I was overtaken by pain and didn't continue with the group. They also got to see a couple of beautiful Rembrandts and Breughels.

"And now," the loudspeaker announced, "we will visit the slaughterhouse, one of the capital city's most modern institutions. The slaughter of the animals proceeds according to such humane, I might even say noble principles, that ladies with weak nerves and children too can watch without trepidation."

We passed along huge halls. Everything was bathed in light. Soft music reverberated between the marble walls, with not a bellow or grunt to disturb the mood. Our path led all the way from the weighing station to the ham smoking and tenderising station, and everything was different from what I had imagined. I did not see animals frozen with fear or grunting, squealing with terror, nor did I spot any young muscular butchers bearing down with their heavy axes. The beef-cattle, the hogs, the sheep appeared through snow-white corridors into a huge room, where they gradually turned sleepy, lay down, and passed on as smoothly as a boat glides over an isthmus into still water.

I pulled our guide aside.

"I would like to ask you for a favour," I said.

"It is out of the question," she said.

"I have my reasons," I said.

"So do they all," she said.

"I wouldn't be ungrateful," I said.

"I've been offered fortunes," she said.

"Why is it just the sheep?" I said.

"I'm sorry, it is strictly forbidden," she said.

Budapest

On Calvin Square a bus crashed into a tree. Next, every tram in the city came to a stop. Everything stopped, even the toy train in the toy shop window. Everywhere, silence. A little later something gave off a rasping sound, but it was just a page from a newspaper being swept along by the wind. Then it was thrown against a wall, and the silence grew even more profound.

Eight minutes after the atomic bomb exploded the electricity went out, and immediately afterwards, the last gramophone recording wound down over the radio. An hour later, the water taps began to give off a slurping sound, then the water stopped running. The foliage, too, turned as dry as a tin roof. The semaphore gave the go-ahead, but the last express from Vienna never made it to the station. By morning, the water cooled down in the boiler of its locomotive.

Within a month, the parks were overgrown with weeds and oats grew in the sand boxes of the children's playgrounds. The delicious drinks, too, evaporated on the innkeepers' shelves. All the foodstuffs, all the leather goods and library books were eaten by the mice. Mice are marvellously prolific; they have litters as often as five times a year. In a short time they filled the streets like some sort of velvety, mud-like, billowing stonework.

They took over the flats, the beds in the plats, the rows of seats in the theatres. They even got into the Opera House, where *La Traviata* was the latest performance. When they had gnawed through the last string of the last violin, the twang was the swan song of Budapest.

But by the following day, right across the street from the Opera, a sign appeared, attached to the stones of a ruined building:

"Dr. Mrs. Varsányi, mouse exterminator. You bring the bacon, I catch the mice."

Translated by Judith Sollosy

György Litván

Post-Trianon Hungary in *Foreign Affairs*

A Correspondence

The debate in question started in the United States eighty years ago. It was about the position and international standing of Hungary after the Treaty of Trianon.

The participants were six in number. Oszkár Jászi, a sociologist and bourgeois-radical politician, had been Minister for National Minorities in the Károlyi government of late 1918. Count Albert Apponyi, a leading political figure since the turn of the century, had headed the Hungarian delegation at the Paris Peace Conference. Count László Széchényi was Royal Hungarian Minister in Washington, DC. On the American side, William R. Castle was chief of the Division of Western European Affairs at the State Department, Archibald Gary Coolidge was a Harvard professor and the editor of *Foreign Affairs,* and Hamilton Fish Armstrong was on the staff of the same journal. Valuable research on the subject of this article has been done in recent years by two young Hungarian historians: Tibor Glant on Apponyi's visit to the United States, and Gergely Romsics on articles in *Foreign Affairs* relevant to Hungary. The author would like to thank them for the information and documents they have made available.

Oszkár Jászi had been a leading figure in the Hungarian democratic revolution that broke out in 1918, but during the short-lived Hungarian Soviet Republic, which followed it, he went into exile in Vienna. As a prominent member of the democratic exile community, he edited the *Bécsi Magyar Újság* (Vienna Hungarian News), which appeared until 1923, and struggled, even in harness with leaders of the surrounding Little Entente countries, to overthrow the Hungarian counter-revolutionary regime and bring about peace and reconciliation in the Danube Basin. Jászi arrived in New York in September 1923 after long preparations. He was to make a countrywide lecture tour to present his ideas and plans for

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the Danube region and to unmask the Horthy regime as a threat to regional peace, combatting its propaganda among American academics and students.

Jászi had been born in 1875 in Nagykároly (Carei), ceded to Romania under the peace treaty, and he arrived on a Romanian passport with a visa issued by the United States consul in Bucharest. He could not have known that he owed his visa to luck and the goodwill of Consul Palmer, since Géza Daruváry, the Hungarian Foreign Minister, had ordered his country's Washington envoy months before to ensure the Americans did not authorise Jászi's entry. In the State Department at the time Hungarian Prime Minister, Count István Bethlen, Minister to the U.S. Count László Széchényi, and the latter's American wife, née Gladys Vanderbilt, exercised considerable influence. Castle, a close personal friend of Széchényi's, had done his utmost to keep Jászi out, and according to Széchényi's report, remarked after the event, "There is nothing to be said about the matter except to apologise."

Jászi's presence was even less desirable because it coincided with the arrival of Count Albert Apponyi, the grand old man of Hungarian conservative politics. He was there to put his reputation, connections (and fluent English) behind an application for a loan approved by the League of Nations vital to Hungary's economic consolidation, which members of the Hungarian emigré community were trying to make conditional on the regime granting democratic rights (universal suffrage, etc.). The situation would obviously lead to a clash between the two men and their supporters, which soon occurred.

On his arrival, Jászi wasted no time in recruiting support from the liberal press in New York. On September 16, *The New York Times* carried a long interview with him under the headline "Jászi Here to Aid Hungary's Peoples". A further interview in the same paper on October 7 was headed "Jászi Says Apponyi is Hapsburg Aid". Jászi's trump card was Apponyi's royalist position, which he played in the knowledge that the American public was inimical to the deposed house of Habsburg. He did so not without grounds, but not quite justly, because the Count was there to make political preparations for the loan. Jászi, however, warned the Americans that the loan would be used for purposes of which they would not approve. The next article about Apponyi appeared in *The Nation* on October 10. This presented, with respect but without any embellishment, the political career of the Count. It emphasised his opposition to extending the franchise, his support for the wartime alliance with Germany, and the fact that Apponyi, having requested and received life-saving assistance from Mihály Károlyi during the 1919 Communist dictatorship, later made no move to defend the ex-president in exile. On the other hand, the article conceded that the Count was the only leading politician in Hungary to have boldly opposed the White Terror of 1919–20.

Apponyi replied to the *Times* interviews in an open letter published in the paper on October 11. He naturally accused Jászi of being unpatriotic in trying to obstruct the loan. He contrasted his own work on behalf of "democratic pro-

gress" with that of Jászi and his associates, with their "unnecessary and frivolous revolution" and responsibility for its consequences.

The reply from Jászi, who had moved on to Washington and was busy with his lectures, did not appear until October 21, under the headline "Apponyi and the Loan", slightly shortened, but still prominently displayed. First, he repudiated the false historical account designed to compromise him:

> To enfeeble the strength of my arguments Count Apponyi applies the time-worn methods of his erstwhile Jesuit teachers, and presents my case to American public opinion by confusing the two last Hungarian Revolutions as one and the same thing, and placing the responsibility for both on the shoulders of the Count Károlyi Government. This statement however is a pure falsification of history.

As for Apponyi,

> He was never regarded as a liberal and a democrat in the past... In the Hungary of today Count Apponyi's role has changed and he is at present regarded as a liberal progressive. This change however is not due to a metamorphosis of Count Apponyi's character but to the total collapse of public liberties in Hungary.'

Finally, he explained his position on the loan:

> We do want a loan. But a loan for peace and creative work. A loan beneficent for the Hungarian people. But we do not want a loan for war and for feeding the Horthy camarilla and the Habsburgist officers.

After that article, Jászi's belief that he had emerged victorious was supported by a *Times* editorial enquiring whether the loan was for peace or for warlike purposes, and quoting in this connection some warlike statements about territorial revision that the Regent Horthy had made. But Apponyi too was hailed as the victor, by his chronicler, Imre Jósika-Herczeg, whose *Apponyi és Amerika* (Apponyi and America) appeared in New York in 1926.

Apponyi, incidentally, soon left the city, and after a short tour, the country as well. Jászi, on the other hand, stayed, and not content with the dispute in the *Times,* wrote a long open letter for the January 2, 1924 number of *The New Republic,* entitled "Kingdom or Republic in Hungary?" This summed up the differences between the two men:

> Republic and monarchy have an almost symbolic significance. They are the ideas of diametrically opposite values. This is the problem which Count Apponyi considered as so small in importance to bring to the attention of the American people or which he considered as a purely internal problem of Hungary while he asked for American assistance in many problems.

(According to Count József Somssich, Hungarian Minister to the Vatican, the article contained "hair-raising things" and it could be seen "by what methods the treacherous propaganda works.")

This ended the American duel between the two Hungarians. Minister Count László Széchényi, in a report sent to Budapest on December 10, 1923, also thought it was time to assess matters. Jászi's lectures, he thought, did not pose any special danger, although his university tour had been prepared by some very influential figures. But Jászi "is a poor lecturer, due to his stumbling address and his poor English." However, "a much more serious danger than his lectures are his articles, which unfortunately show a masterly hand, not only in their composition, but in the smoothing of the English as well." (Jászi's writings were usually touched up by Emil Lengyel, a journalist friend.) "It is no easy matter to offset Jászi's performance here," the minister complained. "What could be happier than to appear before the American public as a political victim and appeal against this to traditional American open-heartedness?" Nor had the patronage of the Little Entente done Jászi any harm there, because the ideas about the Little Entente held by pacifist circles were vague. "What recommends Jászi [to them] is precisely that Hungary's neighbours look upon him with confidence."

But Jászi's most "dangerous" piece of writing was yet to come. It appeared a few days later, on December 15, in the influential journal *Foreign Affairs,* which had been founded a year earlier. When he was given this opportunity, Jászi felt it was important to explain more thoroughly to the American educated public what had been happening in Hungary and the Danube region in recent decades. The result was his longest study, "Dismembered Hungary and Peace in Central Europe", which aroused strong interest at the journal's offices and in the Hungarian Legation and the State Department in Washington.

Jászi tried first of all to outline for American readers the international position and role of Hungary, and at the same time he put forward his underlying idea:

> Economically, geographically, historically Hungary always has been an important part of Central Europe. Should she continue in her present state, alternately despairing and in the throes of a feverish dream of revenge, there is small possibility for serious work of reconstruction and the establishment of a sane equilibrium in the Danubian countries.

In the present situation, in which the government of Count István Bethlen had been striving for consolidation for two years, he did not see any essential change since the first years of the counter-revolutionary course, because in his view, the structure of power and the objectives had remained the same. To make this plain, he outlined all the factors which had instigated the atmosphere of national hatred and mutual suspicion in the region, and which favoured the revival of militarist systems and the development of dictatorships, red or white.

> In the light of the foregoing facts, I think the importance of the Hungarian problem is clear. The chief victim of the historical forces I have enumerated was my unhappy country. We lost about two-thirds of our territory, with the most valuable industrial and commercial resources, and fifty-nine percent of our population. This tragedy was further accentuated by the fact that very important Magyar minorities came under foreign domination.

When it came to explaining the causes and effects of this tragedy, Jászi's analysis was opposite to what was argued by Hungarian officialdom. He blamed the war and the erroneous national minorities policy on the still surviving ruling elite.

> There are two ways open for mutilated Hungary to set about restoring her strength and healing her wounds. The one would be a democratic and pacific way: the reformation of her agricultural organization, democratization of her public life, and the adoption of an energetic initiative in developing sincere cultural and economic relations with the neighboring states. Unfortunately the way out just indicated is barred for the Horthy regime. According to their ideology, Hungary was innocent of complicity in bringing on the World War. The essential aims of this oligarchy are the restitution of the Habsburgs, the restoration of the former frontiers, the renewed domination of Magyars over alien races, and, above all, the maintenance of the large feudal estates.

In furthering the dual purpose of the article—to present Horthy's Hungary as the main threat to peace in Europe and thereby his plan for a Danube confederation as the one long-term possibility—Jászi used some not entirely spotless arguments. In fact, the danger of a Habsburg restoration had largely disappeared by then, while the nationalism of the Little Entente countries was not much less virulent than the Hungarian government's, and they showed no inclination to return Hungarian-inhabited territory voluntarily or to make real preparations for a Danube confederation. However, the idea and importance of the federation was firmly and convincingly before his liberal American readers.

That was the background behind the correspondence published here. It was neatly summed up by H. F. Armstrong's memoirs, *Peace and Counterpeace. From Wilson to Hitler,* New York, Harper & Co., 1971:

> An article in one of our early numbers set off an acrimonious public controversy involving the Hungarian Legation in Washington and the State Department on one side and a wide range of American liberals on the other. The author was Professor Oscar Jaszi, who had been a Social Democratic [sic!] minister in the last-gasp non-Communist cabinet under Count Károlyi before Béla Kun took over the Hungarian Government in 1919. Jaszi criticized the Allied dismemberment of Hungary but suggested that what she needed to restore her strength was to adopt democratic methods—reform her agriculture, eliminate the unearned increment of her feudal classes, democratize her public life, suppress revanchist military organizations and develop sincere cultural and economic relations with her neighbors. This, he asserted, was the opposite of the policy being pursued by the Horthy regime, which secretly was aiming to restore the Habsburgs, maintaining the great feudal estates and seeking allies for a new war. Count Széchényi, the Hungarian Minister in Washington, urged us to print a reply and was supported by a friend in the State Department, William R. Castle, Jr., who accepted his assertion that Jaszi was in the pay of the Communists. The accusation, which Széchényi spread widely, so enraged Jaszi that he was with difficulty persuaded of the futility of trying to break the Minister's diplomatic immunity and sue him for libel. Our first choice as spokesman for the Horthy government was Count

Teleki, former Premier and famous geographer, but he ruled himself out after his appointment as chairman of a commission to draw the Iraq frontier.

Finally, it was Count István Bethlen, the prime minister since 1921, who wrote an article ("Hungary and the New Europe" [*Foreign Affairs,* 1924/25. Vol. 3. pp. 445–458]). Avoiding open polemics he did not blame the unjust judgement of the victorious Allied and Associated Powers, nor the greed of the states that were to make up the Little Entente. In his opinion the bourgeois democratic revolution headed by Count Károlyi and Oszkár Jászi was responsible for destroying the health of the national organism, and this led to the 1919 Hungarian Soviet Republic, which finally decided the fate of the nation.

In actual fact decisions regarding the post-Trianon frontiers were essentially taken by the time the Hungarian Soviet Republic was proclaimed.

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LETTERS BETWEEN A. C. COOLIDGE AND H.F. ARMSTRONG

H. F. Armstrong to A. C. Coolidge

September 12, 1923

Dear Mr. Coolidge:

I sent you a copy of the September number yesterday. I really think it looks very well.

I am going to dine this evening with Bibesco to meet your Hungarian friend, Prof. Jaszi, who is in the confidence of Carolyi *(sic!)*. It occurs to me that he might be a good man to write for us, but I can tell better after talking to him. In any case you may have strong views about him.

I am sending this along even though there isn't any other news.

Yours sincerely,
H.F. Armstrong

Dictated but not read

From A. C. Coolidge's letter to H. F. Armstrong

September 13, 1923

[...] Thanks for your No. 23. I remember Jaszi as one of the most intelligent people I met when I was in Budapest. Offhand I should say he was as good a person as we could well find to write about Hungary, the more so as he is not a dyed-in-the-wool reactionary. [...]

From H. F. Armstrong's letter to A. C. Coolidge

September 14, 1923

[...] I found Jaszi interesting and intelligent, and I think we might do worse than ask him for an article. He will certainly be delighted to write one for us. When would you think of having him? It is important that he be given the right sort of directions and that you outline to him the particular points you want covered. He is very bitter against the present Hungarian Government and also against Apponyi—who, by the way, is arriving here next month for a visit. [...]

From A. C. Coolidge's letter to H. F. Armstrong

September 15, 1923

[...] Thanks for your No. 25. How long does Jaszi stay in this country? If he is going to be within reach, he might be good to get a last minute article out of, if your calculations come out wrong for December. We ought to have something about Hungary some day but it is not of first rate importance for us, nor do we greatly care when we have it. [...]

From H. F. Armstrong's letter to A. C. Coolidge

September 18, 1923

[...] There is to be a dinner given by Duggan[1] for Apponyi on October 3. He has asked me and I shall go if possible. I am planning a joint dinner for the Council at which both Apponyi and Jaszi will speak. How about coming down for the dinners for Herriot[2] and Apponyi on the second and third? I am sure Duggan would love to have you. I am not sure that I could put you up on 36th Street, but I think it very probable that I could. [...]

From A. C. Coolidge's letter to H. F. Armstrong

October 8, 1923

[...] I have just got a letter from Duggan asking me if I can't get Apponyi a chance to speak at Harvard. I fear there is nothing doing, I see Jaszi has come out in the papers against his mission.

A. C. Coolidge letter to H. F. Armstrong

November 6, 1923

Jaszi's article will probably be almost as good in March as it is now, but we have asked him to do it for us under pressure and he might object to a postponement, so that if what he is giving us does not need much revision and correction, we had perhaps better take it now. If it does, he can be asked to spend more time on it.

A. C. Coolidge letter to H. F. Armstrong

November 12, 1923

Dear Armstrong:

In a note I received this morning from Castle he says:

> "I am interested in what you say of Jaszi, and I do not agree. I find myself unable to have much sympathy with a Hungarian who will come to this country paid by the Little Entente to stir up feeling against the present Hungarian Government. Invitations to his lecture at the American University were sent out by the Jugoslav Legation. The man must have deteriorated, I think, since you knew him in Vienna. I saw a good bit of Apponyi. He was disappointed, of course, that he could not lecture at Harvard but told me that he thought Mr. Lowell's[3] reasons were sincere. I heard him speak only once and he did not make the error of attacking his neighbors. If his other talks contained as little propaganda he certainly did well. He is not a great man but he is a very charming man. Jaszi was quoted in one of his talks here as saying that what little culture the Hungarians had came from the Slavs and Rumanians. Practically nobody went to his lectures except the entire staffs of the Czech, Serbian and Rumanian Legations and the man I sent to report."

Castle may be biassed though I don't think he is in general but it makes me squirm a little about our article. We may want to give it rather sharp examination. Unluckily we haven't any time to waste unless the thing gets put over till a later date.

I have told Sykes[4] that we were going to take his article. He is much pleased and says with engaging British frankness that it is a very good one. I have never said anything to him about the honorarium.

Very sincerely yours,
Archibald Cary Coolidge

From H.F. Armstrong's letter to A. C. Coolidge

November 13, 1923

[...] Jaszi told me that he had a fine time in Washington, but that no one in the State Department came to his lectures and the official people, to whom he had letters, did not respond to them. Castle, it seems to me, has taken a completely wrong slant on Jaszi's objects, but I suppose it is natural

for officials to be biased in favor of what is as opposed to what might be. There is quite enough to explain Castle's attitude in the phrase he uses: "I saw a good bit of Apponyi". I have no doubt he did, and think he would have done better to see a bit of both.

Yours sincerely,
H.F.A.

From A. C. Coolidge's letter to H. F. Armstrong

November 14, 1923

[...] Thanks for your No. 60. I rather expected that my letter of yesterday would bring a prompt telephone call and sure enough it came within a minute of the time that I got back from my nine o'clock lecture. I admit that Castle's letter gave me pretty cold feet about Jaszi. Whether the State Department are right or not in thinking that he is a paid propagandist, the mere fact that they do feel so tends to make one shy about him. Castle's remarks had surprised me because he is by no means in sympathy with the ultra-conservatives and though he liked Apponyi when he met him in Budapest he never regarded his ideas as up to date. That Castle should see Apponyi was inevitable but I agree that he might have seen Jaszi unless he received orders from higher up that Jaszi was a concealed agent of foreign propaganda and must not be dealt with. I don't believe Szechenyi will forgive me and I am sorry because I like him personally but it is all in the game. As Gay[5] says, if you are an editor you must be prepared to lose your friends. You can see, however, that when I took up Jaszi's manuscript I was in a state of mind that made me hope that he would be studiously moderate and when I found that he wasn't, I was wrathful. Now let us see what we can do with the whole thing. [...]

LETTERS BETWEEN COUNT LÁSZLÓ SZÉCHÉNYI AND A. C. COOLIDGE

Count László Széchényi to A. C. Coolidge

January 2, 1924

My dear Professor Coolidge:

Will you allow me to address to you this letter, both in your capacity as editor of "Foreign Affairs" and as a friend of Hungary.

There is no review I am following with such keen interest, ever since the first issue, as your "Foreign Affairs", and you can therefore see my surprise upon noticing in the December issue an article on Hungary by Oscar Jaszi.

I want to make it clear that it is none of my business what you see fit to publish in the review, but I consider it my duty towards you to call your attention to certain phases of Jaszi's personality of which you might not be aware inasmuch as they developed since your historic mission in Budapest.

Without having to dig into Mr Jaszi's past, I simply wish to call your attention to the facts that he came to this country, posing as a Hungarian, with a letter of introduction from President Masaryk, possessing a Roumanian passport, and that the invitations to his Washington lectures were sent out in the envelopes of the Yugoslav Legation. As long as the millenium has not come yet and the lion and lamb do not lie down together, these facts should make Mr. Jaszi's mission to this country appear "fishy" to any impartial observer, to say the least.

Whatever Mr. Jaszi writes about the past may be taken by the American public as the expression of the personal views of an individual, to which after all every person, no matter what his record, has a right. However, what Mr. Jaszi writes of the present conditions of a country where

he has not set foot since the spring of 1919, ought to be discounted as hearsay and not considered as authoritative on the subject. This explains Jaszi's vituperations against the present Government of Hungary, which if actually based on true facts would make it unthinkable that the present negotiations for a Hungarian loan could be carried on.

The pending negotiations for a Hungarian loan give the explanation of Mr. Jaszi's present propaganda in this country, he having stated clearly in his speeches and articles that he wished to make the "democratization" of Hungary the condition for the loan. It is also very plain from what Mr. Jaszi has written and said that by democratization he means to put himself and his friends into power again in Hungary. This he wishes to accomplish by foreign interference and by outside pressure, instead of appealing to the Hungarian people. There is grim irony in the fact that Mr. Jaszi and his friends are posing abroad as champions of Hungarian democracy, when the undeniable fact is that Count Michael Karolyi and his Ministers, of whom Jaszi was one, established the only dictatorship known in Hungarian history.

When Mr. Jaszi speaks of "we" in connection with events of the late fall of 1918, he is absolutely correct, for everything was done by "we" without consulting the country about it. "We" dissolved Parliament, "we" put ourselves into power —by "the grace of God" and not by the choice of the people—as no elections were held and not even preparations made for same during the five months the Karolyi régime lasted. In view of these undeniable facts, it sounds rather humorous to read "we introduced universal suffrage and the secret ballot, with proportional representation".

(Owing, no doubt, to respect for the quarters who openly sponsored his American tour, as stated above, Mr. Jaszi deals with the oppression of minorities in the Succession States with a gloved hand, and while he does not deny it, he makes it appear that the new rulers are merely adopting "many of the methods of the old Magyar system" in regard to their minorities. Lest you might take me for prejudiced in quoting the voice of the Hungarian minorities, I take the liberty of referring to the former so-called subject races of Hungary "liberated now". The Roumanian representatives of Transylvania in the Bucharest Parliament are solidly in opposition, and even the late Take Jonescu said shortly before his death that no such electoral corruption had ever been known in Hungary as witnessed during the last elections in Greater Roumania. The Saxons of Transylvania, who had not been too friendly to Hungary, deny the Roumanians claim that they are doing no worse than the Magyars have done to the Saxons in the past, and point out that while they had ground for complaints before they are faced with extirpation now.

I do not need to call your attention to conditions in the Yugoslav Parliament and to the comparisons Croatians are making between the present and the former Hungarian rule. Croatia was the only part of the old Hungarian Kingdom where a non-Magyar race formed a compact large majority, and it was granted the far-reaching autonomy of which Irish leaders, like Griffith, said and wrote that to obtain similar autonomy for Ireland was their ambition.

The fact that both Roumania and Czechoslovakia have such compact Hungarian majorities within their borders, and they seem to show no intention to emulate the liberal example of the much maligned Magyars in Croatia. As to the Slovaks in Czechoslovakia, I do not know whether you have seen the letter addressed to Secretary Hughes[6] by the Slovak newspaper men of America, which hardly shows a jubilant liberated spirit on the part of

those Slovaks who, living in this country, can express their opinion.)

The fact, however, that even a man of the stamp of Jaszi cannot help but acknowledge a certain amount of rough dealing with Hungary at the peace conference and since, would warrant—seems to me—opening the pages of "Foreign Affairs" to a real Hungarian, one who could speak of conditions there from personal experience.

Very sincerely yours,
(Count László Széchényi)
Minister of Hungary

A. C. Coolidge
to Count László Széchényi

January 4, 1924.

My dear Count Széchényi:

I wish to thank you for your letter of January 2nd and for the very friendly tone in which it is written. I have appreciated the feeling you must have had about Mr. Jászi's article and I am glad of an opportunity to speak to you frankly and confidentially on this subject.

The two obvious people who have been in this country recently to whom I might have turned for an article about Hungary were Count Apponyi and Mr. Jászi. For Count Apponyi I have great regard besides the recollection of pleasant personal relations. I have felt, however, that he was too closely identified with the old régime and too nearly in an official position in his present visit for me to wish to appeal to him. Whatever he wrote would have been regarded as a straight propaganda article. Mr. Jászi I met when I was in Budapest and he was in the Government. He impressed me as a man of unusual intelligence and I also have had a good opinion of his "Der Zusammenbruck [sic] des Dualismus". When he came to this country he wrote to me. Naturally he said nothing about any connection with the Jugoslav Legation and it is only from you that I learn of his possessing a Rumanian passport. It happened at one stage that we had a panic and thought we should be short of material for our December number and must get an article in a hurry. I decided to call upon Mr. Jászi, who I knew would produce one, trusting to our editorial power to keep it in proper bounds. Between ourselves, what he sent in was much more extreme than what we printed. Indeed we toned it down more mercillessly than, I think, any article we have accepted since the review was started, so much so that I should not have been surprised at a protest from Mr. Jászi himself.

As for another article on Hungary representing a different point of view, I should like to have one but not immediately. This is partly because our plans for our next two numbers are pretty well mapped out by now and partly because after almost every issue we have letters from people who disagree with some article and wish to have it replied to without delay. We have refused in every case. We come out only once in three months and it would be impossible for us to allow everyone who wished to answer back to have a chance to do so. We prefer to wait a while and then, if need be, let the question be taken up again as a fresh one from another angle.

Curiously enough I wrote yesterday to Castle mainly about the Jászi article and asked him to speak to you concerning it if he got a chance. I am, therefore the more grateful to you for turning to me directly and giving me an opportunity to explain the case.

Very sincerely yours,
Archibald Cary Coolidge

Count László Széchényi
to A. C. Coolidge

January 10, 1924

My dear Professor Coolidge:

Many thanks for your letter of January fourth. I was glad to learn that you took my letter in the same spirit in which it was written. I was also glad to know that you would like to have another article on Hungary, representing a different point of view, thought not immediately because your plans for the next two numbers of FOREIGN AFFAIRS are pretty well mapped out by now.

I confess though that I was rather surprised to learn that whatever Apponyi might have written would have been regarded as a straight propaganda article, while you apparently thought differently of Jaszi who notoriously hasn't done anything else for the last three years than to write propaganda articles of the most nefarious and misleading kind. I fully appreciate what you say in the middle paragraph on page two of your letter. I should say nothing if the article in question had been written by an American whether friendly and fair or not. As long as you did find room, however, for an article by one "Hungarian" representing an extreme view, it would unquestionably enhance the impartiality of the magazine to have the other side heard.

I still hope therefore that it will be possible for you to find room for another article on Hungary, preferably in your next number.

In addition to what I wrote in my last letter in regard to Mr. Jászi's somewhat curious patronage by the Little Entente, I wish to add that I understand that Prince Bibesco,[7] the Romanian minister in Washington D.C., has written a letter to the Columbia University protesting against the fact that it didn't give an opportunity to Mr. Jaszi to counteract Apponyi's "lies".

Very sincerely yours,
[Széchényi]
Minister of Hungary

A. C. Coolidge
to Count László Széchényi

January 14, 1924

Dear Count Széchényi:

Many thanks for your letter of January 10th. I can only repeat that I am very sorry that I did not know earlier about Jászi what I know now. I can't help feeling that you rather overrate the importance of his article which is not an impressive one or likely to be remembered. Jászi until he came here at least has been little known outside of his own circles. Count Apponyi has an internationl reputation, which was what I had in mind when I said that what he wrote would be regarded as propaganda. I am afraid that there can be no question of our taking a Hungarian article for our next number and I do not wish to make definite promises for the future but I shall keep in mind the desirability of having one.

Very sincerely yours,
Archibald Cary Coolidge

LETTERS BETWEEN OSZKÁR JÁSZI AND H. F. ARMSTRONG

Oszkár Jászi to H. F. Armstrong

April 19, 1924

Dear Mr Armstrong:

An incidental remark of yours during our conversation of a few days ago concerning certain rumors about my mission here, corroborated my impression which I had in the course of my lecture tour here and there, namely, that somebody has systematically calumniated me in this country, describing me as an agent of the Little Entente. Of course, I know very well that Horthy's emissaries and big Jewish financiers make an exasperated campaign against my activity but I have symptoms that also other factors—purely American—co-operated in this shameless calumniatory undertaking. Even, on one occasion, the name of Mr. Castle (of the State Depart-

ment) was mentioned to me in this connection, but when eagerly asked for further information, the gentleman concerned withdrew his remarks, saying that that he knows nothing specific in this case.

All these calumniatory rumors offend me very much, all the more because even in the worst days of the white terror in Hungary, when the Hungarian upper classes lost entirely their heads and when all public men of the opposite platform were ignominiously vituperated, I was perhaps the only man whose integrity was not questioned even by the brigands of Horthy. They called me "fool", a "fanatic", a "doctrinaire", but even these servile people did not dare to attack my bona fide conviction, for everyone knows in Hungary that I always lived in a complete moral and political independence. After the collapse of the Hungarian democracy and during my exile in Vienna the extremely low standard of my life was almost proverbial so that with the greatest stretch of imagination no calumnies could be levelled at me. And when President Masaryk, in consequence of our scientific connection of many years, offered me a professorship in Czechoslovakia, I refused it categorically, saying that I want to safeguard my entire independence.

Under these circumstances the calumnies of certain anonymous Americans offend me very much. I know, as everyone at Vienna knows that Mr. Castle is an ardent supporter of all the reactionary movements in Central Europe, still I can scarcely believe, that a man of his standing could become a calumniatory instrument in the hands of the Legation of Admiral Horthy at Washington.

At any rate, you would oblige me very much by giving me accurate information about the calumnies of which you heard and naming the persons who you think are connected with this campaign. Knowing the details solicited I would immediately start legal proceedings against those infamous persons. I am longing to unveil their base machinations before the public opinion of your country.

Les amis de mes amis sont mes amis. The protectors and friends of Horthy (a man in close friendship with notorious murderers and blackmails) cannot be honest people.

Thanking you in advance for your efforts to elucidate this mean campaign of diffamation, believe me, dear Mr. Armstrong,

Yours very sincerely:
Oscar Jászi

H. F. Armstrong to Oszkár Jászi

April 21, 1924

Dear Prof. Jaszi:

Thank you for your letter of April 19. I am sending your denial of the various allegations against you up to Prof. Coolidge with the request that he send a copy to Mr. Castle of the Department of State, who, undoubtedly, will be glad to have your statement laid before him.

Yours sincerely,
[H. F. Armstrong]

A. C. Coolidge
to Count László Széchényi

November 11, 1924.

Dear Count Széchényi:

I have not forgotten that I told you that I should be glad to have another article on Hungary in FOREIGN AFFAIRS as soon as I could well see a place for it. The time has now come and I am writing to ask you for your assistance. It is essential to get the best man and, from the point of view of the effect to be produced on the public, one wants a writer whose name means something. I had thought of Count Teleki but his recent appointment as arbitrator in the Iraq question will keep him busy with other interests. I think it better not to ask Count Apponyi, much as I re-

spect him. He has already said his say to the American people and his name suggests the controversies of two years ago. Count Bethlen is our present choice but I should be sincerely grateful to you if you would write to me with perfect frankness should some other suggestion seem better to you.

If Count Bethlen is the best person, would you be willing to forward my enclosed letter to him and to support our request, pointing out to him whatever benefit you think an article by him would be to a proper understanding of Hungary in the United States. You might perhaps emphasize, too, that he could make his best impression, not by dwelling on what Hungary has done in the past, protesting against the treatment she has received and making a plea for changes in the future, but by telling what she is striving to do today, amid what difficulties, and with what success. Such a statement I believe could not fail to attract symphathy.

With best regards, I remain

Very sincerely yours,
ARCHIBALD CARY COOLIDGE

P.S. Will you kindly see to it that my letter to Count Bethlen has the proper titles and form of address?

POSTLUDE:
COUNT LÁSZLÓ SZÉCHÉNYI,
A. C. COOLIDGE AND
H. F. ARMSTRONG—AN EXCHANGE

Count László Széchényi
to A. C. Coolidge
Personal.

November 17, 1924.

My dear Mr. Coolidge:

I am very much pleased indeed that you intend to publish an article on Hungary in the March issue of FOREIGN AFFAIRS. I think your choice in asking Count Bethlen to write the article is perfect, and I am forwarding your letter to him immediately, at the same time cabling to find out whether he would be willing to comply with your request.

Until I receive a negative answer—which I hope will not be the case—I shall not suggest any one else to you. Of course, Teleki would have been good too, but as you say his appointment as arbitrator will, I am afraid, make it impossible for him to undertake the work. I trust that I shall be able to give you a satisfactory answer within a week.

Hoping that you will be in Washington very soon and that you will give me the pleasure of calling me up, I remain

Very sincerely yours,
[Széchényi]
Minister of Hungary.

Count László Széchényi
to A. C. Coolidge

November 20, 1924

My dear Mr. Coolidge:

I have just received a cable from home, saying that Count Bethlen will be delighted to write the article you asked for and that he is going to send it in time. I am very pleased to be able to give you his reply so quickly.

Very sincerely yours,
Széchényi
Minister of Hungary.

Count László Széchényi
to H. F. Armstrong

January 19, 1925.

My dear Mr. Armstrong:

I have received your kind letter and the manuscript of Count Apponyi's article which he prepared for FOREIGN AFFAIRS, not knowing that you had asked Count Bethlen to write an article for you which, by the way, was mailed on the fifteenth of January from Budapest and should be here at the latest within three weeks.

I of course understand perfectly that Professor Coolidge is unwilling to have FOREIGN AFFAIRS used for the interchange of controversy, but I can not quite agree with you that the publication of Count Apponyi's article would have been a mistake and that it would have magnified Jaszi's article unduly. I agree completely with Count Apponyi when he says in his second paragraph:

> "Professor Jaszi's article remained without reply because it was considered as the isolated effort of a man, certainly gifted and well informed on all subjects, Hungary excepted, and embittered by his personal experience. But since it appears that it was only part of a persistent activity decided upon by his group in order to pervert foreign opinion, it is our duty to oppose the real facts to the products of a morbid imagination, and to enquire into the claim of this school to have the monopoly of democratic and peaceful ideals in Hungary. I shall try to do it without the smallest particle of personal ill-will, or personal abuse, which does not belong to my habits and which I sincerely abhor."

So that, to my mind, it is not Count Apponyi's reply which magnifies Jaszi's article, but the fact that it was published in such a distinguished review as FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Jaszi, Karolyi, and their close followers, have done more harm against a peaceful and democratic evolution in Central Europe than any one could possibly imagine, and it is always hard to protect one's self with fair weapons of truth against unfair ones of lies.

As soon as I receive Count Bethlen's article, I will of course immediately send it on to you.

With very kind regards and hoping to see you soon in Washington,

Yours very sincerely,
Széchényi
Minister of Hungary.

NOTES

1 ■ Prof. Stephen F. Duggan: Director of the Institute of International Education, which organised Jászi and Apponyi's lecture tours

2 ■ Edouard Herriot: French statesman, leader of the Radical Party, prime minister in 1924–25 and again in 1932.

3 ■ Prof. Lawrence Lowell: President of Harvard University from 1909 until 1933.

4 ■ Sir Percy Sykes: British soldier and diplomat, who served in Persia and wrote about the country.

5 ■ Prof. Edwin Francis Gay: Economist, professor of Economic History at Harvard from 1924.

6 ■ Charles Evans Hughes: Lawyer and statesman, Secretary of State between 1921 and 1925.

7 ■ Prince Antoine Bibesco: Minister of Romania in Washington.

Katalin Plihál

The First Printed Map of Hungary

Tabula Hungariæ, the first printed map of Hungary, was published in Ingolstadt in Germany in mid-May 1528. For centuries it was known only through a description until it suddenly turned up again in the 1880s. It was bought by Count Sándor Apponyi, who in 1924 donated *Tabula Hungariæ* and other rarities from his collection to the National Széchényi Library in Budapest.

To mark the 475th anniversary of its making, the National Széchényi Library is exhibiting for the first time all the known versions of the 1528 map, including one that the library only managed to buy in 2000. Cartofil Kiadó, specializing in publishing maps, brought out a full-size facsimilæ (for details, see: http:/www.cartofil.hu/lazar.htm)

The map is ascribed to one Lázár, about whom next to nothing is known except that he was alive in the early decades of the 16th century. Lázár (Lazarus) could have been his surname or his Christian name. We do not know when or where he was born or died. He was presumably not in the kind of social position that would have attracted the attention of his contemporaries.

All that is recorded about Lázár the mapmaker is his occupation—*secretarius*—and the fact that he lived and was in the circle of Tamás Bakócz (1442–1521), Cardinal Archbishop of Esztergom. This was a large circle, since Bakócz in the early 16th century combined the highest ecclesiastical offices (Primate of Hungary, Cardinal and Titular Patriarch of Constantinople) with the highest secular office (High and Privy Chancellor). Bakócz's personal secretaries are known by name. In that period everyone had to be addressed meticulously by their feudal status. The plain style *secretarius* tended to refer to a layman and this is intimated in the source materials. Lázár is likely to have been working within the Chancellery during Bakócz's term as High and Privy Chancellor (up to June 21, 1521). Many of those who did so were entitled to call themselves *secretarius,* although their official status was only *notarius,* for instance if they went abroad on a diplomatic mission. (None of Bakócz's

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is a cartographer and librarian on the staff of the map room of the National Széchényi Library (since 1971). She specialises in 16th and 17th century maps of Hungary and Transylvania.

known privy secretaries or Chancellery staff bore the Christian name or surname Lázár. On the other hand, only 10 per cent of the documents from the period before the fateful battle of Mohács in 1526 have survived.)

Deák Lázár could not have graduated from a university, or he would have been referred to as *magister.* The sources known today mention five 'expert' men who were *deák,* which in 16th-century parlance meant scholarly men with a knowledge of Latin. The same sources describe him as a Hungarian, and this is confirmed by the name-forms he uses on the *Tabula Hungariæ*. Lázár followed the accepted Chancellery practice of writing *'ee'* for a long *'é'*—thus Ezeek for Eszék (Osijek), Zeek for Szék, Zeeplak for Széplak, etc.—and *'ew'* for *'ö'*—Fewdwar for Földvár, Gew, Eskew, Ewsi, Fewldeak, Tertzew, Besenew, etc. The 'c' sound (ts in English) is sometimes written *'tz',* for instance in Adatz, Agatz, Bakotza etc. This orthography is characteristic of writings in certain German dialects of the time, although it could have derived from those responsible for setting us the Lázár manuscript in print. On the other hand, dialect practices have been preserved by Lázár in other place-names, for instance in his rendition of the *i* phoneme e.g., Kézdi is found on the map as Kyzdy.

According to a letter written by the mathematician and cartographer Jacob Ziegler (1470–1549), he and Lázár contemplated compiling the map in 1514. This was not just a theoretical discussion, because Ziegler remembered having compared the printed version with the original manuscript, which could only have been possible if Lázár had been able to show him some kind of completed work.

How would Lázár have prepared the map and how long would it have taken him? The problem is that we have no knowledge of the manuscript. He probably used one of the cartographic procedures current in his day, but it seems likely that he did not rely on any contemporary astronomical measurements for determining position.

According to publications by Sebastian Münster (1489–1552), a cosmographer and map publisher in Basle, and Georg Joachim Rheticus [Lauchen] (1514–1574), a German astronomer, mathematician and cartographer, there were three mapmaking procedures used in the 16th century.

a) Using a polar coordinate system: a coordinate system was constructed before making the map. The origin for map making was usually rendered in the centre of the sheet. That point, usually a location peeking above the area to be represented on the map, served as the standpoint in determining the azimuths of the visible towns or villages in the neighborhood. The distances between them and the standpoint were also measured. Once all those visible from a standpoint had been plotted, map making continued with the selection of a new standpoint.

b) Curve-crossing method: the origin for map making was arbitrarily placed on the sheet. Then the position of a neighbouring town or village was determined. That was the only phase in the process when the cartographer used a compass and determined azimuth, since, at the beginning of the map making procedure, he had to orient the map and determine the angle between the two places. From then on, the map was constructed by using a table containing the distances between various places. Such tables, called itinerarium, were widespread at that time; they were often printed and used instead of maps. When using this method, the cartographer first plotted all locations, and oriented the map only at the end of the

process. The orientation of the resulting map may have had significant variance from North.

c) Using chained axes of sight: when plotting a map, the cartographer determined the positions of towns and villages along a path, using (azimuthal) angle and distance data.

d) Trianulation: when using this method, suggested by Reinerus Gemma-Frisius (1508–1555), a physician, mathematician, astronomer, cosmographer, and cartographer, it was sufficient to accurately measure the distance between two stations, i.e., the length of the base line, the positions of the rest of the settlements could then be determined by measuring their azimuths.

e) Using geographical coordinates: the practical cartographers in the 16th century did not consider this method adequate to make the map of a country, a province, or of an even smaller area. As practical surveyors and cartographers did not have reliable and accurate devices or methods for determining longitude for centuries, this method was hard to use and thus was not widespread.

Contemporary sources also hint that cartographers combined various methods when plotting maps. In the 16th century, the plotted network of human places was the core of map making; rivers, roads, and relief were added later on. It is easy to see that the majority of the settlements that are easy to identify in *Tabula Hungariæ* are located along main roads, which would imply that Lázár preferred the chained axes of sight method—but this is not at all certain.

The printed map itself shows that it is only along the south of the country that the cartographer has included areas beyond the 16th-century borders of Hungary. The easternmost place marked along the Danube is Szörényvár (Turnu Severin). The southernmost town shown on the Adriatic is Sibenic (Šibenik) and the northernmost Zengg (Senj).

These places have interesting associations. The southern defences of medieval Hungary (which became all the more important in the latter half of the 14th century, with the advance of the Ottoman Turks towards the centre of Europe) consisted of two chains of castles running about 100 km apart. The first was mainly outside the earlier borders of the Kingdom of Hungary, in territory conquered from Balkan states, and ran from the border of Wallachia to the Adriatic. From Szörényvár to Nándorfehérvár (Belgrade), the outer line followed the Lower Danube. From there it ran through the castles of the Srebrenik Banate along the River Sava, before describing a great curve along the valley of the Bosna and Vrbas rivers through Banja Luka, Jajca, Knin, Clissa (Klis) and Scardona (Skradin) to the shores of the Adriatic. Behind this was a second line of defence running from Temesvár (Timişoara) to Nándorfehérvár and then through a number of smaller castles in the Szerémség (Srem), and then down the Sava and Una rivers to the Adriatic at Zengg. The strongest point in the system was Nándorfehérvár, and the area of least defence was the southern border of Transylvania. There, it was assumed in the 15th and 16th centuries that the Carpathians formed a natural barrier so strong that there was no need to strengthen it with castles or a deliberately created line of defence. Lázár's depiction of the southern regions followed very closely this defence system, which was started under the Emperor and King of Hungary King Sigismund of Luxembourg (1387–1437) but only completed after the conquests of King Matthias Corvinus (1458–1490).

This seemingly firm system of defences became permeable shortly after the death

Lázár secretarius: Tabula Hungariæ... *Ingolstadt, 1528, 54 x 78.5 cm.*
National Széchényi Library, Old and Rare Prints.

of Matthias. The Ottoman advances gave them control in 1513 of the Macsó (Valjevo) Banate to the south of Belgrade, which played such an important part in the border-castle defences, and in 1521, the 'keystone', Belgrade, fell as well. We may well wonder why Lázár marked this defence system on his map in such detail, when much of it had fallen into Ottoman hands in 1514. For whom and for what purpose was the map prepared, and what impression were those preparing it trying to give is open to speculation. King Wladislas II (1491–1516) is known to have been seeking suitable political marriages for his son, the future King Louis II (1516–1526), and his daughter, Princess Anna. Perhaps the map was supposed to imply that Hungary was defensible and that expected attacks from the Ottoman Turks could be repelled. It was certainly believed at the time that this chain of castles could prevent an Ottoman advance.

The fate of the manuscript

Lázár could not have lived to see his map in print. The manuscript was probably kept in Buda, at the Chancellery or in the Bibliotheca Corviniana, established under King Matthias. The man who found it was Johannes Cuspinianus (1473–1529), whose journal shows him to have served as a diplomat in Hungary from 1511 onwards and who was familiar with the royal court. If Lázár had worked at Bakócz's behest, as his employee, his work would certainly have entered the collection of the archbishop, who was a great lover of splendour and of scholarship. In that case, the fate of the map might have been even more convoluted: Bakócz's treasures and books were auctioned after his death, and only one codex has been identified as coming from his library, although other sources relate that he had had numerous codices made for him in Italy. In 1526 the army of Sultan Suleiman II triumphed on the field of Mohács and the young king Louis II fell there. Hungary lost its independence for 150 years.

Cuspinianus found the manuscript some time after September 25, 1526—after Suleiman the Great had left Buda, his ships filled with statues from Buda Castle, some of the Bibliotheca Corviniana, along with gold and silver devotional objects from the churches. In the early spring of 1528, Cuspinianus wrote his description of Austria, in which he mentions that he was able to gauge the size of Lake Fertő (Neusiedlersee) accurately from a map of Hungary he had found. Georg Tanstetter (1482–1535), of Bavarian origin, who taught at Vienna University, is known to have had a hand in preparing the map for the press. He would have been the one who altered the manuscript to provide space of at least 200 sq. cm, which was required for the title and coat of arms. It was he who probably took the decision to turn it into an upright wall map. (A 'landscape' format would have been more suitable for Hungary, which was then twice as wide as it was long from north to south.) This intervention led to the uniform map structure of Lázár being split into three parts, suggesting that the original manuscript might have consisted of three parts on different scales. If that supposition is correct, it would have to be assumed that Lázár had realised before the printing that his work would be published with an orientation towards the east and a fairly large space taken up by the coat of arms of King Ferdinand of Habsburg. (It would be inconceivable to rearrange a modern map in this way, but attitudes were different in the 16th century. For instance, if the size of the paper was wrong, the 'heel of the Italian boot' might be distorted, or the northern parts of the British Isles simply bent eastwards.)

The intervention is also apparent in the way several names have been duplicated in transit from the manuscript to the printed map, although there was just one place of that name in medieval Hungary. (Examples include Hrussó, Ignéc, Berhida, Szeremle, Kelecsény, Földeák, Solymosvár, Nádudvar, Alsópozsás and Travnik.) These places are actually in a quite regular order, but not on the map published in 1528. If they are used to try to plot the towns and villages in *Tabula Hungariæ* correctly, the structure of Lázár's original, manuscript map becomes apparent.

The manuscript and the printed map were probably on a different scale as well. According to Cuspinianus, Lake Fertő was bigger than it appears on the printed map. In other words, Tanstetter may have reduced the scale of the manuscript. The map was published by Cuspinianus at his own expense and dedicated to King Ferdinand of Hungary (The Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand I.)

Printer and printing method

The map was relief printed on the Ingolstadt press of Peter Apianus (1495–1552), a Bavarian and pupil of Tanstetter, and a magister of Vienna University.

The pictorial part of the map and the geographical names were engraved in wood. This procedure was very time-consuming, and in the case of several names, very hard to carry out. Errors could not be corrected and the appearance of the letters was very variable, dependent on the skill of the engraver. New methods were sought by printers to overcome these problems and speed up the process of producing the printing blocks.

One possibility was to arrange Gutenberg moveable type in a trough, to make the text even. However, this raised further problems, because the many troughs would weaken the block and shorten its life, while the inserted letters could fall out during the printing process. Thus copies with printer's errors entered circulation, giving rise to non-existent geographical names. (A good example can be found in the map *Regni Hungariæ descriptio vera,* made by Wolfgang Lazius in Vienna in 1556. The 'C' of Crisiensis (Kőrös) fell out, so that those using the map subsequently referred to the county as Risiensis.)

With the stereotype process, each inscription was cast separately on a plate and then positioned correctly on the wooden block using pine resin or tiny nails. The letting of the inscriptions would be even, but sometimes whole names, not just letters, fell out of the block during the printing. Every known map printed by this method lacks some names. The technique was probably developed and/or first used by Apianus, for printing *Tabula Hungariæ*. The map contains almost 350 marks for towns or villages for which the one copy known today shows no name. This suggests that it was not one of the early copies to be printed. The work was originally printed with four wooden blocks engraved probably by Martin and Michel Ostendorfer. The different degrees of wear on the blocks can be seen on the prints, where varying proportions of the names are missing. (Apianus's son Philipp also used stereotypes for the map he made after the topographical survey of Bavaria, and in that case, the blocks themselves have fortunately survived.)

Subsequent history of the map

For a long time, it was thought that only four maps printed between 1553 and 1566 had been based on the *Tabula Hungariæ* published in 1528. The number of recognized descendants has increased in the last decade, bringing the Lázár map family up to six members:

■ **Vavassore's map, Venice, 1553**

Giovanni Andrea Vavassore or Valvassore of Venice (fl. 1510–72) printed an edition of the 1528 *Tabula Hungariæ* in 1553, with some minor changes in the title. The arms of Ferdinand were replaced by those of Venice. The whole work was engraved in wood and printed from four blocks. Vavassore adjusted the spelling of the names to his own language, rewriting almost every *'w'* as *'uv'*, *'uu'* or *'vu'*, so that the phonetic transcription characteristic of *Tabula Hungariæ* was lost (for instance, in the case of the *'ö'* sound). The revision of the names also shows that the name content of the copy of the *Tabula Hungariæ* on which Vavassore worked differed from that of the one copy that survives. Several places that are marked but not named appear with their names on Vavassore's map, including Adacha, Groconaid, Pest and Salanz.

In some cases, Vavassore was unable to read the Gothic letters, writing Dedenburg for Oedenburg, Reletzen for Keletzen, Mitzvuar for Witzwar etc. He substituted Latin letters for all the Gothic letters except the small *'z'*. (Of course, Vavassore may not have worked from the 1528 edition, in which case the misreadings should be put down to someone else.)

Vavassore augmented the *Tabula Hungariæ* of 1528 with the Adriatic coast from Zengg north to Fiume and the Istrian peninsula and the area between Mugia and Monfalcon. As with the original, there is an introduction to the country, in Latin and Italian. Only one surviving copy is known, also presented to the rare books collection of the National Széchényi Library by Count Sándor Apponyi.

■ **The maps of Ligorio and Lafreri and of Duchetti and Orlandi, Rome, 1558–9**

Two versions of *Tabula Hungariæ* appeared in Rome, entitled *Nova descriptio totius Hungariæ.*

■ Version I published by Pirro Ligorio (1496–1583), engraved in copper by Sebastianus Regibus Clodiensis (Sebastiano di Re, fl. 1558–9), and printed by Michaelo Tramezini (fl. 1539–62). Tramezini received a ten-year privilege for the publication from the Senate of Venice and the Pope.

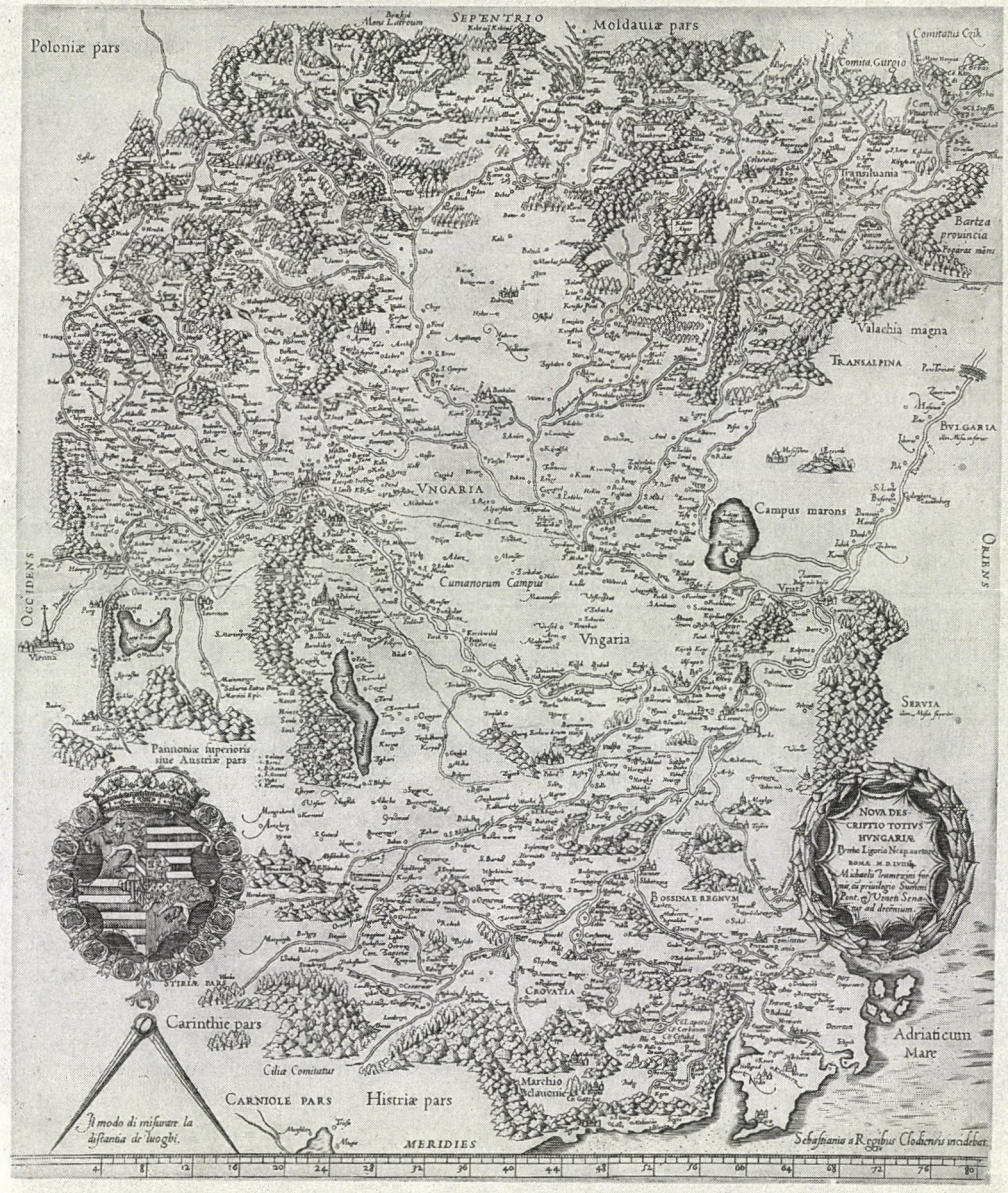
Variant A: The one known copy of this work, bearing the date 1558, was destroyed in Breslau (Wrocław) during the Second World War.

Variant B: The date on the plate was amended to 1559 by adding 'I', but there are no other differences of content. There are separate sheets of this edition in the British Library, the Royal Library in Madrid, the Vatican Library, the Hellwig private collection in Bonn, and the Map Library of the National Széchényi Library.

■ Version II, entitled *Nova descriptio totius Hungariæ* is known in four variants.

Variant A, published in 1558 by Antonio Lafreri (1512–1577). No author's or publisher's name is given, which led some to assume that this was a pirate edition. Analysis of the content does not support this supposition. The edition differs from Ligorio's in size and in content. It is extremely rare, with only one known copy, held in the British Library. The only other known copy in Breslau was destroyed during the Second World War.

Variant B: The year of publication was changed to 1559 by adding an 'I', but no other difference of copy or trace of alteration of the plate can be discerned. The work was not based on the Venice publication or Ligorio's in Rome, as one might think. For instance, all the letters 'w' feature in this edition as they do in the original 1528 *Tabula Hungariæ*. Name variations and spellings show further similarities to the publications under Ligorio's name ascribed to Lafreri. The most conspicuous is the name 'Quinque Ecclesie' for Pécs, which is absent from the Lafreri



Pirro Ligorio: Nova desriptio totius Hungariæ. *Rome, 1559, 38.5 x 46.5 cm. National Széchényi Library, Map Collection.*

version. There are copies of this variant in the British Library, the Vatican Library and the rare books collection of the National Széchényi Library.

Variant C: Lafreri's map plates passed after his death to his nephew Claudio Duchetti (1554–1597), who, after 1577, produced an edition hardly changed in content but including 'Quinque Ecclesie' (Pécs), and adding the inscription 'Rome Claudij Duchetti Formis'. The only single sheet of this edition is now in the Map Library of the National Széchényi Library.

Variant D: After Duchetti's death, the plates were bought by Giovanni Orlandi (fl. 1600–1604), who issued a new edition of *Nova descriptio totius Hungariæ,* adding the inscription 'Ioannes Orlandi formis Ro 1602'. The map was not otherwise altered. According to present knowledge, this was the last edition of the 1528 *Tabula Hungariæ* to be published. Its existence was not even suspected until it first appeared in the book trade in 1985. It is very rare as a separate sheet. The only known copies are in the Hellwig collection in Bonn and in the Map Library of the National Széchényi Library

The survival of these Rome editions in large numbers is due to a type of atlas specific to the 16th century, devised and sold by Lafreri and known as a composite atlas, under the abbreviation IAO (Italian Atlas to Orderer). Lafreri, who was also a bookseller, would bind into one volume maps currently available in Italy, so that the contents are very varied. Atlases of this type became havens for maps that would have vanished in sheet form. The variation in their contents means that such atlases have no title page or table of contents, so that they preserve pages that would have decayed over the centuries. Similarly compiled atlases are thought to have been made by Orlandi as well.

■ Zsámboky's map, Vienna, 1566

János Zsámboky (Johannes Sambucus 1531–1584), a noted philologist, poet, historian and physician, published his version of *Tabula Hungariæ* in 1566, under the title *Ungariæ Tanst. descriptio.* This was printed from two copper plates engraved by Donat Hübschmann (1540–1583). The etching technique he used makes it easy to draw curving lines, but the inscriptions do not approach the beauty of those engraved into the copper, so that etching was used more rarely for maps. Zsámboky's sources are harder to identify than those of any other edition. It is difficult to know if the literals are errors by the engraver or in his sources. For instance, the initial *'w'* of 'Wizwar' is upside down and some of the lower-case Gothic *'k'*s have not been replaced by Latin ones. Zsámboky's basic source must have been one of the versions of Wolfgang Lazius's 1566 maps (*Regni Hungariæ descriptio vera...* Vienna, 1566, or *Des Khünigreich Hungern sampt seinen eingelleibten landen grüntliche und warhafft[tige]* Wienn 1556). This has introduced a noticeable degree of corruption compared with the original *Tabula Hungariæ*, especially in the depiction of watercourses. There has been augmentation of the western stretch of the River Drau around Klagenfurt and Villach, as well as in the Priština district of what is now Kosovo, while the depiction of the Adriatic coastland is practically unchanged. Zsámboky attached a trilingual list of place-names, to his map with the name forms of the most important towns and villages. ❧

János Zsámboky (Johannes sambucus): Ungariæ Tanst[etteriana] descriptio.
Vienna, 1566, 54.5 x 69 cm. National Széchényi Library, Map Collection.

PERSONAL

Edward Alexander

Béla Bartók–A Memoir

When Béla Bartók arrived in the United States in 1940, he was following in the footsteps of many famous self-exiled Europeans fleeing the Nazi invasion of their countries. While most of them were writers, scholars, academics and intellectuals of every variety, many were famous musicians, and Bartók soon found himself in the same artistic milieu as other famous composers of our time.

That, however, was short-lived because most of them moved on to teaching positions at universities in different parts of the United States—for instance, Paul Hindemith to Yale and Arnold Schoenberg to the University of Southern California. But most of the exiles aggregated in Los Angeles, which became a colony of European intellectuals, among them Thomas Mann, Bertolt Brecht, Aldous Huxley and Igor Stravinsky. Bartók chose to remain in New York and his presence in the city was quickly given recognition in various ways.

Shortly after his arrival—accompanied by his wife, the pianist Ditta Pásztory, and their son Péter, his first son Béla, Jr. remaining in Hungary—the League of Composers organised a programme in his honour in April at the Museum of Modern Art, and in October Bartók and Pásztory performed together at Town Hall in a two-piano recital. Then in November Columbia University conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Music and gave him a commission to tran-

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Edward Alexander

was First Secretary for Press & Culture in the American Embassy in Budapest (1965–69). After retiring from the Diplomatic Service in 1980, he served on the Human Rights Delegation to International Conferences. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, he became an Advisor to the State Department and the Armenian Embassy in Washington concerning developments in the Caucasus. He is the author of three books: The Serpent and the Bees, *chronicling his experiences with the KGB;* A Crime of Vengeance, *describing a 1921 murder trial in Berlin related to the Turkish genocide of the Armenians; and* Opus, *a novel set in Budapest in the 1960s involving the joint search by the American and Soviet Cultural Attachés for a stolen Beethoven manuscript.*

scribe a huge collection of Yugoslav folk music, much as he had already done with Zoltán Kodály when researching Hungarian, Romanian and Turkish folk music. Because of his dire financial need, Bartók was particularly grateful for the research post, especially since his music was still not being sufficiently performed to earn him royalties.

This underwent a radical change when the eminent conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Serge Koussevitzky, at the instigation of Joseph Szigeti, commissioned Bartók to write a major work for orchestra that became the Concerto for Orchestra, which was given its world premier in 1944 with enormous success.

This commission was not, however, the very first expression of American largesse. A few years earlier, while he was still in Europe, the Coolidge Foundation had commissioned his Fifth String Quartet, and shortly thereafter, a rather surprising commission had come from the swing music bandleader Benny Goodman—again at Szigeti's urging—which resulted in 1938 in *Contrasts* for clarinet, violin and piano, with Goodman and Szigeti in performance.

Although he was not as yet known worldwide, Bartók's strong political stance in the 1930s had attracted international attention when he had refused to perform or have his music played in Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. In consequence, commissions came to him from, among others, Paul Sacher, the eminent Swiss conductor, which in 1937 produced the *Music for Strings, Celesta and Percussion* (used by Stanley Kubrick in his suspenseful film *The Shining*), and the Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion, both critically hailed wherever performed as masterpieces.

In that same year of 1941, I was completing my studies at Columbia in musicology and had enrolled in a seminar called "Twentieth Century Music," which was a detailed examination of the musical accomplishments of the major contemporary composers. Our professor, Douglas Moore, himself a composer, devoted each session to the work of one prominent artist encompassing his biographical background, the musical influences on him, and the theories which he pursued in his music, following which Moore would illustrate each composer's style with recordings. These weekly sessions had focused on Stravinsky, Shostakovitch, Prokofiev, Schoenberg, Copland, Britten and Strauss, when one day at the end of a lecture, Professor Moore said, "Next week, I shall depart from our normal format and will have a surprise for you. Until now, it has been I doing the talking, but next time, it will be the composer himself. I have invited Béla Bartók, who as some of you may have heard is working here on our campus. I know you will be as thrilled as I."

There was a huge vocal reaction from all of us in the class, for while the wider public may still have been unfamiliar with the Hungarian composer, we were not. The anticipation was great the following week when we assembled and held our collective breath. Word had spread in the music departments of

Columbia and Barnard colleges so that the normal attendance of 25 or so students had multiplied three-fold.

The door opened, and Professor Moore entered leading the conservatively dressed, white-haired composer, who seemed tense and absorbed. We all recognized him*, of course, and Moore's introduction was merely a courteous formality. Moore joined us in our seats as Bartók fussed nervously with small bits of paper, then slowly looked up. In fact, throughout the next two hours he never made eye-contact with any of the students. His eyes were either averted from our gaze or transfixed to some point beyond, which gave his distinctive countenance the aura of preoccupation with other worlds.

When he began to speak, his voice was so soft that we all leaned forward to better hear him. His English, while understandably halting, was quite articulate as he thanked Professor Moore for the invitation to discuss and explain his music. He informed us that this was his second visit to the United States, the first having been in 1927 when he had performed with the New York Philharmonic under Willem Mengelberg. The following year he had performed again, this time with Szigeti. He spoke of his early education at the Royal Academy of Music in Budapest, of his friendship with Zoltán Kodály and their joint studies of Central European folk music in the 1900s.

He then sat at the piano to illustrate how these studies had influenced his early piano works, emphasizing that while Kodály's musical language was based almost exclusively on Hungarian folk music, his sought inspiration in the wider field of East Europe. As examples, he performed several of his own piano pieces based on Romanian songs, and followed up with several piano works by Kodály, as well as an excerpt from *Háry János* transcribed for piano.

While Bartók never disparaged the newest and most revolutionary approach to music in two hundred years, namely atonality, nor Schoenberg, its creator and foremost practitioner, he emphasized his own adherence to the diatonic scale. He revealed a fascination with Stravinsky, suggesting at the same time that the Russian seemed intrigued by the new school and possibly contemplating it. Music, Bartók told us, is filled with huge potential but no amount of experimentalism can ever exclude the classical use of the scale. As an example, he played the one recording of the session, excerpts from his Fourth String Quartet, a remarkable exploration of radical sounds and rhythm as performed by just four string instruments.

Almost the first hour had gone by and more students, and faculty, quietly crept into the classroom. No one wanted it to end, even as the distinguished composer continued to speak from what looked like bits and pieces of paper he occasionally consulted. He held his rapt audience completely in thrall.

* An abridged version of the Columbia University lecture appears in *Béla Bartók Essays,* Selected and edited by Benjamin Suchoff, University of Nebraska Press, 1992, pp. 348–353.

In the second hour Bartók, making slight reference to his six string quartets, addressed his own approach to the composing of his larger works, emphasizing that it was in the larger formats that he drew heavily on the influence of Hungarian intonations, modes and rhythms. He spoke at length about his various orchestral works, his two piano concertos (the third was still being composed), his ballets and operas. And then he became very personal, as he approached the finale which was to be the *pièce de resistance* of the lecture.

Bartók informed us that when his son Péter was born, it was the intention of both parents that he become a musician. Towards that end, when Péter became of age, his father began the boy's musical education by composing a series of very simple pieces which were actually a piano method—each piece progressively more difficult, so that when completed, they would be a kind of A to Z of piano music. Bartók told us that that is what he finally accomplished, completing 153 pieces in all, giving them the title *Mikrokosmos.* The final piece, as many of us knew, was a devilishly difficult study called *Allegro Barbaro,* and Bartók said he would like to perform it for us. We all looked at each other in disbelief in anticipation of the rare event, and what ensued was both an aural and visual image that to this day lingers in my memory.

Bartók strode to the piano, without the music, of course, hesitated a few seconds, and then began an attack on the classroom Steinway that no one who was present can forget. His hands flew on the keyboard as the heavily-weighted rhythms and accented chords made the floor tremble, and as the piece approached its conclusion, Bartók lowered his head, turned it sideways, his right ear almost touching the keys, and pounded out the final barrage of sound that reverberated on the walls and windows. When the final chord had died, there was a brief moment of silence, then all pandemonium broke loose as we rose to our feet, clapped and cheered in a thunderous ovation—for the stunning music, the bravura performance, and Béla Bartók.

Seemingly indifferent to our enthusiastic response, Bartók arose from the piano, bowed stiffly, nodded to the also applauding Professor Moore and walked briskly out of the classroom. My fellow classmates all began to engage in animated conversation about this unique experience, but I felt an enormous urge to personally communicate with the composer. I wanted to ask him about *Contrasts.*

As he walked down the corridor I caught up with him.

"Excuse me, Mr. Bartók, may I please speak with you?"

He turned to me and for the first time I looked directly into a pair of eyes I can only describe as piercing.

"Yes," he said quietly.

I am pleased that I asked my question because after sixty years, I still find his reply revelatory.

"Your entire body of work is so deeply classical, so European, so profound. Can you tell me how you could accept a commission to compose something for a popular musician like Benny Goodman?"

Far from being amused, irritated or condescending, Bartók continued his serious mien, leaned close, seized my arm and said with great conviction:

"Because jazz is America's most important contribution to music," turned on his heel and walked into Professor Moore's office.

In December of that year the attack on Pearl Harbor catapulted the United States (and me) into World War II and during that period Bartók received his Boston commission to compose the Concerto for Orchestra, which brought him further renown but little financial reward. In 1945, I was working in Bad Nauheim in Military Intelligence de-nazifying German officials, when I heard on September 26 that Bartók had died of leukemia. He had been hospitalized for almost a year, the radio report said, in WestSide Hospital in New York. It wasn't until I was discharged and returned home that I learned of his continuing financial problems and that the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers had paid his medical bills. I also learned that he had become an American citizen.

Twenty years later, when I was posted to the American Embassy in Budapest, I was to have two more echoes of my brief experience with Bartók. The first was in 1967, at the funeral of Kodály. I had known that Béla, Jr. had stayed in Hungary the entire time, and that he was an engineer, but I had never met him. At the funeral, as Hungarian friends like Iván Boldizsár and Gyula Illyés pointed out the many prominent personalities attending, I saw someone whose face looked remarkably familiar but whom I did not know. "That is Béla Bartók, Jr.," my friends told me. He was the image of his illustrious father.

The second echo was even more startling when I discovered that Ditta Pásztory was not only still alive but also living in Budapest. Determined to meet her, I cabled Washington and asked that the most recent recording of anything by Bartók be sent me. Soon thereafter, I received the Juilliard String Quartet's newly-issued recording of all six string quartets. I found her phone number and with great anticipation called and, explaining that I was the American Cultural Officer, asked when I might visit her. When the date and time were agreed upon, I drove to her apartment, rang the bell and was admitted by a gentleman who said he was Mrs. Pásztory's lawyer. I walked into a large dimly-lit room packed with innumerable Bartók memorabilia and two grand pianos. Standing before me was a wisp of a woman, stooped and unsmiling. We shook hands and I presented the Juilliard album to her which she accepted with a whispered "Thank you" in English. She then retired to a chair in a corner of the cluttered room and remained silent during the brief time I spent there.

The lawyer, a very friendly gentleman, said that when she had received my call, the fear had arisen in her that I might raise legal problems concerning royalties and the future of a Bartók Archive that was created in New York. "She called me to protect her interests," he said, "but I see there is no such problem." As he escorted me to the door, he whispered that she was not well and to excuse her demeanor. I left depressed by the experience.

In 1970, one final experience in my memories of Bartók took place when the Department of State asked me to represent the United States Government at a ceremony to be held at Bartók's grave in Ferncliff Cemetery in Hartsdale, New York, commemorating the 25th anniversary of his death. In the company of United Nations officials and Hungarian dignitaries, we all paid tribute to this artistic giant whose innovative body of music continues to astonish, inspire and move us.

In 1988, Béla, Jr. had his father's remains moved and interred in Budapest.

It has become almost an axiom that for some creators of great art, fame comes only after death. This has certainly been true in Bartók's case whereby the works he composed largely in the last ten years of his life, works which represented the epitome of his creative powers, have become virtual standards in the repertoire of major orchestras and chamber groups. Recognition may have come late but today Béla Bartók's name graces the pages of music programmes throughout the world.

As for his legacy and his place in history, the music-loving public of the United States has long entertained the belief that the three B's of music should be augmented by a fourth, namely, Bach, Beethoven, Brahms—and Bartók: a Hungarian to the core, but an artist for all mankind. ❧

Miklós Györffy

Two Women, Two Pasts

Zsuzsa Rakovszky: *A kígyó árnyéka* (The Shadow of the Snake). Budapest, Magvető, 2002, 467 pp. • Magda Szabó: *Für Elise.* Budapest, Európa, 2002. 417 pp.

Thomas Mann tells a story of how his typist, on finishing *The Tales of Jacob,* the first volume in the *Joseph and His Brothers* trilogy, handed it to the author with the comment, "At last we know how it all really happened!" Readers may have the same reaction to these two long novels, albeit the subjects are not biblical myths. One is also reminded of István Szilágyi's *Hollóidő* (Raven Time, see *HQ* 165), the first two-thirds of which (370 pages) plays out in a single well-defined locality, the castle-like manse, court and garden and the church in a southern Great Plain market town sometime in the Turkish conquest age. Through its suggestion of an unbroken sensuous presence and its authentic portrayal of everyday life, *Raven Time* gives you the feeling that we are learning all there is to know about something that existed once but has now vanished without a trace, conveying a sense of initiating us into an arcane secret.

Zsuzsa Rakovszky's *A kígyó árnyéka* (The Shadow of the Snake) exerts a comparable spell. Here, what is reconstructed is the adolescence of a woman and the setting in which it took place. The period is roughly the same as in Szilágyi's novel, around 1600, though the location is not Hungary's southern marches but, first, the Saxon town of Lőcse-Leutschau (Levoča, Slovakia) in the north of what was Upper Hungary and, later, the western border town of Sopron, similarly predominantly the home of German burghers and always called Oedenburg, its German name by the narrator. Her name too is German: Ursula Lehmann, though mostly she is referred to in the novel as Orsolya, the Hungarian equivalent of Ursula. Rakovszky's novel recounts Orsolya's daily routine in the first person over 470 closely printed pages. Though not lacking in fateful and symbolic twists, the narrative primarily gives us the banal simplicity of her life, her embeddedness within a narrow sphere of people and objects. All this is observed with a precision and detail that convinces us that we are dealing with the real life of a real woman, with all that happened to her made fully available to us through this book. "This was poignant," Thomas Mann comments on his typist's remark, "because of course nothing had happened."

Miklós Györffy
reviews new fiction for this journal.

For all its disarming appearance, the astonishingly precise and comprehensive factual knowledge that it displays of history, folklore and natural history (the reader, being in no position to check anything, gives her the benefit of any doubt) Ursula Lehmann's confession is not a document of any age, whether genuine or fictional, but literature. The whole point is precisely that in taking care throughout to preserve and draw from the appearance of a mundane reality faithful to its period, a flotsam life of old, a refined and self-reflexive literature, a novel, even a fairy-tale, is imperceptibly created.

What is literature, first and foremost, is the carefully pitched, dense allusiveness of the unhurried trickle of the plot, static for long periods but then unexpectedly plunging ahead. Orsolya came into the world towards the end of the 1580s, the daughter of a Lőcse apothecary, fruit of her father's second marriage, (his first wife had died early). Orsolya's mother had found long-sought refuge in her marriage to a widower; in the turmoil of the times she had lost everything to the marauders ravaging the country and had fetched up with her relatives in Lőcse. Withdrawn and bitter, she was unable to open up towards either husband or daughter; she may even have been unfaithful and Orsolya may not be the apothecary's child. That suspicion is only mooted after the mother's death at an early age, falling victim to the plague in the town whilst her husband and daughter chanced—fatefully—to be visiting relatives in the country. From this point on, the father, already closely attached to his daughter, who by then has passed into womanhood, makes advances to her of an unambiguously amorous kind, hinting that she is not, in reality, his own flesh and blood. The truth does not emerge, but for the time being Orsolya rejects her father's advances in horror.

The father soon enough marries for a third time, now taking as his wife a girl of the same age as his daughter who is also called Orsolya. As a number of analogous motifs suggest, Orsolya-the-daughter leads a Cinderella life under the iron hand of her young step-mother. In one of her dreams a parallel with the Sleeping Beauty story is also drawn; this too is no extraneous stylisation, since Orsolya is a native of the Zips region and thus familiar with German folk-tales that were around long before the brothers Grimm recorded and published them.

The fact that Orsolya, half-orphaned and lonely, falls in love with her godmother's nephew, who pays a visit to the town for a month, is likewise a motif in the Cinderella story. The shallow young man, busy chasing the daughters of well-heeled patricians, has little interest in his young kinswoman's passion for him, but Orsolya manages to seduce him in the frenzy of the Shrove Tuesday masked turmoil and (though that was not her intention) becomes pregnant by him. The narration of this year (the turning-point in the life of the 17-year-old Orsolya) which runs from the appearance of this young man, Niki by name, up to the birth and the shortly ensuing death of the child he has sired, comprises the central part of the novel, its backbone and, at 230 pages, its longest section.

That riotous celebration before the start of Lent provides the setting not only for the loss of Orsolya's virginity but also for an ominous accident to, and miscarriage by, her step-mother. On the way home from her kitchen-garden, she is literally swept off her feet and trampled on by a procession of drunken masked revellers. Thus, the time when Orsolya-the-daughter conceives coincides with the time when Orsolya-the-wife miscarries: the prelude to an imminent exchange of

roles. Destiny is consummated by incest when the father inherits an apothecary's shop at Oedenburg from his elder brother and decides to move back to his native town with his convalescent wife and pregnant daughter. In his scheme, this will also provide a good opportunity for his daughter to avoid shame: she will give birth to the child whilst they are lodging with distant relatives en route, and in arriving at Oedenburg they will tell everyone that the child is the parents'. The problem is that the step-mother, let in on the plan when they are on their way, will have nothing to do with it—she turns back in rage and is finished off by a gang of highwaymen. All this finally leads to the Orsolya identities being switched: the daughter being forced to take over the role of Orsolya-the-wife to the world at large, then later *de facto* wife, in bed too, to her flesh-and-blood or adoptive father.

A further error slips into the father's plans. As far as he knows (from Orsolya's version of events) his daughter's pregnancy resulted from being raped by one of a gang of Hajdu irregulars looting in Lőcse. That, however, had been several months before Carnival, and there is no sign of the child being born anywhere near its due date. The remaining time that father and daughter have together is poisoned by the festering suspicions that have been there from the start and by the father's misplaced, perverted love, now compounded by their deceitful life and the fear of being unmasked. Long years later, an old acquaintance from Lőcse, Orsolya's former rejected suitor, turns up suddenly at the house in Oedenburg, obliging them to kill him and bury the body in the cellar.

A further seventeen years elapse before Orsolya, trying to escape her unbearable fate, almost instinctively seduces another man, younger than herself, a Dr Binder, who has been attending her during a severe illness. She coaxes him to run away with her when a devestating fire breaks out in the town. It is never made clear whether her father and the house are actually destroyed in the fire, for when that is at its height she leaves him to his fate, ageing and highly strung, in much the way her father once fled in panic from her mother's plague-ridden corpse.

These are the bare bones of the plot. Given that this is spread over 470 pages, innumerable details and episodes have naturally not been touched on, which may give the impression that what we have here is a red-blooded romantic tale, propelled by fateful accidents and recurrences, abounding in melodramatic twists and turns—literature, a fairy-tale. However, this is not completely unfounded, as I have already suggested, but it is a product of interpretive abstraction, for the immediate experience whilst reading is quite the opposite: one of drawn-out slowness, painterly attention to detail, everyday banalities, and detached, impartial, near-dispassionate analysis. The first-person narrator evokes the story of her life from the lofty perspective of an omniscient, impersonal chronicler. The very first sentence declares:

> These things were set down by me, Ursula Binder, née Ursula Lehmann, in the twilight of my old age and misery, in the year 1666 of our Lord, as an account in all true conscience of my past life, and of my childhood and youth in particular.

The Orsolya who relates the story of her younger days is a solitary old woman of around eighty, a gatherer of medicinal herbs and derided as a witch. Her husband is long dead, and the three children she has borne him, barely mentioned, have all left her. Critics of *The Shadow of the Snake* have remarked that although the novel merely touches on, rather than making a

meal of, its status as fictional autobiography, it seems improbable—with the old woman's reminiscences being written down, line by line, in her hovel of a room—that a destitute, dim-sighted burgher's widow of slight education who has devoted her entire life to housekeeping and is obviously a complete novice to the art of writing should be capable of registering and analysing psychological processes with such astounding subtlety. She recalls everything, down to the minutest detail, and articulates this complete knowledge without the least sign of doubt or hesitation. One reviewer even chided the memoir-writer that, horrible as the traumas to which she attests are, "from beginning to end she adopts an agreeable tone, writing ornately, evocatively, even-temperedly... this is not the tone of one who is beyond good and evil, but of one who aestheticises."

There's no getting away from it, Rakovszky's narrator expresses herself "exquisitely" throughout. Her descriptions of the countryside are vivid and poetic, her psychological probing acute (in a thoroughly modern manner), the construction of her periods, and the rhythm these impart to the text, nicely poised, with a near-musical flow. Zsuzsa Rakovszky has up to now been known as a fine poet, and the imprint of that lyrical intonation is also discernible in this, her first, novel. Yet, just as poetry is not "beauty" for its own sake, so the "beauty" of *The Shadow of the Snake* is not lyricism merely for aesthetic effect. *The Shadow of the Snake* is a true epic, and what is more, complexly stylised and self-reflexive—a post-modern epic. The stricture on the plausibility of the psychology and form of expression adopted by the narrator, in actual fact, taxes the novel for its use of interior monologue, that characteristic innovation of modern portrayals of personal crisis. Rakovszky's first-person narrator, however, inhabits a world that at once predates and lies beyond the crisis of the modern individual. She predates it insofar as, being a seventeenth-century woman, her attitude to the world is still archaic and magical in relation to the modern age.

This is most clearly signalled by the system of symbols incorporated in the novel. The symbols that play a key role in the book are not just decorative but, quite literally, figure as characters. Fire, snakes, shadows and more—all ever-present major motifs in magical concepts of the world—have an important part in Orsolya's life and dreams. The fact that the memoir again and again cites Orsolya's former dreams is in itself of significative value, and those dreams, whilst not rationally intelligible, clearly bear a magico-mythical relationship to her life. From a standpoint of authenticity, of course, it is again implausible that the narrator would recall dreams so many decades old with such precision, yet what is at stake here is not authenticity but the creation of a narrative line that has a primarily literary mode of existence and, beyond that, at most only a limited referentiality to reality.

From a standpoint of verisimilitude, one might regard it as similarly implausible that Ursula Binder, whose native language was obviously German, should write her memoirs in elegant Hungarian, and not the modern idiom at that but an elevated, polished literary language which, if it preserves any archaic feel, that is evidenced at most in the pace of the text, and although reminiscent of certain models—to be more specific, literary translations of nineteenth-century foreign novels (Rakovszky is a first-rate literary translator in her own right)—in reality exists nowhere outside this novel.

Equally, Orsolya stands beyond the modern crisis of personality. Her story

concerns a woman who has lost her identity, and may indeed never have possessed one: "...not for a single moment can I forget," Orsolya ruminates on her situation at one point, towards the end of her story, "that I am not identical with the person whom I present to the world, except, bit by bit, I no longer know who and what—if not that—I am in reality?" Orsolya is so alienated from her own identity that she could be anyone, possibly the witch whom the local children pelt with rotten apples—or even that twenty-first century author who, having thought her way into Orsolya's life with great erudition and empathy, whilst at the same time holding herself aloof from it, writes for her what she would have been unable to write herself.

In her 85th year, Magda Szabó, the grand old lady of contemporary Hungarian literature, has likewise chosen to put out her new novel, *Für Elise,* in the form of an autobiography of an elderly woman. In this case the elderly woman is herself. *Für Elise* is the first volume of Magda Szabó's autobiographical novel. Hitherto "the author has stubbornly sidestepped all questions directed at her life as an adolescent and young adult," she herself writes in the blurb. "Now she is breaking the seal of silence, being old enough not to be ashamed of anything that happened to her and those close to her: the sole witness to herself, her family having been swallowed up by the grave, she can no longer upset anyone's sensitivities with her frankness..." Like most books of this kind, *Für Elise* is about the writer's childhood and youth. It is odd, though, how people generally seem to consider that the only interesting things which happen to them that are worth recording in later life are things which occur in their youth; yet people's adolescences tend to be much more of a muchness than their adult years.

The first-person narrator of *Für Elise* grew up in a cultivated and widely respected provincial middle-class family during the 1920s and '30s. The defining stamp on the family background was the local singularity of Debrecen and the Calvinist Church. For centuries on end, to be a burgher of Debrecen, that bulwark of Hungarian Calvinist culture, bestowed at once station and obligation. All her life Magda Szabó has been proud to represent that heritage, for all that it has lost much of its lustre under the impact of Communist dictatorship and, more recently, the homogenising influence of globalisation. Her father was a noted cultural adviser in the town, whilst her mother, thanks to her musical gifts, might well have become a concert pianist had she not chosen to accept the role of mother and housewife that convention prescribed. Magdolna was their only child, but three years after she was born, in the shadow of the catastrophe of the Great War and the tragic consequences of the Peace Treaty of Trianon, they adopted a "Trianon orphan", Cili (Cecilia), a little girl of almost the same age as their daughter, whose own parents had been shot at the frontier whilst trying to escape from the Voivodina, recently occupied by the Serbs, to the territory of truncated Hungary. Cili had been rescued literally from beneath the dead bodies of her parents.

In the novel, Magda Szabó relates not just the story of her own childhood and adolescence but, in conjunction with that, indeed with equal prominence, Cili's story as well, starting with the crisis that the sudden appearance of a new sibling caused her and taking it right up to the upheavals of their subsequent love affairs. Cili's story is truly "fit for a novel": after those ghastly beginnings she was able to attract notice with her prodigious singing talent, including the attentions of an inter-

nationally famous Italian conductor thirty years her elder. Although the young woman was in love with another man, this was unrequited, so she married the maestro, who took her with him back to Italy. Cili died suddenly three years later in Amalfi, though why is not made clear in this first volume, which—albeit with many a jump ahead—sets out the events up to roughly the year the girls take their matriculation. The conductor, called Gianni Tonelli in the novel, was "a public figure, adored by Hitler, esteemed by Mussolini, who also featured occasionally at the matiné concerts Horthy put on in the Buda Castle gardens." He was a member of a wealthy Milanese patrician family with an illustrious past. Since no great conductor of that name is known, this is obviously a pseudonym. Presumably there are other figures too who feature under fictive names, most notably the teachers at the Dóczy High School for Girls in Debrecen, a once celebrated Calvinist "factory for young ladies"—by turn paragons and monsters for the schoolgirl Magdolna, who must have been a bit of a handful for them.

This is all very intriguing as it raises the question of whether we are dealing with a novel or an autobiography. On its own declaration, *Für Elise* is a novel, but then we have that blurb, which promises that the writer is now breaking the seal of silence at long ast to record everything the way it was. Following the fictionalised versions and rewritings of Magda Szabó's previous books, "we now finally get to know how it all really happened." That deceptive appearance of autobiography is strengthened by the narrator's frequent reference to her later novels, assuming that these are common knowledge and, laying their pages bare as it were, "revealing" what real figure inspired which fictive character, who was the model for whom.

Fictionalised and confessional elements are mixed together, just as in Rakovszky's book, but whereas in the latter the obvious fiction creates the impression of an authentic reality, here the gestures towards novellising undermine the validity of autobiographical authenticity. Like Rakovszky's narrator, Magda Szabó (or her first-person narrator) precisely remembers every detail, citing every single word and gesture from seventy and eighty years back with scrupulous accuracy, but this testimony to the implausible powers of recollection of a readily identifiable narrator often works to its own disadvantage. In an autobiography it is hard to accept passages like the following as reminiscences of a three-year-old first-person narrator:

> Cili was now on her feet, then finally she started slowly to undress, first undoing her apron with her still stiff arms, struggling for a long time with the buttons, even managing laboriously to slip the dress off, under which were the camiknickers that she also discarded to stand there, in the middle of the room, innocent and naked in her knee-stockings and clumpy orphan's shoes, shapeless and likewise black, and she reached out for the blanket that was familiar to her, perhaps thinking it was her property. Too weak for its weight, she dropped it, then started off towards the door in her boots and knee-stockings, in the buff, but on reaching the door she picked up the discarded shirt and handed it to me, for me to take that too; obviously there was no place, nothing, for her, because all the things that she had just now slowly divested from herself were new. She handed the chemise over with a biblical gesture and, as I did not hold on, it fell to the ground; I startled at the rustle as at nothing ever before in my life.

In this case too, therefore, we are dealing with a novel, but one has no way of telling to what extent it is the autobiographical story that it purports to be, be-

cause when it comes down to it we just don't know "how it all really happened," and it is not something we could ever know in any shape or form, as time has meanwhile rewritten everything, and—as we have learned since Proust—memories most of all. From the standpoint of rhetorical configurations, Magda Szabó may rewrite the stories in what she calls her autobiographical novel, but she does so in essentially the same way as in her avowedly fictionalised novels. It may be that here she speaks more clearly to those who are interested in the "naked truth", reveals more to those who profess to having already surmised all sorts of things, but that does not alter the fact that unsuspecting readers can only read *Für Elise* as a novel, even if they are convinced they are at last getting to know how it all really happened.

In the end, that novel, with its occasionally hard-to-follow digressions and convoluted verbosity, tells the story of the upbringing and schooling of two extraordinary young girls. Unlike in *Egy polgár vallomásai* (Confessions of a Bourgeois), Sándor Márai's brilliant 1942 autobiographical novel, the milieu, in the strict sense, within which that upbringing took place—the town, that is to say—plays a rather minor role in *Für Elise*. Yet it was precisely in Magda Szabó's young days that Calvinist Debrecen, with all its contradictoriness, still retained its distinctive features, as even *Für Elise* allows one to gather. Here that milieu is represented, first and foremost, by the aforementioned "factory for young ladies" and its teaching staff, with their subjection to the church. This, however, is presented to us baldly and unappealably from the interpretive and judgmental standpoint of the recollecting protagonist of today. Typical is a passage where the narrator, by now a famous writer, on having honorary citizenship of the town bestowed on her, pays a visit back, decades later, to her alma mater. There she refuses to speak to a former teacher who had hated her then, doing whatever she could to make her life a misery, because Magdolna was not patriotically spirited enough and was more interested in Roman writers than in the Girl Guides. The overzealous teacher may have deserved the snub—a victim of Trianon may have made her the way she was—but, more significantly, the author presents the perspective of today's truth as though that had also been the perspective of the adolescent girl of the time; in other words, the standpoint of novelist and autobiographer are once again blurred.

Ultimately, though, the veracity and richness of the biographical material win out. This novel of an adolescent girl who enthuses over mythological heroes, whose favourite book is the *Aeneid,* and who has a crush on her Latin master (he turns out on a school excursion to be a Humbert Humbert, as it were, to her Lolita), and also of that other girl, the orphan over whom great musicians enthuse yet who, like a female Tonio Kröger, falls hopelessly in love with one of the dancers at her dancing school, despite the sprawling formlessness of its formulation, is enthralling. Especially in the final third of the book, any reader, however finicky, will be drawn under the spell of the eternal magic of human stories and will want to know how it all really happened—it does not matter where, and if nowhere else, then between the covers of this book—and will look forward to its continuation. ❧

Ivan Sanders

Bittersweet Home

In the Land of Hagar. The Jews of Hungary: History, Society and Culture. Edited by Anna Szalai. Tel Aviv, Beth Hatefutsoth, The Nahum Goldman Museum of the Jewish Diaspora and the Israeli Ministry of Defence Publishing House, 304 pp., illustrated.

In the Land of Hagar is the third major work published in recent years on Hungarian Jewry, though none of the three offers a systematic history of the subject. *Jewish Budapest—Memories, Rites, History,* a collective work first published in 1995, is a veritable treasure trove of information about Jewish life in the Hungarian capital over the centuries, and as such it is both more and less than a straightforward history. Raphael Patai's *The Jews of Hungary: History, Culture, Psychology* is also an unconventional portrait, reflecting the author's special interest in cultural anthropology as well as his close ties to one particular group of early twentieth-century Hungarian Jewish intellectuals. *In the Land of Hagar* is an even more disparate collection of 39 essays examining various aspects of the Hungarian Jewish experience. It might be argued that when it comes to large and complex topics, such an approach—focused studies by experts in different disciplines—is more useful, more enlightening, than a traditional chronological narrative. However, the approach also has serious drawbacks. In this volume, we find too many articles that are little more than descriptive summaries, overviews, enumerations. A more detailed comparison of these three books would leave room to consider the consequences of the fact that the first was written and published in Hungary, the second in the United States, and the third, the volume under review, in Israel—although quite a few of the scholars whose articles appear in this volume live and work in Hungary, and at least one historian—Kinga Frojimovics—has contributed to both *Jewish Budapest* and *In the Land of Hagar.*

Still, we should point out that contributions by Israeli writers, especially the historical essays covering the modern period, tend to gloss over certain historical givens without which it is difficult to understand developments in twentieth-century Hungary. There seems to be a consensus among historians nowadays that everything that happened between the two world wars in this country can be related to the outcome of the First World War, the disastrous consequences for Hungary of the Treaty of Trianon. Yet in an essay entitled "Anti-

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Semitism in the Inter-War Period", Raphael Vago doesn't even mention Trianon. Moreover, he offers too many negative generalisations about the populist movement, asserting for instance that the "populists idealised a past which was more reinvented than based on reality, and rejected the 'foreign body'—mainly the Jews—which had disrupted the delicate equilibrium within Hungarian society." Vago implies that all populists were German-influenced, anti-Semitic rightists, though it is common knowledge that there were populist intellectuals and "village explorers" on the left, too, who were never beguiled by simplistic explanations for their country's ills.

Nevertheless, the outlines of the story of the Jews of Hungary do emerge in the pages of this volume, in chapters written by both Israeli and Hungarian historians and economists. As elsewhere in Europe, the story is about periods of gradual, promising growth followed by sudden retrenchment and displacement. In the early Middle Ages, with the emergence of a money economy in Hungary, Jews were needed and therefore welcomed. In subsequent centuries, when their numbers were still small, they were tolerated, and some of them attained comfortable, even privileged positions as merchants, moneylenders and shopkeepers, protected by the court or the aristocratic owners of large estates. But as soon as their commercial rivals—very often members of German guilds—saw them as a threat, and the rulers of the country felt that Jews were more trouble than they were worth, favours were withdrawn, discrimination followed, and its victims very often had to flee for their lives. This pattern did not change even in the nineteenth century, when the influx of Jews from the eastern provinces of the Austrian (later Austro-Hungarian) Empire turned Hungary within a relatively short time into a country with one of the largest Jewish populations in Europe, and when the particularly Hungarian road to assimilation became an important European model. The surveys of economic history make it clear that economic interests lay invariably behind anti-Semitic agitation in both the modern and pre-modern periods. This is how Yehuda Don, a Hungarian-born Israeli economist, sums up the pattern: "When the benefits from utilizing the Jews economically seemed smaller than the cost of their efficiency through which they competed with the Christian artisan or merchant, religious arguments were employed to discriminate against them."

In addition to the historical surveys, some of which, as already mentioned, seem rather cursory, there are other essays far narrower in scope but more carefully worked out and therefore more rewarding. Shlomo Spitzer's examination of the famous seven communities *(sheva kehilot)* in western Hungary (after 1918, Burgenland, Austria) is a case in point. These orthodox Jewish enclaves in settlements on land owned by the Esterházy family remained intact for centuries. Professor Spitzer's precise and sympathetic account of the inner workings of these cohesive and closed communities help us see them as model ghettoes whose longevity and stability were due as much to the piety of the inhabitants as to the relatively benign attitudes of the owners of the princely estates on which the communities were founded. Another Israeli contribution—"Several Truths About the Orthodox Community in Budapest", by Dov Landau—is a touching remembrance of the big city. The author recalls how as a boy of eleven he would often travel with his father to Budapest from Szeged, and from the railroad station head straight for the synagogue, the bookshops, the strictly kosher restaurants and bakeries of Budapest's Orthodox Jewish section. There aren't too

many people in Hungary today[1] who could write about the orthodox Hungarian Jewish experience as authoritatively and authentically as someone like Dov Landau. Equally authoritative are Haya Harel and David Giladi's discussions of early Hungarian Zionists' contacts and activities, including a look at "Herzl and His Hungarian Friends in Paris 1891–1895". We should add that Attila Novák of Budapest recounts just as expertly the history of Hungarian Zionism between the two world wars.

One of the more intriguing aspects of this book (and others on the subject) is that a number of contributors who deal with Hungarian Jewish culture endeavor to isolate and identify Jewish elements and characteristics even in the works of completely secularised Hungarian artists of Jewish descent who never treated Jewish subjects in their art. A related issue, raised again and again in the literature on Hungarian Jews, has to do with the reasons why certain professions and art forms attracted so many assimilated Hungarian Jews. Essays on secular Jewish musicians, architects, photographers reach the conclusion that the art of these people speaks of their deep commitment to progress and modernity. Eschewing their own musical tradition lest they were seen as fostering ethnic separatism, "these modern-minded Jews," writes musicologist Judit Frigyesi, "escaped to a world of spirituality, so to speak, where existence could be explained through emotions and the symbols of art. They were reluctant to expose this world to the threat of ethnic hatred." In his essay on Hungarian Jews and modern architecture, Rudolf Klein points out that by 1900 the "Hungarian Style" became Jewish even though it no longer employed biblical motifs. "Ödön Lechner's Jewish followers placed Hungarian decoration in a new context that reflects the 'Jewish structural principle': free association, intentionally unstructured constitution, paraphrasing of original themes, combinations resembling language-play." And István Nemeskürty, writing about the role of Jews in the film industry, contends that the "strong participation" of Hungarian Jews in this area may be explained by the fact that "Hungarians have a highly developed visual imagination. The rich visual imagery of Hungarian folk carvings, folk tales and poetry bear witness to this fact. Jewish filmmakers, whose mother tongue was Hungarian, also enjoyed this mastery."

As fascinating as this kind of theorising may be, it entails certain risks. For one thing, it is very difficult (though not impossible) to define a quality that it is at best fluid and elusive. However, some of the formulations about Jewish "essence" and Jewish "genius" come perilously close to those hazy and simplistic notions of Jewishness used often by anti-Semites to label and dismiss certain types of music, art, literature, etc. as subliminally, subconsciously, yet quintessentially, "Jewish".

It would seem that further research into the Hungarian Jewish past and present would yield more tangible results than fanciful hypotheses about what makes a non-Jewish work Jewish. Writer after writer in this volume laments that many areas of Hungarian Jewish history and culture remain unexplored. Kinga Frojimovics in her brief but illuminating overview of Hassidism in Hungary comments that "the history of the movement in Hungary is still uncharted territory". And Judit Frigyesi notes

1 ■ One of those people is István Domán. A Budapest rabbi, Domán evokes the world of pre-Holocaust rural Hungarian *yeshivot* in his fascinating, and autobiographical, *A talmudiskolák titkai* (The Secrets of the Talmudic Academies), Budapest, Ulpius-ház, 2001.

that while Hungary has a rich cantorial tradition reaching back to the nineteenth century, and many in Budapest still remember the outstanding cantors of recent decades, "besides a few accidentally preserved records, we have almost no information about these people."[2] Where we do get a great deal of information and insight, is in the longer, more thoroughgoing articles: in Rudolf Klein's survey of the synagogues of Hungary, for instance, or Kinga Frojimovics's examination of the historic split within the Hungarian Jewish community in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Yet, when all is said and done, we may still conclude that *In the Land of Hagar* is more than a book of scholarship; it is an Israeli tribute to Hungary's Jewry and, indirectly, an homage to Hungarian Jewish contributions to Israeli culture. Published by Tel Aviv's Museum of the Jewish Diaspora and the Ministry of Defence Publishing House, the book is also, in a sense, a memorial, the fourth in a series of volumes on historical Jewish communities around the world. It is also noteworthy that *In the Land of Hagar* is a beautifully and expensively produced, lavishly illustrated, oversize book. Indeed, the reproductions and photographs—of synagogues, religious articles, artifacts, portraits, as well as documents, caricatures, advertisements, Hungarian Jewish greeting cards and other ephemera from public and private collections—are often more memorable than the texts themselves, whose purpose in many cases is to make the illustrations more meaningful. Some of the reproductions are well known and have been published before, but all of them have been selected with an eye for the significant and the revealing. There is one photograph, accompanying the essay on the Holocaust in Hungary (p. 272), which—to this reviewer, at least—expresses eloquently the ironies of the Hungarian Jewish experience. The picture shows a group of passengers on the "Kasztner train". (In a highly controversial deal worked out by Rezső Kasztner, a Hungarian Zionist, the lives of 1700 wealthy or well-connected Hungarian Jews were traded for money and equipment demanded by the Germans in the spring of 1944.) So the people we see are not ordinary refugees. Well-heeled, stylishly dressed men, women and youngsters pose casually for the camera. They could be vacationers going off to the mountains. (Actually, they were given safe conduct to Switzerland.) There will undoubtedly be some who will leaf through *In the Land of Hagar* for the pictures. And though this is certainly more than a coffee-table book, some people will no doubt display it as such because of its attractiveness.

One of the critics of the volume wonders about the wisdom of publishing it in English, the language neither of Hungary nor of Israel, adding a bit sarcastically that perhaps it was done so that the American sponsors of the book could read it, too.[3]

2 ■ The historian Tibor Frank echoes such complaints in a recent study on the life and times of Mór Wahrmann, noting that in the past 100 years no comprehensive biography has been written of this leading though now largely forgotten public figure, who both as a Hungarian and a Jew was a commanding presence on the Budapest political and social scene in the late nineteenth century. See "Honszeretet és felekezeti hűség. A Wahrmann életrajz kérdései" (Patriotism and Religious Loyalty. Problems in a Wahrmann Biography) in László Karsai and Judit Molnár (eds.), *Küzdelem az igazságért. Tanulmányok Randolph L. Braham 80. születésnapjára* (Fighting for the Truth. A Randolph L. Braham *Festschrift* on the Occasion of His Eightieth Birthday), Budapest, MAZSIHISZ, 2002, pp. 169–184.

3 ■ See Naftali Kraus, "Miért Hágár és miért nem magyarul?" (Why Hagar and Why Not in Hungarian?) http://www.rabbi.hu/konyv44.htm Last visited March 3, 2003.

Actually, the criticism is misplaced. For the potential readers of such a book, in Hungary, Israel or elsewhere, the English language would hardly be an obstacle. Nevertheless, the question of whom the book was written for is a legitimate one. Most of the contributors assume some knowledge of Judaism and Jewish history on the part of the reader, though there are exceptions. For example, Miklós Rékai describes Jewish customs and rituals from the point of view of a folklorist who doesn't seem to have first-hand knowledge of contemporary religious life. Otherwise he wouldn't make the following startling statement in connection with observant Jewish women shearing their hair the day after their wedding: "Very few women in the Diaspora cut off their hair today, since this act evokes the horrors of the concentration camps." Is it possible that Mr. Rékai doesn't know that in today's London, Antwerp or New York there are thousands of religious Jewish women who, when they marry, cut their hair and wear a *sheitel* (wig)?

We could quibble further about textual inconsistencies in the book, lapses in the translations, or complain about the failure to provide exact sources for the otherwise well-chosen literary quotations, or an explanation for why the name Hagar was used for Hungary in medieval Hebrew literature. But all in all, *In the Land of Hagar* is a valuable and attractive addition to the growing number of publications on the Jews of Hungary. Editor Anna Szalai deserves praise for bringing it all together, and making sure that every part of the Hungarian Jewish story is covered—the present as well as the past. In one of the last essays, András Kovács and Eszter Andor present a balanced and sober assessment of the Jewish revival in post-1989 Hungary. The last illustration in the book is appropriately hopeful: it shows the title pages of Hungarian Jewish journals launched, or relaunched, in the 1990s. ❧

Steven Béla Várdy

Images, Perceptions, Individuals

Tibor Frank: *Ethnicity, Propaganda, Myth-Making. Studies in Hungarian Connections to Britain and America, 1848–1945.*
Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1999. 391 pp., name index.

Hungary is a relatively small country which for centuries has repeatedly looked to Western Europe and then to North America for help and inspiration. As a result Hungary's connections to the Western World has been a favoured subject for Hungarian authors—be they established scholars, learned publicists, or run-of-the-mill journalists. Their study of Hungary's connections to the world of German and Italian civilizations was a natural by-product of their nation's ongoing relationship to these linguistic and cultural entities.

Not so Hungary's relationship to the English-speaking world, especially England and the United States. These two countries are much more remote geographically and thus less accessible—at least they were in the past—as sources of influence and inspiration. Hungarian interest in Britain and the United States, therefore, is of more recent origin.

When it began, it was motivated partially by a desire for models of social, economic, technological, and political modernisation (e.g., Széchenyi's English-inspired economic and technological reforms, and the impact of American democracy upon Hungarian political thinking during the 1830s and 1840s), and partially by Hungary's desire to find a favourable hearing among the British and American political elites in the wake of her mutilations following the two world wars.

Hungary's connections to the English-speaking world reach back to the sixteenth century—more specifically to the activities of Stephen Parmenius of Buda (c.1555–1583) and Captain John Smith (1579–1631) of Virginia fame—but until the mid-nineteenth century these connections were somewhat sporadic. Not until the Hungarian Revolution of 1848, and the unsuccessful War of Independence that followed (1848–1849), was the English-speaking world made aware of the existence of the Kingdom of Hungary and of the Magyar nation. The man most responsible for this

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change in attitude was Louis [Lajos] Kossuth (1802–1894), the most visible leader of the revolution, and for four months the Governing Regent of revolutionary Hungary.

Following his flight in August 1849, Kossuth became the most celebrated Hungarian political exile, and for a number of years, the most illustrious exponent of the principle of national sovereignty and political independence in the Western World. His speeches, delivered in a slightly archaic but elegant English, are still being quoted—both for their content and for their elegance.

Although never displaced from his position of preeminence among Hungarian exiles, Kossuth was only the first of thousands of illustrious men who left Hungary in the twentieth century in the wake of two world wars and the accompanying political and social upheavals. They were preceded by hundreds of thousands of humble economic migrants in the three decades prior to the First World War, and then accompanied and followed by tens of thousands of political emigrants in the period between the 1930s and the 1980s (200,000 in 1956 alone, most of whom settled in the United States). The emigration and settlement of such a large number of Hungarians in the English-speaking world created a new, broader, and more complex relationship between Hungary, England and the United States. And this bond naturally became the hunting ground for an ever increasing number of publicists, historians and other scholars.

Early practitioners of Hungarian–English and Hungarian–American connections were mostly literary scholars, amateur historians, and journalists, who were motivated by the desire to point out their nation's connection to, interest in, and contributions to English and American civilisation. They produced hundreds of articles, scores of pamphlets, and occasionally also a number of large volumes that usually contained a collection of their diverse articles which had originally appeared in various periodicals scattered over two continents. Some of the best examples of such volumes include István Gál's (1912–1982) *Magyarország, Anglia és Amerika* (Hungary, England, and America, Budapest, 1946), József Reményi's (1891–1956) posthumous *Hungarian Writers and Literature* (New Brunswick, 1966), S. B. and A. H. Várdy's *The Austro-Hungarian Mind at Home and Abroad* (New York, 1989), and Sándor Fest's (1883–1944) *Skóciai Szent Margittól a walesi bárdokig. Magyar–angol történeti és irodalmi kapcsolatok* (From Saint Margaret of Scotland to the Bards of Wales. Hungarian-English Historical and Literary Connections, Budapest, 2000)—published nearly six decades after the author's death.

Others produced larger studies, monographs, and occasionally even some syntheses, particularly in the area of Hungarian–American connections. Some of the best known authors of such studies and monographs include the historian Sándor Márki (1857–1925), the publicist and amateur historian Jenő Pivány (1873–1946), the sociologist and diplomat Géza Hoffmann (1985–1921), the Calvinist clergyman and amateur historian Ödön [Edmund] Vasváry (1888–1977), the journalist-historian Tivadar Ács (1901–1974), the diplomat-historian Andor Sziklay [Andor C. Klay] (1912–1997), the literary scholar and bibliographer Albert Tezla (b.1915), as well as such other still working younger scholars as József Gellén (b. 1946), Zoltán Fejős (b. 1948), and the author of the current volume, Tibor Frank (b. 1948).

The synthesisers count among their ranks the journalist-historian Géza Kende (1880–1933), the publicist-historian Emil Lengyel (1895–1985), the sociologist

Miklós Szántó (b. 1916), and such professional historians as István Rácz (b. 1929), Julianna Puskás (b. 1932), Steven Béla Várdy (b.1936), and Nándor F. Dreisziger (b. 1940). Potentially the author of the book under review is also in this category, although his current work is not a synthesis, but rather a collection of scholarly articles that he has published during the final quarter of the twentieth century.

Tibor Frank is one of Hungary's premier scholars in the field of emigration/immigration studies. Director of the Institute of English and American Studies at Eötvös University in Budapest since 1994, in earlier years he spent time as a visiting professor at several American and European universities, in the course of which he conducted research in some fifty different archives. He has published the results of his research in three major books and about two dozen articles, twenty-one of which are reprinted in the current volume, along with another that was written specifically for this work.

Two-thirds of these articles appeared during the 1990s, following the collapse of Communism, while the remainder one-third were published in the course of the preceding decade and a half. Of these twenty-two articles, sixteen were written in English, five in Hungarian, and one in German; although one of the Hungarian articles also appeared seven years later in an English version.

The twenty-two articles are organised topically in three separate categories: "Cultivation of Nativism" (eight articles), "The Politics of Propaganda" (nine articles), and "Demythologisation of a Canon: Marx and Kossuth" (five articles). The last section contains most of the older articles, originally published between 1979 and 1984. They are obviously the by-products of the author's two simultaneously published monographs: *Marx és Kossuth* (Marx and Kossuth, 1985), and *Egy emigráns alakváltásai. Zerffi Gusztáv.pályaképe* (The Metamorphosis of an Emigrant. The Career of Gustav Zerffi, 1985)—the latter subsequently also appeared in English. The remaining three of the pre-1991 articles are scattered among the studies in the other two categories, and they are related to some of the author's subsequent topics.

While most of the enclosed articles/chapters deserve comment, limitations of space force my commentary to be selective. In the section on the Cultivation of Nativism, the most useful chapters to an average reader are those that deal with the evolution of the process of American immigration and the development of U.S. immigration policy during the period of the "great economic immigration" in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Here the author summarises and gives his own interpretation on the nature of this mass emigration from Austria-Hungary, on emigrants' reception in America, as well as on the various forms of anti-immigration feelings and movements that manifested themselves in turn-of-the-century America. They stretch from Franz Boas's (1858–1942) physical anthropological research to diverse manifestations of Social Darwinism. Boas actually drew some pro-immigrant conclusions by emphasising the positive impact of American society upon the physical features of the immigrants, and in particular upon their American-born offspring. But these conclusions were ferociously attacked by Madison Grant (1865–1937) in his notorious *The Passing of the Great Race* (1916), which proclaimed that without the leadership of the genetically superior Anglo-Saxon "race", the world would descend into a new form of barbarism. In his study of Social Darwinism and related issues, Tibor Frank mentions some of these issues and retraces the

steps outlined by Richard Hofstadter in his outstanding work, *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (1955), which the noted social historian soon complemented by his equally thought-arousing and challenging *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (1963).

To this reviewer the most interesting part of the book is the section on The Politics of Propaganda, that contains a number of scarcely known revelations. As an example, Tibor Frank examines the source of Lajos Kossuth's use of the English language, which the noted statesman openly attributed to the influence of Shakespeare's plays on his mind. But, as Tibor Frank points out, this reference to Shakespeare's alleged role in Kossuth's sophisticated use of English was really only a political ploy, whereby the Hungarian statesman tried to maximise his chances for Anglo-American support by his repeated reference to the alleged influence of the bard upon his life. In actuality Kossuth had learned his English like everyone else, by studying diligently. And his English was not Shakespearean English. Rather, it was Victorian English, spoken by all educated Englishmen in the nineteenth century.

Similarly interesting and revealing are the author's studies on the changing American image and perception of interwar Hungary's regent, Admiral Nicholas Horthy (r. 1920–1944) through the instrumentality of such prominent Americans as General Harry H. Bandholtz (1864–1925), Nicholas Roosevelt (1893–1982), and John F. Montgomery (1878–1954). The first of these was the head of the American Military Mission in Hungary in 1919–1920, while the latter two were U.S. Ministers to Hungary between 1930–1933 and 1933–1941, respectively. And like many Americans who stayed for a protracted time in Hungary, they too fell under the spell of the charms of the "courtly" Magyar gentlemen.

Likewise enlightening and informative are Tibor Frank's essays on Hungary's scholarly propaganda efforts carried out through the newly established *La Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie* (1932–1944), *The Hungarian Quarterly* (1936–1944) —the predecessor of the current periodical—and the projected but never completed English-language synthesis of Hungarian history. Apparently, the latter failed not so much because of the lack of talent or lack of funds, but simply because personality conflicts between Hungary's great interwar historian, Professor Gyula Szekfű (1883–1955), and József Balogh (1893–1944), the learned and sophisticated Secretary General of the Magyar Szemle Társaság (Hungarian Review Society) and subsequently also of The Society of *The Hungarian Quarterly*. Apparently the two men simply did not click, and consequently (disregarding the original national goal) they sabotaged each other's efforts.

As a sad afterthought to this whole affair, Balogh, who was a baptised Jew and an enthusiastic Hungarian, died in 1944. Following the German occupation of Hungary on March 19, 1944, he went underground, but he was soon found and deported. Not even Regent Horthy was able to save him, even though the latter had sent his aide-de-camp to find the editor of *The Hungarian Quarterly*. As related by the author,

> "Lt. Colonel Tost was said to have motored all the way through Western Hungary in a desperate attempt to try to save his life with an alleged draft to the air force he had served so willingly during World War I, but to no avail. The editor died at the hands of the Germans whom he had fought against so courageously through the entire decade before." (p. 275).

The articles in the third and final section of the book discuss the somewhat hazy and obtuse relationship between Karl Marx (1818–1883) and Lajos Kossuth, as

well as the operation of the Habsburg Secret Service in the period between the Hungarian Revolution of 1848 and the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867. The latter topic is particularly interesting and revealing, but it has been dealt with much more extensively by Tibor Frank himself in his book on the Hungarian-born and unusually gifted international soldier-of-fortune-cum-scholar, Gustav Zerffi (1820–1893). Zerffi's life demonstrates the best and the worst that Hungary has produced in the course of the past several centuries. The land of the Magyars has given birth to many persons of outstanding abilities. After going abroad, they achieved great things, but at times they also misused their abilities for petty personal gains.

All in all Tibor Frank's *Ethnicity, Propaganda, Myth-Making* is a high-quality scholarly work and exciting reading that deserves the attention of all scholars of modern European and American history. The scholarship that went into the making of these articles is first rate, the English language and style are excellent, and the quality of printing and binding fully up to modern standards. It is a handsome volume and a valuable scholarly work that should be in every major academic library. It is our hope that this book is but a precursor to a new synthesis of the history of Hungarian emigration and of Hungarian American life in general by a scholar who is already in the front rank among Hungary's emigration historians. ❧

Johanna Granville

Insult to Injury: The Children of 1956

Zsuzsanna Körösi and Adrienne Molnár: *Carrying a Secret in My Heart: Children of the Victims of the Reprisals after the Hungarian Revolution in 1956. An Oral History.* Budapest: Central European University Press. 2003. 195 pp. Illustrations and bibliography.

"Capital punishment kills immediately, whereas lifetime imprisonment does so slowly," said the banker in Anton Chekhov's play *The Bet.* "Which executioner is more humane? The one who kills you in a few minutes, or the one who wrests your life from you in the course of many years?" Culling over forty lengthy interviews, historians Zsuzsanna Kõrösi and Adrienne Molnár show us in detail how the lives of the children of those repressed after the 1956 Hungarian revolution were wrested from them, figuratively speaking, over several years. Thrust into poverty and degrading manual labour, barred from secondary school, stigmatised by friends and society, these children arguably suffered more than their executed fathers. Körösi and Molnár are both research fellows of the Oral History Archive at the Budapest-based Institute for the History of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. They explain how this research grew out of the Oral History Archive's brave efforts in 1981 (when still illegal) to gather oral testimonies from over one thousand "witnesses of twentieth-century Hungarian history" (p. 2). Given the campaign orchestrated by Communist authorities thoroughly to expunge the memory of the revolution and stigmatize it as a "counterrevolution," the Oral History Archive's work has proved invaluable in preserving Hungary's historical heritage. *Carrying a Secret in My Heart* consists of nine short chapters, a bibliography, biographies of the forty-two interviewees, and their poems and sketches produced as children. This highly readable memoir is apt to educe latent childhood memories in readers, especially those who have themselves lost parents or siblings, as they "bond" with the increasingly familiar interviewees.

The chapters trace—through the words of the interviewees—the several stages of the childrens' experience, from the Revolution and their memories of it, the sudden poverty and heavy responsibilities during the father's imprisonment, patterns of communication within the family, and social stigmatisation; to the adjustment after the fathers' release from prison (those who did survive), the public exoneration of the victims and their families in 1989,

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and the adult childrens' present-day reconciliation with their pasts.

The age of the interviewees varied at the time the Revolution first broke out (the student demonstration of October 23, 1956). Four were over ten years of age, sixteen were between seven and ten, eight were between four and six, and fifteen were below four years of age (p. 6). While the younger ones retain only vague visual memories of red stars and statues being desecrated, the older ones recall participating in marches and standing in long queues for hours—often at 4:00 or 5:00 a.m.—to buy bread and milk. One respondent remembers accompanying his mother to the hospital (one hopes because she lacked a babysitter) and saw bodies writhing in pain, missing legs and arms. One man's intestines were hanging out (p. 14). The children intuited the Revolution's end by the shift in mood at home. Some recall their mother's pleas that the father emigrate to save his life. Most cannot remember their fathers' actual arrest because they were either not present or too young to remember (p. 21). A few can still hear their fathers' last words as they were taken away. "You are the man of the family now; you must help your mother!" one interviewee, Tibor Molnár, was told —a heavy responsibility for a ten-year-old (p. 22).

Beyond a doubt, losing a father through temporary imprisonment or execution, is traumatic. Yet, in modern life where between fifty and sixty percent of marriages end in divorce, the absence of a father during childhood is not uncommon. Indeed, a child can perhaps bear more easily the experience of losing a loving father who involuntarily abandoned him or her than a divorce in which the father voluntarily left and never played a role in the child's life. However, politically induced abandonment carries a peculiar signature. The chapters on economic hardship, educational barriers and stigmatisation go the farthest in showing the reader the full extent of the unique trauma endured by the children of the victims, how their lives were wrested from them over the course of many years.

For every one of the interviewees, the economic situation changed radically after their fathers' arrest. Dealing with the loss of the major "breadwinner" was hard enough, but to add insult to injury, the Kádár regime targeted the wives as well. One in three of the interviewees' mothers was fired from her job (p. 29). Experiences differed, depending on whether the families lived in the city or countryside, but most of them were forced to do poorly paid manual work, like housecleaning or factory labour. Erzsébet Pekó recalls: "My mother went to stuff geese at 2 a.m., and by the time she went out to clean for a doctor she had stuffed sixty or seventy geese. She knew she had to go, otherwise there would be no food for us" (p. 28). In 1957 a decree was passed, stipulating that relatives of the executed were not eligible to receive widows' pensions or support for those left as orphans (p. 28).

Rarely could the families survive on the mother's pittance, so many of the children had to give up their schooling (elementary level) and do rough physical work as well. The family's survival took precedence over individual needs for self-betterment. Those who were financially able to continue their studies were usually barred from secondary school. Some prudently circumvented this barrier by moving to another city or town where people did not know them. If the mother divorced her husband-convict and remarried, changing the last name of her children, the educational barrier could be surmounted. It was a high price to pay for something others took for granted.

Chapter Four ("Stigmatisation") is one of the most moving. Here the reader grasps the profound and lasting effect of the social stigmatisation the children endured: low self-esteem. "The consequences of 1956, and the situation it landed us in, left its mark on everything," György Fenyőfalvi told Zsuzsanna Körösi.

> We were not allowed to do this, we were not eligible for that. When something was being handed out, I couldn't reach for it first. I had to wait until all the others had got theirs first. This feeling of always having to stand at the end of every line was also manifested in not being thought capable of a certain level of performance. That is, I came from a context in which no more could be expected (p. 60-1).

This stigmatisation at school could to some degree be offset at home if the mother instilled a strong sense of self-worth in the child and communicated openly with him or her, the authors explain. Unfortunately, many mothers were too harried trying to put food on the table that they often lacked the time and energy to provide emotional sustenance for their children. Growing up in poverty can have a devastating effect on a child's self-esteem as his parent(s) come to see him as just one more mouth to feed. Struggling themselves to withstand the stigmatisation, some mothers turned to alcohol to numb the pain, thus further hampering their ability to provide proper parenting for their children. Others became ill and needed frequent hospitalisation. A few even put their children into state institutions. László Földes was put under state care for five years (from age four to nine).

> It was real suffering. It was really, really bad. I am not saying that we were beaten, although there was the occasional smacking. I simply felt miserable all the time and I couldn't wait to be allowed home (p. 77).

Körösi and Molnár show how the child's ability to cope with the discrimination and ostracism in the wider community was a direct function of the degree of openness within the family. Children from families of the intelligentsia where the revolution was freely discussed and the father's presence kept alive tended to have a sturdier self-concept. These include Katalin Litván, daughter of the 1956 Institute's director and founder György Litván, Kinga Göncz (daughter of former Hungarian president Árpád Göncz), László Donáth (son of Ferenc Donáth, a close supporter of Imre Nagy who was deported to Romania), and László Tihanyi (son of Árpád Tihanyi, a teacher of Hungarian literature in Győr).

Unfortunately, many of the interviewees from working class families were forbidden from talking about their fathers and the Revolution. The topic became taboo, either because it was too painful for the mother, or because she felt guilty about perhaps causing her husband's arrest when she was interrogated about him, or because she herself didn't fully understand why her husband had been imprisoned or killed. This made it harder for children to grasp why they were being treated in school as if they were inferior. Lack of information tended to increase the sense of helplessness and fear. This censorship, imposed from without, soon metamorphosed into permanent self-censorship, as the children learned to "carry a secret" in their hearts.

> We didn't like talking about this to anyone. It was like having an inferiority complex. It was as if we had been branded. We didn't even like hearing about it,

Erzsébet Pekó recalls (p. 63). Körösi and Molnár report that fourteen percent of those they contacted refused to be interviewed, stating that such an interview

would "reopen old wounds and seriously disturb them emotionally" (p. 7).

Yet the passage of time, by itself, does not heal wounds. Psychotherapists encourage their patients to allow traumatic events from childhood to rise to conscious awareness where they can be discussed and analysed freely with adult intelligence, and "defused"—like a bomb squad does to a bomb. How sad that even now, more than a decade after the collapse of the communist regime, these second generation victims as adults in their forties and fifties, have never come to terms with their fears and articulated them!

Prison visits revealed the degree of openness in the family. Some mothers insisted that their children come along and talk with their father. Other mothers forbade them to come, believing it would upset the children, or lied, saying that children were not allowed at the prison. In some cases the father had too much pride and refused to let his children see him in striped clothes like a common criminal (p. 32).

This is selfish, short-term thinking. Körösi and Molnár generally opine that more openness is healthier for a child's psyche. Just as a nation needs to preserve its history, so children need to preserve memories of their parents for the molding of identity. As adults, they inevitably pose questions: Did my father love me? Why did he leave me? Visiting their fathers in prison, as well as writing letters and sending parcels, provided validation that would prove invaluable, especially for those children whose fathers never returned home alive. Körösi and Molnár provide interesting details about the regulations concerning letters: length was restricted to 32 lines and nothing about politics or prison conditions was permitted. Each letter had to contain the censor's stamp of approval *("Ellenőrizve").* Consequently, the convicts wrote in Aesopian language in microscopic-sized letters. Occasionally convicts could smuggle longer, revealing letters via released prisoners or lenient prison guards. In one case a convict, facing his own execution, managed to sew a long letter into the seams of his sheepskin jacket, which was returned to his loved ones after he was dead (p. 33). Families showed great ingenuity as well. One interviewee, Zsuzsa Mérei, reminisces that her father and the other convicts were making a radio in the prison. Her grandmother helped by baking tiny radio parts (diodes) into a fruitcake that would be sent to the prison in a parcel (p. 37).

In Chapter Seven ("Together Again"), Körösi and Molnár illustrate the difficulties families had in adjusting to the fathers' release from prison. In many cases the children—some now teenagers—had not had adequate time to prepare for the shock. Often they did not recognize their fathers physically, who were thin and balding, with poor eyesight. The change in lifestyle was sudden. They had to get used to having a disciplinarian around; they lost some of their freedom. They also needed to adjust to the shifts in their fathers' personalities. Before they had looked up to their fathers as protectors. Upon release from prison, however, many convicts were spiritually broken and desperately needed validation from their wives and children. Since the latter had themselves suffered so deeply, they missed the stronger man they had once known. Regrettably some children lost respect for their fathers who were now so psychologically needy. Moreover, some wives felt uncomfortable sharing power, and divorce after the convicts' release was not uncommon. Readjustment was swifter, however, in families where communication had remained open throughout the years of imprisonment.

One will never know how many brilliant inventors, writers, poets, musicians, industrialists, and entrepreneurs Hungary lost due to the inane decision to bar innocent children from higher education and intellectually challenging jobs. Moreover, the repression of the families of the victims of the 1956 Revolution was a fatuous policy because it kept the Revolution alive. Chapter Eight ("The Turnaround") recounts the public exoneration of the victims. At a memorial service in Heroes' Square on June 16, 1989, coinciding with the thirty-fourth anniversary of Imre Nagy's execution, hundreds of thousands of people, including emigres, came to Budapest to pay tribute to the 229 individuals who had been unjustly executed (pp. 1, 121). The interviewees reported a tremendous feeling of "closure," but also much pain. "I was so moved and happy, and at the same time bitter, because the old memories had come to the surface," Mária Tomasovszky told psychologist Gertrud Hoffmann. "Healthwise I found it hard to bear the whole thing. I even had a mild heart attack afterwards" (p. 123).

Permission to exhume the victims' bodies, which the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party declared on November 23, 1988, formed part of the public exoneration campaign. The chapter "Turnaround" shows the interviewees' differing reactions. Some petitioned to have their fathers' skeletons exhumed from plot 301 of the Rákoskeresztúr public cemetery and fondled the skull and bones with not a trace of repulsion, finding it soothing. Others preferred to allow their fathers' bodies to rest in peace in the public plot, deeming it disrespectful to relocate them. They also feared that exhumation might yield a skeleton that was not their fathers' or—worse—no skeleton. They chose not to risk discovery that the earth they had secretly tended and graced with flowers all their lives was only an empty plot (p. 124–5).

An act was also passed in 1989 granting one million forints to the families of all convicts who were granted annulment of their sentences (p. 126). Kőrösi and Molnár investigated the families' reactions. While grateful, the consensus is summed up by László Kolozsy: "One million forints can never compensate for a man's life, for so much suffering." One cannot turn back the clock, undo the years lived in shame. József Andi said

> For me, peace of mind will only come when I die. The whole thing lives in me. It is like something sitting on your soul. I wake up with it in the morning and go to sleep with it at night. I think of it every day, but there are no words to express it (p. 127).

At the same time, most interviewees told the authors (discussed in Chapter Nine, "The Legacy") that they had no desire for revenge. Even if they could cross certain moral boundaries, whom exactly would they avenge? The hangman and other people carrying out the repression? First, they were only following orders; second, they are old men now; and third, revenge would merely breed counter-revenge. "I must keep my anger to myself," József Andi said (p. 139).

The chapter also explores the interviewees' attitudes toward politics. Many recall injunctions from their fathers to shun politics and most reported a revulsion toward politics. Initially some became involved in the new parties formed after the collapse of communism, such as the Alliance of Free Democrats, but soon discovered that politics is a "forum for individual interests," less about ideals and integrity and more about backslapping and backstabbing (p. 132). Most interviewees aspire only to bring their own children up with a sense of pride, not shame.

In short, *Carrying a Secret in My Heart* is well worth reading and will interest not only historians, but political scientists, sociologists, and psychologists as well. While several analyses of the children of the martyrs of 1956 have been published in Hungarian (including the Hungarian original of this book), *Carrying a Secret in My Heart* is virtually the only source in English. For a sociological study of the views of Hungarian teenagers today toward the 1956 Revolution, see Júlia Szalai and László Gábor, *"Az én ötvenhatom, a te ötvenhatod, az ő ötvenhatjuk. Tizenévesek a forradalomról,"* (My Fiftysix, Your Fiftysix, Their Fiftysix. Teenagers on the Revolution) *2000,* 1 (1994): pp. 11–22. This was translated in English in Terry Cox, ed., *Hungary 1956—Forty Years On* (1997).

No book is flawless, of course. As the authors themselves would admit, this is not the kind of sociological study featuring objective statistics, percentages and random selection of interviewees. Since the biographies at the end are uneven, the reader cannot discern how many second-generation victims were barred from secondary school, how many had to do hard physical labour while still in elementary school, or how many chose to have their fathers' bodies exhumed, for example. The book also lacks an overall analytic chapter. The chapters are collections—or "mosaics"—of quotations from the various interviewees. Many questions are likely to occur to readers. Körösi and Molnár selected twenty-one individuals whose fathers were executed and twenty-one whose fathers were incarcerated and then released. How, then, did the experiences of the former compare with the latter? If the second generation victims befriended each other, how—if at all—did those friendships change after some of the childrens' fathers returned home? Did the half-orphans' envy blight those friendships?

Western readers might find the book rather tame. Books abound, for example, detailing the problems Vietnam veterans and their families had readjusting after the end of a war stigmatised as the first American defeat (admittedly an awkward analogy)—with high rates of suicide, crime, drug abuse, alcoholism, personality disorders and domestic violence. In *Carrying a Secret in My Heart,* the reader only learns that the interviewees "have no desire for revenge." Given the prolonged poverty and stigmatisation they endured as children and the low self-esteem that inevitably resulted, the reader suspects that deeper problems continue to plague the second-generation victims. (Perhaps these would have been revealed by that fourteen per cent of those contacted who refused to be interviewed.) One also wonders if perhaps a "reverse taboo" may be in effect: nothing "bad" must be said about the victims because nothing good was said about them for three decades. Yet to report an individual's behavioural problems is not to denigrate that individual's intrinsic worth as a human being. Temporary failings do not define one's identity. Or, to return to Chekhov, "One must be a god to be able to tell successes from failures without making a mistake." ❧

William Wright

New Liszt Letters

The present cache of correspondence spanning some fifty years of the composer's life not only sheds new light on a few shadowy figures in Liszt literature but, more importantly, adds to what is known about the man himself, his activities as a pianist composer in Paris, London, Weimar, Rome and Budapest, and the support he was given by a coterie of devotees in England, who continued to keep in touch with him throughout many years of his life: Queen Victoria, William Cusins, Thomas Frederick Beale, Julius Benedict, Henry Chorley and Alexander Mackenzie.

Fourteen years ago the present author set himself the task of collecting as many Liszt letter facsimiles as possible from public and private collections throughout the United Kingdom. He had no idea then how successful his quest was going to be, but after his discovery of Liszt's Piano Piece in A flat [S189] in a December 1935 *Piano Student* magazine in Kilmacolm in rural Scotland he was eager to take up the challenge. Little did he realise at that time that at least forty-four unpublished letters by Liszt and two in the hand of his mother lay unnoticed in archives scattered throughout Scotland, England and Wales and, an added bonus, an unknown manuscript for cello and piano or organ: "Enchaînement de F. Liszt" [S382a] lay undetected in the library of the Royal Academy of Music in London.[1] Thirty-two of the new Liszt letters from the above sources were published in two issues of the *Journal of the American Liszt Society*.[2]

1 ■ See William Wright: "Chamber Music", in *The Liszt Companion*, ed. Ben Arnold, Westport CT, London, Greenwood Press, 2002, pp. 227 and 233.

2 ■ Volume 31/ January–June 1992, and Volume 33/ January–June 1993.

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scholar and pianist, gave the world première of Liszt's piano piece in Ab S 189 in a BBC Scotland broadcast recital in 1987. His most recent study, "Chamber Music", is included in The Liszt Companion, *ed. Ben Arnold, London, Greenwood Press, 2002.*

The letters published here were written in French except for Letter 9 to Ferenc Erkel and Letter 2 by Anna Liszt, which were written in German. For the originals see Appendix.

The addressees are listed chronologically as follows:

Letter 1. To Wojciech Gryzmala	[1836/'37]
Letter 2. To Julius Benedict	27 April [18]40
Letter 3. To Thomas Frederick Beale	[June 1840]
Letter 4. To Henry Chorley	[28 August 1843]
Letter 5. To Julius Benedict	21 April 1844
Letter 6. To Julius Benedict	27 May [18]56
Letter 7. To an unknown correspondent	8 May [18]58
Letter 8. To Louise de Mercy-Argenteau	[1866]
Letter 9. To Ferenc Erkel	21 February [18]77
Letter 10. To William G. Cusins	7 August [18]79
Letter 11. To William G. Cusins	8 October [18]79
Letter 12. To the Princess of Wales [Sec.]	16 April 1886
Letter 13. To Mme Ma[c]Kenzie	17 April 1886
Letters of Anna Liszt: 1.	To Mme Mortier 10 Jan. '65
Letters of Anna Liszt: 2.	To Mme Mortier 10 Jan. '66

Letter 1 [1836 /1837]

To Albert [Wojciech] Gryzmala [1793–1871] Polish patriot exiled in Paris. Gryzmala had been in the hands of Russian forces after the rout of Napoleon's militia in 1812 and thirteen years later was involved in an insurrectionist plot. In December 1825 he joined a company of around three thousand men, officers from the royal army, members of the aristocracy and the Polish intelligentsia as they converged on St Petersburg in a bid to thwart the accession of Nicholas I. Their plan was to establish a constitutional monarchy by placing Constantine on the Russian throne. Their plan failed. Nicholas 1 became Tsar and Gryzmala and others were imprisoned. A period of better fortune followed after his release, and in 1830 he was sent on financial and diplomatic missions to Berlin, Paris and London.

After a two-year stay in London, Gryzmala returned to Paris where he was doubtless soon in touch with several fellow nationalists: Frederic Chopin, the poet Adam Mickiewicz, nephew of the pianist composer, Maria Szymanowska, whom Liszt had met in Paris in 1825, and Princesses Anna and Marcellina Czartoryska.

Gryzmala was probably introduced to Liszt around 1833. They were certainly together on 13 December 1836 at a "large soirée at Chopin's apartments in the rue de la Chaussée d'Antin. George Sand, the novelist, was also present".[1] Liszt and Marie d'Agoult had renewed friendship with her when they came to Paris in October 1836, and the two ladies began sharing a salon at the Hôtel de France in the rue Lafitte. It must have been around this time that Carlotta Marliani began to frequent the latter Parisian address.

Letter 1, the first note from Liszt to Gryzmala to appear in print, was probably written between October 1836 and July 1837, i.e. before Liszt and d'Agoult left France for Italy, and before the breakdown of the d'Agoult/Marliani relationship.

I am really behindhand with you, dear good Gryzmala; you have written me the most delightful notes imaginable, and as for me, I have not yet found a moment to come and shake your hand.[2]

Forgive me and pity me.

I do not know which day Madame Sand[3] will set for our Dinner. Now Madame Marliani[4] is ill—it will have to be *put off* again; still, I hope that we will get together here at the latest during the first part of next week.

In any case, I am counting on you, because we would miss you[5] too much if you happened to give us a miss.

We'll meet soon then, and forever and everywhere.

Yours cordially,

F. Liszt

(Source: Northumberland Record Office. Ref. ZAN M12 D7 (pt)) [6]

1 ■ See Alan Walker: *Franz Liszt. The Virtuoso Years 1811–1847,* Volume 1, London and Boston, Faber and Faber, 1983, p. 226.

2 ■ Liszt means to call on Gryzmala in Paris and greet him.

3 ■ George Sand (1804–1876), Amandine Aurore Lucie Dupin, French novelist and journalist "had befriended Liszt and Marie in 1836, in 1838 had quarrelled with Marie and wanted to do her in". See Eleanor Perényi: *Liszt,* London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974, page 87. Honoré de Balzac became George Sand's accomplice and "her instrument of revenge," his novel *Béatrix ou les Amours forcés,* a satirical paraphrase of the Liszt/d'Agoult affair, serialised in 1839 and published in a book form five years later, delivered the blow.

4 ■ Charlotte [Carlotta] Marliani (c. 1789/1790–1850) George Sand and Marliani probably came into contact in the spring of 1836 and when Liszt and d'Agoult left the French capital in July 1837 Marliani corresponded with d'Agoult until the latter returned to Paris from Italy. However, when it was revealed to d'Agoult that Marliani had passed on to George Sand a letter in which she criticised her in a disrespectful manner, d'Agoult promptly terminated their relationship.

5 ■ The autographed word looks like *manquieriez.* Liszt occasionally dots his 'i' erratically.

6 ■ The above Liszt letter is included with Liszt's note to Beale (see Letter 3) in the Brooks Collection at the Northumberland Record Office in Newcastle. The collection was compiled from 1850 to 1894 by the Wallsend shipowner, John Crosse Brooks (1812–1897) and was gifted by him to the Society of Antiquarians of Newcastle shortly before his death.

Letter 2: 27 April [18]40[1]

To Julius Benedict (1804–1885) celebrated German-Jewish conductor, pianist and composer. He probably met Liszt for the first time while in Paris in 1834/1835 before he left for London, his base from 1835 until his death. Liszt performed at his Annual Grand Morning Concert extravaganza held in the concert room of Her Majesty's Theatre on 29 May 1840. He had appeared with Benedict when the latter conducted at John Orlando Parry's Hanover Square Concert on 8 May and they were both on stage together again when Benedict acted as "master of cere-

monies" and conductor at Mary Jane Steele's Concert on 14 May. A further Liszt performance, probably arranged by Benedict, took place at the matinée musicale of the Prussian Court Pianist, Madame de Belleville Oury, given at the residence of Mr and Mrs Perkins, 26 Queen Anne Street, Cavendish Square on 27 May 1840. We do not know the extent of the preparations Benedict had made for Liszt's visit or when their "reunion" took place "at 18 Great Marlborough Street," the home of Pierre-Orphée Erard (1794–1855), the harp and piano manufacturer.[1] Benedict may well have acted as Liszt's concert manager during his 1840/41 London visits.

Sorry for the delay my dear Benedict but I have had a multitude of problems these past few days which I will at best only be able to tell you about—I will definitely leave next Monday, the 4th of May. Érard has been kind enough to offer me an apartment and I have accepted, so our reunion will be at 18 Great Marlborough Street. I am already very much looking forward to it. As regards the terms, we will say 30 guineas if that is acceptable to you. Mrs Anderson[2] and Mr Parry[3] who have also asked me to play at their concert are paying me this amount and I do not want to accept public engagements for any less.

I do not know how to thank you for going to so much trouble for me prior to my arrival—I am not very familiar with London—There may not even be an opportunity to give a concert—what do you think? I will follow your advice on the matter. In the meantime, I see that it makes good sense to set aside a day for a potential concert—thank you for thinking about it. I am convinced we will easily reach agreement on subsequent matters.

Many thanks again and see you soon.

All the best
F. Liszt

27 April 1840

(Source: Glasgow City Archives, Papers of Stirling of Keir)[4]

1 ■ He was the nephew of Sébastien Érard who had formed a business partnership in Paris in 1788 with Pierre's father Jean-Baptiste Érard selling five octave fortepianos. Sébastien commenced the manufacture of harps at 18 Great Marlborough Street in London in 1792, four years before the first Érard 'grand' was sold there. Pierre took over the London business in 1814 and in 1825 he began manufacturing the 'Érard New Patent Grand Pianoforte of Seven Octaves': the type of instrument that Liszt had championed during his sojourns at 18 Great Marlborough Street in 1824 and 1825.

2 ■ Lucy Anderson (1790–1878) was wife of George Frederick Anderson who from 1848 to 1870 was The Master of the Queen's Music. Lucy Anderson's Annual Grand Morning Concert took place at the Opera Concert Room on 20 May with Liszt as special guest artist. She had been piano teacher to Princess Victoria and, after the latter's marriage to Prince Albert in 1837, had taught piano to their children. In June 1840 she helped found the Society of Female Musicians in London and Liszt performed with other members of that society during his 1840 and 1841 London visits. Liszt's 1st Fantasie on Rossini's *Soirées Musicales* op. 8. No. 1. [S422], published by Christian Rudolph Wessel of London in 1838, was dedicated to her.

3 ■ John Orlando Parry (1810–1879), a gifted singer and entertainer, gave many provincial concert performances in Britain in the autumn of 1840 and January 1841 while on tour with Liszt and a few other artists. On 8 May 1840 Parry and Frances Ann Toulman, another member of the Female Society of Musicians, appeared with Liszt at the Queen's Concert Room, Hanover Square.

4 ■ The above letter is included in an autograph collection containing correspondence of mainly musical interest from 1831 to 1842 that was apparently compiled by Scottish born Lady Matilda Maxwell (1802–1857). Lady Maxwell, Matilda Harriet Bruce, was the daughter of the Earl of Elgin and became the wife of the 9th Baronet of Pollok and Auldhouse, Sir John Maxwell. Her sister-in-law, Elizabeth Maxwell married Archibald Stirling of Keir House. He was the uncle of Jane Wilhelmina Stirling (1804–1859), the well-known pupil of Chopin.The Liszt letter is an item in the "records of the Stirling family of Keir and Cawder which were deposited by Mrs Stirling on 30 September 1975".

Letter 3 [cca June 1840]

To Thomas Frederick Beale (1804/5–1863) pianist and publisher. Liszt may have made his first acquaintance with the Beale family during his visit to Manchester from 31 July to 7 [or 9] August 1824. Thomas Beale, the Manchester music seller and publisher, was father of Thomas Frederick Beale who at that time had probably become co-founder of the London music publishing firm, Cramer, Addison and Beale. Beale junior may well have been the "Beale" who performed with Liszt at Liszt's 9 June 1827 Benefit Concert at the London Argyll Rooms. On several occasions in 1840/1841 Liszt visited his home at 13 Albion Street, Hyde Park and it was there, sometime between 6 and 13 May 1840 that Beale invented the name "Recitals" to entitle the concert programmes of Liszt's 'solo' performances at the Hanover Square Rooms on 9 and 29 June that year.[1]

In 1844 with the retirement of Addison and the succession of William Chappell to the post, the firm became known as Cramer Beale and Chappell or Cramer, Beale and Co.

From 1847 until 1850 Beale, prima donne *Giuseppe Persiani, and Michael Costa directed the Royal Italian Opera at Covent Garden. In 1852 Beale in his role as co-director and co-founder of the New Philharmonic Society engaged Hector Berlioz, during the composer's third visit to the capital, to conduct six "society" concerts at the city's Exeter Hall.*

After the death of Beale's publishing partner, Cramer in 1858 and Chappell's retirement in 1861, George Wood [1812/'13–1893] joined him in business.

Would you be kind enough, dear Mr Beale, to give 5 Tickets[2] to the bearer of these lines.

Yours sincerely,
F. Liszt

(Source: Northumberland Record Office. Ref. ZAN M12 D7 (pt))

1 ■ See Wright: "New Letters of Liszt." *Journal of the American Liszt Society,* Volume 31/January-June, 1992, pp. 17 and 19, and Serge Gut et Jacqueline Bellas Ed. *Correspondance Franz Liszt/Marie d'Agoult,* Paris, Fayard, 2001, pp. 579 and 580.

2 ■ 'billets' would not usually take a capital. The above note probably refers to Beale's involvement with the sale of tickets for Liszt's two 'solo' performances in June. According to several advertisements in *The Times* the 'recital' tickets were "to be had at Cramer and Co's, Regent Street, and principal warehouses".

Letter 4 [28 August 1843]

To Henry Fothergill Chorley [1808–1872] English critic, novelist, playwright and poet. He was in his day particularly noted for his musical studies and concert reviews. Indeed he was reckoned by his contemporaries to be one of the most important and influential writers on musical matters active in his own country. He began his professional career as a freelance writer for The Atheneum, *a weekly London-based magazine. From 1833 until 1868 he was on their regular payroll. He also contributed articles and reports for* The Times *and in both publications, whenever possible, sought to promote and defend Liszt and his music. From 1840 when Liszt visited him in London and inscribed for him a copy of his recently printed* Années de Pèlerinage, Suisse, *published by Richault, Chorley remained one of Liszt's staunchest friends and admirers.*[1] *He was in the Rhine area on an expedition with Liszt and the Kembles in 1841, and he probably heard Liszt when the latter performed at the Dortmund Gymnasium on 24 August 1843, i.e. a few days before writing letter 4.*[2]

How are your migraines dear Chorley? I was intending to pay you a visit today as a Christian act of friendship, coming to Godesberg to take care of you, but friends are dragging me (not literally) to Cologne and I cannot really refuse.

If you are not put off by the distance[3], come to see me (40 – Cäcilien Strasse at Mr Lefèbvre's).[4] I will be staying there around eight days. When I return I will come to ask you to dinner and you will take me back to my Roland['Jsburg.[5]

A thousand greetings—*or rather one single greeting,* good and true

and all the best

F. Liszt

Monday evening

(Source: Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.)[6]

1■ The 1840 Richaud edition inscribed "Henry Chorley – amitié dévotée F. Liszt" is held in the Manchester Central Library.

2■ How else could he have written about Liszt's performance of his "Hexameron" "Tarantelles" and "Galoppe Infernale" that evening unless he had been there? Michael Saffle notes: "none of the numbers Chorley mentions seem to have appeared on Liszt's 24 August 1843 Dortmund program. See Saffle: *Liszt in Germany,* Pendragon Press, New York, 1994, p. 72. Letter 4 was probably written shortly after the concert, i.e. on the Monday evening 28 August 1843 or at the latest on 4 September that year.

3■ The distance between Godesberg and Cologne is roughly thirty kilometres and would probably have involved Chorley in a three-hour journey by stagecoach.

4■ Joseph Maria Lefèbvre (1807–1871) had been from 1837 "business manager at Eck and Co, piano manufacturers and music publishers, a firm owned by his childhood friend Jakob Eck (1807–1849) piano builder, and Eck's brother Christian [b. 1811], lithographer and music publisher. In 1841 the Eck's moved ... to 40–42 Cäcilien Strasse and Joseph Lefèbvre became a partner in the firm, henceforth known as Eck and Lefèbvre, Cologne". See Pocknell: "Franz Liszt and Joseph Maria Lefèbvre: A Correspondence 1841–1848", [Part 1] *Liszt Saeculum,* Volume 1, 1995, number 54, p. 39. Lefèbvre was one of Liszt's special friends during his years of travel in the eighteen forties and he acted on Liszt's behalf not only as piano agent but as secretary, financial manager and concert agent.

Liszt dedicated to Lefèbvre his 'Rheinweinlied' [S72], no. 1 of his 4 four-part male choruses that Schott published in 1841.

5■ Rolandsburg is a Rhine hill with a castle close to Nonnenwerth, and related to legends of Roland, Charlemagne's knight and his love for a girl who became a nun. When Chorley was in the Rhine area on the expedition with the Kembles and Liszt in 1841 he may well have visited it with them. Liszt wrote fairly often from Rolandsburg. See his letter dated 3 August 1843 to Schott; Edgar Istel: *Die Musik* 5/3 (1905/1906) pp. 43–52."Take me back to my Roland'sburg" probably means "drop me off opposite Nonnenwerth, my island retreat".

6■ Given to the library by Mrs J. J. Greg in 1926.

Letter 5: 21 April 1844[1]

To Jules Benedict. Liszt returned to Paris at the beginning of April and his solo performances on 16th and 25th of that month at the Théâtre des Italiens re-established his primacy as a virtuoso in the capital. According to Letter 5 Liszt seems to have suffered an injury to some of his fingers either before or after his 16 April performance and although it is unclear whether or not the "grazings" were of a serious nature, the quality of his playing appears to have remained unaffected. Indeed the music columnist of Le Corsaire *observed; "Let's admit it calmly this man has something in him that the others haven't."[2] Liszt was probably prompted to inform Benedict of his accident as he recalled the occasion on 5 June 1841 when, with a sprained wrist and an arm in a sling, he performed to critical acclaim a duet with Benedict at Stafford House in London, the home of the Duchess of Sutherland.*

...as there is reason to worry, that is to say *double.*

Keep a little affection for me and always count on me as I will count on you.

All the best,

F. Liszt

I dictated this letter because I grazed my fingers the other day at the *Italiens.*

Paris, Monday 21 April 1844.

(Source: Taylor Institution Library, Oxford. Ref. MS. 8°E18/66a Peyton Family Autograph Books)

1 ■ The whereabouts of the first page, or other pages, of the letter is unknown.

2 ■ See Adrian Williams: *Portrait of Liszt,* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1990, p. 204.

3 ■ Ibid, p.163.

Letter 6: 27 May [18]56

Probably to Julius Benedict. Liszt had been clearly impressed by Benedict's developing compositional style around this time as is evidenced by the inclusion of the latter's attractive "Morceau de Salon" in Das Pianoforte, *"a choice collection of classical and modern original compositions" edited by Liszt, a ten volume compilation of pieces printed in Stuttgart in 1857 by the publisher Edward Hallberger. Liszt and Benedict had probably been in touch by letter on several occasions dur-*

ing the 1850s. Liszt also knew that throughout his long and distinguished career Benedict had presented and promoted the talents of many international stars in the vocal firmament and would be eagerly awaiting Johanna Wagner's London debut performances at His Majesty's Theatre in early June that year.[2]

Dear friend,

A few days ago I asked Mr Härtel[3] to send you (free of charge) the six scores of my *Symphonic Poems* which have just come out—but a much better form of reminder has been presented to me by Miss Johanna Wagner and I am ensuring I make use of the occasion. Such messengers are too rare not to be given special consideration.

I am convinced that when the London public hears her powerful rendition of the song of Orpheus[4]

Ghosts, phantoms, shadows—terrible!

the stalls, boxes and circles will change the "No" of the terrible ghosts, phantoms and shadows into the *"Yes"* of enthusiastic applause.

The great and rare distinctions of the artist aside, I recommend Miss Wagner to you for her charming and simple personal qualities which I was able to appreciate to the full during her recent stay in Weimar—where I hope some fine day also to have the opportunity of appreciating your charms at a little more leisure. Your trip a year ago does not count despite the change of hats[5]—and I expect you, during one of your next trips to Germany, to come and have a little more relaxed chat without looking for your hat or checking your watch[?].

With kind regards from your devoted friend

F. Liszt

Weimar, 27 May 1856

(Source: Taylor Institution Library, Oxford. Ref. MS. 8°E18/67 Peyton Family Autograph Books, 2)

1 ■ Benedict's piece was the first work of the series, Liszt's *Festvorspiel* – Preludes 5226 was the first piece in Vol. 1.

2 ■ Liszt had been so impressed by Johanna Wagner (1826–1894), the niece of Richard Wagner, in her role as Elizabeth in the Berlin production of *Tannhäuser* in January 1856 that he had engaged her to sing in Weimar. She appeared there on April 30 that year in Gluck's *Orpheus and Eurydice.*

3 ■ "Härtel eventually brought out six of the full scores in April 1856, under the title *Symphonische Dichtungen* and on May 9 he sent fifty copies of each work to Liszt in Weimar." They were *Tasso, Les Préludes, Orpheus, Prometheus, Mazeppa,* and *Festklänge.* See Walker: *Franz Liszt, The Weimar Years,* London, Faber and Faber, 1989, pp. 304–305.

4 ■ Liszt wrote to Agnes Street-Klindworth on 12 May: "At the beginning of June she [Wagner] will make her debut in London, in *Orfeo* at H[er] M[ajesty's] Theatre, which Lumley is reopening this season." See Pocknell: *Franz Liszt and Agnes Street-Klindworth, A Correspondence,* 1854–1886, New York, Pendragon Press, pp. 96–97.

5 ■ Benedict may have heard a performanc of Liszt's symphonic poem, *Orpheus* and the première of his symphonic poem, *Prometheus* in Brunswick on 18 October.

Letter 7: 8 May [18]58

To an unknown correspondent. Liszt we know was inundated with requests from autograph collectors and was usually quite short with them. In this case he is polite, almost conciliatory, so his correspondent must have been someone rather special—possibly someone writing about George Sand.

Letter 7 was received by Liszt around 10 May 1858, eight days after his return to Weimar from a short visit in Berlin and during his "preliminary rehearsals" at the Altenburg prior to the fateful staging of Peter Cornelius's comic opera, The Barber of Bagdad.[1] *It was the period when Liszt's position as conductor at the theatre was being gradually undermined by the newly appointed theatre* Intendant, *Franz von Dingelstedt (1814–1881).*

Your kind note finds me quite unprepared because for many years the letters I have received from Madame Sand have been taken from me by autograph hunters who plague me. Consequently, it is impossible at the present time for me to do as you ask but if in future I receive a few lines from Madame Sand which can be made available to you, I shall be happy to send them to you, assuring you then as I do now that I am

your devoted
F. Liszt

Weimar, 8 May 1858

(Source: Trinity College Library, Cambridge. Ref. Cullum H.V. 25, Items 1–2) [2]

1 ■ The première, given on 15 December 1858, was a "fiasco" and immediately led to Liszt's resignation as conductor. See Walker: *Franz Liszt, The Weimar Years 1848–1861,* London, Faber and Faber, 1989, pp. 494–495.

2 ■ Given to the library by George G. Milner-Gibson-Cullum, former Mayor of Bury St. Edmunds.

Letter 8: [1866]

To Louise de Mercy-Argenteau (1837–1890), Belgian countess, born Marie Clotilde Elizabeth Louise de Riquet, Countess de Caraman. She was a woman of considerable beauty, wealth, musical talent and great influence who was not only engaged in political manoeuvrings through her intimate relationship with Louis Napoleon but in her latter years, with the support and encouragement of Liszt, promoted the music of the Russian School at her concerts in Liège and further afield: the works of Balakirev, Mussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Liadov, Borodin and Cui. Liszt and the Countess first met in Paris in May or June 1861, were together in the city for an extended period in the spring of 1866, and continued their treasured friendship until the last year of Liszt's life. Letter 8 is the nineteenth letter from Liszt to Louise to appear in print and was probably written about the time when Bernhard Sax the sculptor came to Paris in the spring of 1866 to attend the premiere of Liszt's "Gran" Mass and to present to Liszt his "completed" bust.[1] Sax, who exhibited some of his work in Rome in 1865 and in London in 1877, had made his first bust of Liszt in 1862 and his second was "completed in Munich" at the beginning of 1866 or shortly before.

What marvels you recount... and more marvellous still! I feel more dead than alive—leaving without much correspondence; but one could not imagine anything more *"gimplique"*[2] than your very "infirm" servant

FL

Sax will be monstrously punctual

77[3]

(Source: Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.)[4]

1 ■ See Pocknell: *Franz Liszt and Agnes Street-Klindworth, A Correspondence,* 1854–1886, New York, Pendragon Press, 2000, pp. 209 and 220. Sax omitted to bring Liszt's bust with him to the French capital (see La Mara [Marie Lipsius]: *Liszts Briefe* pp. 6, 107 and 108).

2 ■ 'Gimpel' meaning 'bullfinch' was the nickname given to Liszt by Louise. Liszt used the word 'gimplique' here to describe himself as 'a blockhead' to underscore his deep affection for the lady. See Suttoni: "Liszt and Louise de Mercy-Argenteau", *JALS,* Volume 34, July–December 1993, p. 4.

3 ■ It is unclear what '77' represents.

4 ■ J. J. Henderson Bequest, Music Volume, p. 123. The Henderson collection was donated to the library in 1933.

Letter 9: 21 February [18]77

To Ferenc Erkel (1810–1893), Hungarian composer and conductor, Director (and creator) of the Hungarian national opera and also the Director of the Academy of Music in Budapest that Liszt and he founded in 1875. The Budapest Philharmonic Concerts were inaugurated by Erkel. Letter 9 was written towards the end of Liszt's six-month stay in Budapest (15 October 1876–11 March 1877) when he was engaged in composition, a little performing, and in teaching at the Royal Academy of Music. While there was "work to be done", Liszt felt "relaxed and in fairly good form." Only those close to him, like Frau von Meyendorff, knew that when he was otherwise engaged he felt indescribably sad.[1] In order to help himself "survive the strain of these weeks", he went from time to time to the Opera House or concert hall.[2] The following note to Erkel: a request by Liszt for a box at a forthcoming opera performance was probably written by Liszt at a dark moment.

Dear Sir,

Many thanks for the kindness shown towards me. Following a letter from the composer of the opera *The Ghost of Voyvode*[3], Mr L. Grossman[4], I am taking the liberty of asking you to let me have a box for one of the upcoming performances of this opera.

Yours faithfully,

F. Liszt

February 1877, Budapest.

(Source: Trinity College Library, Cambridge. Ref. Cullum H.V. 25, item 1–2)

1 ■ See Dezső Legány: *Liszt and His Country,* Budapest, Occidental Press, 1992, p. 63.

2 ■ See Legány: *Liszt and His Country,* p. 65.

3 ■ Liszt wrote the following lines to Carolyne Sayn-Wittgenstein: "I've attended a score of concerts and about a dozen opera performances—the *Queen of Sheba* of Goldmark... *Geist des Wojwoden.* This last is a light opera by the Warsaw composer Grossman who has attempted a fusion of Polish and Hungarian music." *Liszts Briefe* pp. 7, 174.

4 ■ Ludwik Grossman [1835–1915], Polish composer, conductor, pianist, organist, and, for a period, Director of the Polish National Opera in Warsaw.

Letter 10: 7 August [18]79

To William George Cusins (1833–1893), Master of the Queen's Music, Conductor of the Philharmonic Society and member of staff of the Royal Academy of Music in London.

He probably met Liszt for the first time during a short stay in Budapest in January 1871 when he received and brought back to England the bust of Beethoven that had been specially sculpted by Johann Nepomuk Schaller of Vienna for the London Philharmonic Society. In a letter to Stanley Lucas, the Secretary of the Society, dated 25 January 1871, written on the day of his arrival in the Hungarian capital, Cusins remarked "I shall probably call on Franz Liszt tomorrow with Remenyi."[1]

Cusins and the Hungarian violin virtuoso, Eduard Remenyi [1830–1898] had doubtless been in regular contact at Windsor Castle from 1854 to 1860 when they were both employed as musicians to Queen Victoria, the latter in his capacity as conductor of her private orchestra, and Cusins was dutifully at hand to welcome his colleague to Budapest in 1871. An enduring link had certainly been forged between Remenyi and Liszt and by January 1871 Liszt had composed or arranged for him at least four violin and piano arrangements and probably two or more arrangements for violin and organ.

Liszt composed "Go not happy day" for Cusins in July or August 1879 and the piece was included in the latter's 1880 compilation: "Tennyson Songs with Music." They were to meet for the last time in April 1886 when Cusins was summoned by the Queen to bring Liszt to her at Windsor Castle. Her deep regard for Liszt and his music had been of even longer standing.

Three letters of Liszt to Cusins are known to exist; two are held in the Pierpont Morgan Library, one dated 7 August 1879 and the other 8 October 1879. They are included in the present collection. The third letter, 21 [27 ?] September1879, is still unpublished and is in the Goethe and Schiller Archives in Weimar. The 7 August 1879 letter was printed for the first time around 1905 in Liszt Briefe, *Volume 8 edited by La Mara [Marie Lipsius]. Letter 10 not only provides us with further evidence of the high esteem Liszt was held in by notable musicians in Europe and the United Kingdom but also of the considerable influence he had on them.*

Dear Mr Cusins,

In your kind letter back in May you indicated that I should send my little manuscript for the new edition of the renowned Songs of Tennyson[2] by August. I *enclose* my melody for "Go Not Happy Day".[3] If it is sung by a fine tenor, it should go down well at salons and concerts. Please send it to the publishers and let me know you have received it. From 18 to 22 August I will be in *Bayreuth* (in *Bavaria, Germany*), not in *Beirut* in Syria...[4]

When I have heard from you I will tell you where to send me the proofs. I am keen for the published edition of this song to be perfect and, consequently, I am not sparing the publisher the trouble of sending me the proofs.

Warm and sincere regards,
F. Liszt

7 August 1879, Weimar

I am leaving Weimar next Monday and will be in Bayreuth on 18 August.

(Source: Pierpont Morgan Library, New York)

1 ■ See *History of The Philharmonic Society of London: 1813–1912* compiled by Myles Birket Foster, F.R.A.M., London, John Lane Company, 1912, pp. 317 and 318.

2 ■ A Kegan Paul and Co. London publication. The manuscript of this song was cited incorrectly by Humphrey Searle in the 1980 edition of *The New Grove* and by Sharon Winklhofer in *The New Grove: Early Romantic Masters* as being held in the Library of Congress.

3 ■ In this letter "Liszt asked Cusins to arrange for the publisher to send to his address the proofs of his song *Go not happy day,* set to Tennyson's poem. See Dezső Legány: *Liszt and His Country 1874–1886.* Budapest, Occidental Press, pp. 123 and 305.

4 ■ Liszt is referring here to an unfortunate experience Karl Klindworth and Wagner had with the Russian postal system in 1855/1856. Klindworth had made a piano arrangement of the second act of Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* while at the Imperial Conservatory in Moscow and sent the manuscript assuming that the work would be transported fairly expeditiously. However "the Bavarian town was unknown to the Russian post-office and the parcel was sent to Beirut in the Middle East instead!" When Wagner eventually received it twelve months later he had to pay a large postal fee. See Walker: *Franz Liszt, The Weimar Years 1848–1861,* London, Faber and Faber, 1989, p.186.

Letter 11: 8 October [18]79

To William George Cusins. Following his 1880 compilation: "Tennyson Songs with Music" Cusins continued to seek ways to promote the works of Liszt in England and on 30 May 1883 three excerpts from Liszt's oratorio, Christus *were performed by the Philharmonic Orchestra under his baton. A barrage of criticism ensued following this London première and Cusins relinquished his post as Conductor of the Society Orchestra.*

Letter 11 was written from Rome during the period (8 September 79 until 6 January 80) when Liszt was based at the Villa d'Este in Tivoli as guest of his friend, Cardinal Gustav von Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst [1823–1896]. In July 79 Liszt had received and accepted an invitation from the cardinal to become an Honorary Canon of Albano Cathedral and at the beginning of October they left Tivoli to attend Liszt's formal canonic induction in Albano on the 12th. Liszt wrote his short note to Cusins during a stopover in Rome at the end of the first leg of their trip.

Dear Sir,

The proofs of the song have not yet arrived[1] but yesterday I received the fee of 26 pounds sterling. I will thank the publisher when I return the corrected proofs. Without further delay, sir, I would like to thank you for adapting the fingering to the English system[2] and apologize for having put you to this trouble. This was just a momentary lapse because I am well aware that fingering is written differently in

England to elsewhere. As for the tempo, I will probably mark it *Moderato* or *Andantino*.[3]

Please always count on my very warm and sincere regards.

F. Liszt

8 October 1879, Rome
[via del Babuino, 65]

(Source: Pierpont Morgan Library, New York)

1 ■ See letter 10, note 3.
2 ■ Cusins used the English system of fingering [X1234] throughout his 1880 Kegan Paul and Co. edition of 'Tennyson Songs with Music.'
3 ■ The tempo marking adopted by Liszt for the 1880 Kegan Paul and Co publication was 'Allegretto.'

Letter 12: 16 April 1886

Probably to Sir Francis Knollys, (1837–1924) Secretary of Edward, Prince of Wales who on this occasion appears to have acted as secretary to the Princess of Wales (1844–1925) and to have been the recipient of the letter. Alexandra of Denmark, as she was known before her marriage to Edward in 1863, was cultivated in musical matters and had been taught piano by the distinguished Danish composer, J.P.E. Hartmann. Her mother, Queen Louise of Denmark (1817–1898), who had shared her love of music and had also received piano tuition from the Dane, had in February 1879 requested two autographs from Liszt via pianist composer Siegfried Langgaard, one for herself and the other probably for her daughter, Alexandra.

It is not surprising therefore that on the occasion of the first London performance of Liszt's oratorio Saint Elizabeth on 6 April 1886 at St James' Hall, when Liszt himself was in the audience, the Prince and the Princess were present and during the interval invited Liszt to dine with them and other distinguished guests at their London residence, Marlborough House the following Sunday, 11 April. Liszt duly complied and charmed them with his magical pianism. Five days later Princess Alexandra requested the Liszt autograph.

Most Honourable Sir,

For many years now I have made it a rule not to write in autograph albums.

The exception confirming the rule permits me to note in the album of the Princess of Wales[1] the motif of The Legend of St Elizabeth which Her Royal Highness...

(Source: Alexander Meyrick Broadley [1847–1916]: *Chats on Autographs*. T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1910, pp. 258 and 259)[2]

1 ■ See Wright: "Liszt Letters from the Royal Library, Copenhagen (1841–1886)", *Liszt Saeculum*, Volume 1, 1995, number 54, p. 28.
2 ■ This note is presented in the 1910 publication as a 'partial facsimile.' The whereabouts of the rest of the holograph is unknown. It is listed in Suttoni: "Liszt's Correspondence in Print: A Supplementary Bibliography", *JALS*, volume 46/Fall 1999, p 7, as item 62.

During Liszt's sojourn in London in April 1886 he attended a photo session at 55 Baker Street, the address of the piano warehouse, Moutrie and Son and photographers, Elliott and Fry. At least four pictures of Liszt were taken on this occasion. One is held at the Manchester City Library with the Elliott and Fry address clearly visible at the foot of the reproduction, another is lodged at the Taylor Institution Library, the University of Oxford, a third can be viewed on p. 495 of Alan Walker's *Franz Liszt.* Vol. 3, *The Final Years 1861–1886* and a fourth is in the safe keeping of the archivist of the Madame Tussaud Waxworks in London. The Liszt/Tussaud photograph was taken on behalf of the sculptor, John Theodore Randall Tussaud (1858–1943), who immediately afterwards proceeded to take several measurements of the celebrated Hungarian (e.g. the circumference of Liszt's head was 63 centimetres i.e. 7 and three quarters in hat size). The measurements were later written on the back of the Liszt/waxworks photograph. Both sides are shown above.

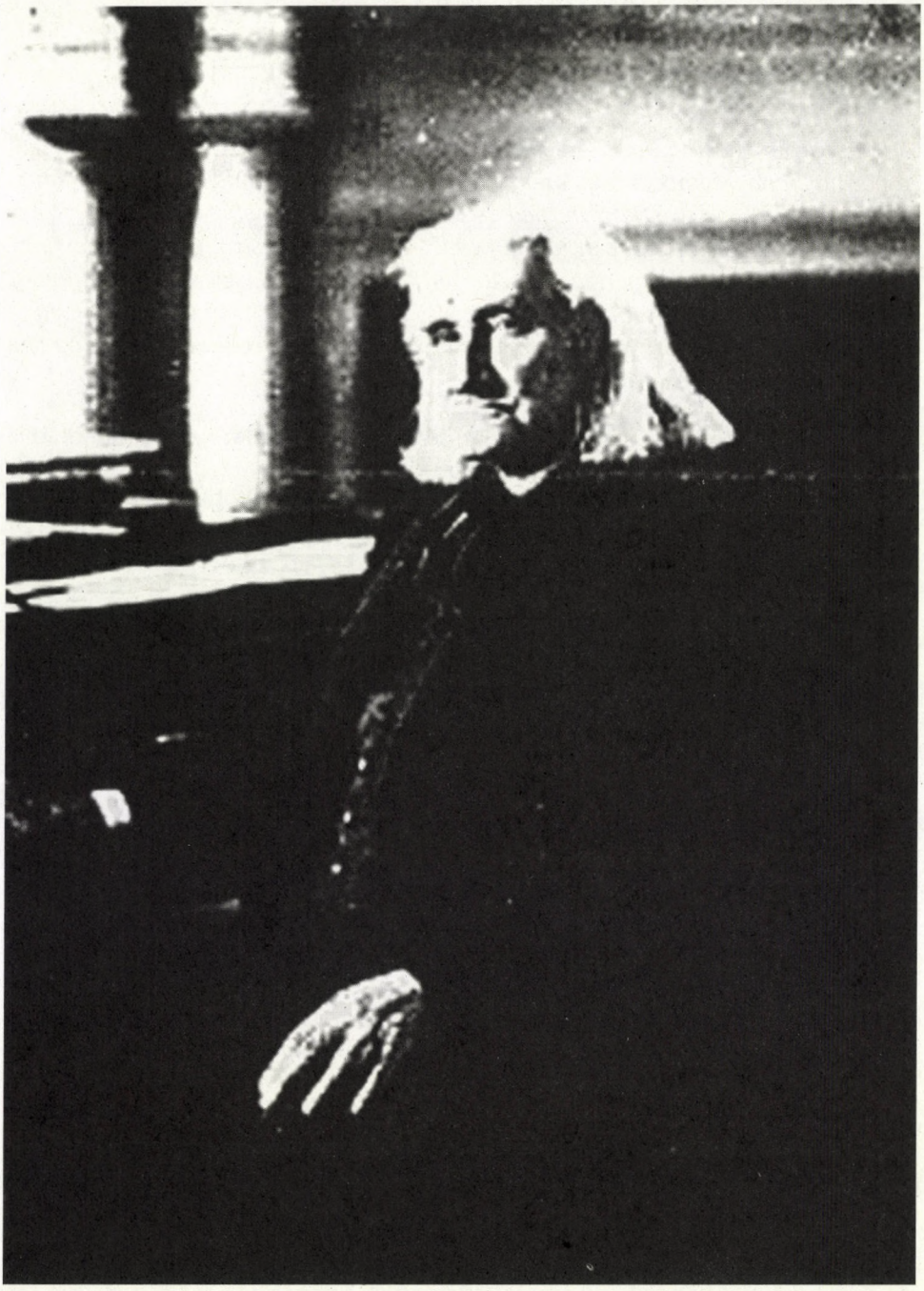
A few days, or a week or two, after the photo session, a sculpted figure of Liszt, standing with one of his hands resting on the keys of one of Moutrie's pianos was "modelled with extreme sill" by Tussaud. He, the great grandson of Marie Tussaud was in charge of the studio in Marylebone, that Liszt may or may not have visited. John Tussaud was a huge contributor to the items of the waxworks and more than a thousand effigies appeared there from his hand. Wax casts of Liszt's hands were also made by him.

The Liszt figure was first seen by the public at the Tussaud Galleries in Marylebone Road on 1 June 1886, i.e. about a month after Edgar Boehm's bust of Liszt was first exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery in New Bond Street, Westminster. The wax model was noticed in the *Times* the following day, reported in the *Musical Standard* and *Musical World* on 26 June, and again in the *Morning Post* on 26 December the following year. Liszt was described in the 1888 Exhibition Catalogue as "A pianist without a rival in the history of music, and a composer of an original and brilliant series of highly classical works."

The Liszt figure and the piano were probably destroyed in the fire of 1925, but only a few moulds were lost, and a replacement was on view in 1928, when the Exhibition reopened. The replacement figure remained at the Exhibition until 12 September 1941, when Madame Tussaud's Cinema was bombed. The Liszt model and the Liszt mould along with most of the other valuable and historic moulds perished in the attack.*

The wax hands of Liszt survived the First World War attack and in the autumn of 1966 were even shown on a British Television music programme. According to recent correspondence between the present author and the Music and Arts department of B.B.C. Television and with the archivist at Tussaud's there appears to be no trace of this viewed 1966 "Music Workshop" programme at the B.B.C. and neither the archivist at Tussaud's nor anyone at Broadcasting House knows of the present whereabouts or, more likely, the fate of the perishable 'hands'. ❧

* William Wright: "Liszt in London", 1886, *The Liszt Society Journal,* Vol. 25, 2000, pp. 98 and 99.



Liszt's photograph taken at 55 Baker Street,
the piano warehouse of Moutrie & Son and the premises of the photographers
Elliott & Fry, April 1886. Archives Madame Tussaud Waxworks, London.

Letter 13: 17 April 1886

To Madame Mackenzie (?–1925), born Mary Melina Burnside, the daughter of John Burnside of Edinburgh. She married Alexander Campbell Mackenzie, the distinguished Scottish composer, conductor and academic in 1874, and while in Florence from 1881 had been in contact with Liszt.[1] *Liszt expressed great interest in her husband's compositions and sought to promote his music. "Little Madame Mackenzie," as she was known, had established a relationship with Liszt in her own right and was often seen playing whist with the maestro. She was "usually his partner." During the period, 3 to 20 April 1886, when Liszt was in London at Westwood House as honoured guest of Henry Littleton, the head of the publishing firm, Novello, Ewer and Co. (when he had one of his few free evenings), and she was beside him at the card table.*

Madame Mackenzie, a memento[2] to recall the exemplary direction of this work in London[3] and Sydenham Palace[4] by Mackenzie.[5]

With my best regards,
F. Liszt

April 1886, Sydenham

(Source: Sir Alexander Campbell Mackenzie, K.C.V.O.: A Musical Narrative. London, Cassell and Co., Toronto, Melbourne and Sydney, 1927, p. 152)[6]

1 ■ See Sir Alexander Mackenzie: *A Musical Narrative,* London, Toronto, Melbourne and Sydney, Cassell and Co., 1927, p. 149.

2 ■ Liszt's autograph inscription is on the reverse side of the title page of the presentation copy of his Oratorio, *St. Elizabeth*. The score was given to Madame Mackenzie immediately after its performance at the Crystal Palace in Sydenham on 17 April 1886. It was sold at Sotheby's shortly after her husband's death.

3 ■ The performance was given in St. James's Hall, London on 6 April 1886.

4 ■ The performance was given in the Crystal Palace in Sydenham on 17 April 1886.

5 ■ Shortly before Liszt's 1886 London visit Mackenzie was appointed conductor of the Novello Oratorio Concerts. The series opened on 10 December 1885 with a performance of Mackenzie's *Rose of Sharon.* Gounod's *Mors et Vita, his Redemption,* Dvořák's *The Spectre's Bride* and *Stabat Mater,* were subsequently featured, and Liszt's St Elizabeth, conducted by Mackenzie, was given its British première on 6 April 1886. The Scottish composer became principal of the Royal Academy of Music in London in 1888, a position he held until 1924. He was knighted in 1897 and in 1922 was made Knight Commander of the Victorian Order.

6 ■ The above note appeared in holograph in Mackenzie's *Musical Narrative.*

*

Letter 1: 10 January 1865

To Madame Mortier, German opera singer, born Marguerite Limbach (c. 1820– ?) the second wife of Polish pianist Henri Louis Stanislas Mortier de Fontaine (1810–1883). She became his wife sometime after 1841, i.e. shortly after Mortier de Fontaine divorced his first wife, Belgian opera singer Marie Josine Vanderperrin (1814–?)[1] According to published correspondence from Liszt to the Polish pianist, dated 1837 to 1841,[2] the former had a warm regard for both Mortier and his first wife and Liszt's friendship towards Mortier and his second wife, Marguerite, appears to have been equally cordial until around 1846, when Liszt dedicated to him his "Drei Märsche von Franz Schubert S462". In 1847 the Liszt/Mortier relationship foundered. "While Liszt had been on tour, many a person was advised to see Frau Anna in Paris for a loan; others turned up without even having received any encouragement. Like her son, Anna did not relentlessly pursue her callers to retrieve the money she had lent".[3] Instead, after finding herself repeatedly in straightened financial plights, she informed Liszt about her problems. One of the culprits had been Mortier de Fontaine, whom Liszt immediately classed as among the "canaille artistique" *[artistic rabble].[4] Four years later Liszt pressed Anna to dispatch him posthaste.[5] If Anna ceased having any communication with the Pole, as Liszt insisted, it is clear from Letters 1 and 2 that she did not terminate the friendly relationship she had established with Marguerite, rather, the latter was one of the last to be in touch with Anna before she died on 6 February 1866.*

Paris, 10 January 1865

Dear Madame Mortier,

I received your kind letter and would like to thank you for your wishes. Please be assured that my wishes for you are equally warm and sincere. I hope with all my heart that you continue to prosper as you have up to now and keep in good health. You would have received this letter before now but the extremely cold weather we are experiencing at the moment kept me in bed for several days. In his last letter,[6] my son told me that he will be coming to Paris in the spring. His reason for coming is to have a number of his works performed in Paris[7] and I hope that I will have the pleasure of his company for longer than in October when he only stayed for 8 days.[8] He was very well and as kind and good as ever.

Mme. von Bülow is in Munich and was also well but this is no longer the case and I am worried about her.[9] She has still not written to me to wish me a Happy New Year. I would like to repeat my new year greetings to you and add friendly regards.

Anna Liszt

Thank you for your photo—it is very good. I have just sent a message to the convent to have some news to give you about your dear mother. She is reasonably well and gets up every day.

(Source: Royal Society of Musicians, London)[10]

1 ■ See Gut et Bellas Ed. *Correspondance Franz Liszt/Marie d'Agoult,* Paris, Fayard, 2001, pp. 1277–78.

2 ■ See Wright: "New Letters of Liszt". *Journal of the American Liszt Society,* Vol. 31, 1992, pp. 12–16.

3 ■ Franz Liszt: *Briefwechsel mit seiner Mutter,* ed. and trans. Klara Hamburger (Eisenstadt: Amt der Burgenlandischen Landesregierung, 2000), pp. 23 and 24.

4 ■ Franz Liszt: *Briefwechsel mit seiner Mutter.* Liszt letter to Anna, dated 10 February 1847, p. 206.

5 ■ Franz Liszt: *Briefwechsel mit seiner Mutter.* Liszt letter to Anna, dated 21 February 1851, p. 250.

6 ■ Liszt wrote in a letter to her, dated 17/12/1864, of his intention to be in Paris in the spring of 1865 and to have some of his works performed: "I look forward very much to seeing you again this spring... If, as seems possible, the plan to perform some of my compositions in May comes true, I hope it will give you some pleasure. Without any immodesty, I think that the Gran Mass and symphonic poems that I will have performed in Paris are not the works of a schoolboy! I have not worked frivolously during these fifteen years and, after my extensive experience in Germany, I am in a position to present myself with some confidence elsewhere [...]" See Jacques Vier: *Franz Liszt. L'artiste—Le clerc. Documents inédits,* Paris, Éditions du Cèdre, 1950, Letter 47, pp. 134 and 135.

7 ■ Liszt did not come to Paris in 1865.

8 ■ Anna's recollection was accurate. Liszt and his daughter Cosima had been with her from 4 to 12 October 1864.

9 ■ Anna had good reason to be worried about Cosima. Anna almost certainly knew of the secret liaison Cosima was having with Wagner and doubtless would have been fully briefed and updated during Liszt's October visit. Cosima, who had travelled to Paris with her father and was pregnant with Wagner's child, Isolde, may well have spoken to her grandmother about the affair.

10 ■ Letters 1 and 2 are from a collection of autographs of famous musicians presented to the Royal Society of Musicians after the death in 1934 of Miss Thyra Lange, former member of the Society and previous owner of the collection.Three letters from Liszt to Louis Mortier de Fontaine, dated respectively 25 November 1837, 27 July 1838 and [20 April] 1840, also from the above cache, were published in the *Journal of the American Liszt Society*, Volume 31, 1992 annotated by the present author.

Paris, 10 January 1866

Dear Madame Mortier,

I received your amiable letter of 29 December and therefore was very pleased that you are keeping well. I also thank you heartily for your well-meaning wishes for the New Year and wish them doubly back to you. Good health above all else. Your mother is keeping very well; during the last 15 days she has visited me twice, is quite happy and in good spirits, more so than I ever saw her before. She sends you her greetings and is pleased that she will see you in July. She always tells me so many good things about the sœurs [nuns]. It is really a happy solution to have placed her in this Convent. The mother superior is now also quite well. They always bring your mother to my house and I have her taken back by my maid.[1]

I have, thank God, good news about my family. My son intends to come to Paris[2] in the month of March and will have some of his compositions performed here.[3] Bülow will also come to join him. The papers also tell that he will go to England for the consecration of a new church. He himself has not said anything about that to me. *L'Indépendence de Bèlge* mentioned the Pest Music Festival in September. I have a copy. You can look at it when you come to Paris.

My health is reasonably good in this dreadful wet weather[4] and I only stayed in bed one day before Christmas; we have much fog, cutting winds, rain and dark days. The bad weather is harmful to my eyes—that is also the difficulty that led to you receiving this letter several days late.

Now adieu my dear Madame Mortier, I assure you of my friendship and my interest in all your pleasant and unpleasant news.

May God preserve you in good health and protect you on all your ways and spread his blessing over all your undertakings. From the depth of my heart

your friend who holds you in high esteem

A. Liszt

(Source: Royal Society of Musicians, London)

1 ■ Émile Olivier had written to Princess Caroline on 10 July 1863:
"I really regret having abandoned [Mme Liszt] but my brother will replace me at her side, and after my brother my maid, who is extremely intelligent, will watch over her ..."
See Walker: *Franz Liszt, The Final Years 1861–1886,* New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1996, p. 81.

2 ■ Walker adds: "Liszt had written to his mother on 14 January telling her of the "friendly letter" he had received from M. Dufour, and how this visit to Paris would bring him the joy of seeing her again." See Walker: *Franz Liszt,* Volume 3, page 97. See also *Liszts Briefe,* volume 8, p. 151. Liszt arrived in Paris on 4 March 1866 and remained in the city until 22 May.

3 ■ Liszt's "none-too-successful" *Gran* Mass was performed at the St. Eustache Church in Paris on 15 March 1866. It was perhaps during this visit that Liszt's Piano Piece in A flat [S189] dated V 1866 was composed. See Hugh Macdonald and Wright: "A Lost Liszt Piano Piece Recovered". *Journal of the American Liszt Society,* Volume 23/January–June 1988, pp. 99 and 100.

4 ■ "In mid-January [Daniel] Olivier had still been able to report that Anna, whom he looked after devotedly, was in "perfect health" ..." See Walker: Vol. 3, p. 95.

APPENDIX

Letter 1

Je suis bien en retard avec vous, cher excellent Gryzmala; vous m'avez ecrit [écrit] les plus charmants billets qui se puissent imaginer, et moi je n'ai pas encore trouvé un moment pour vous aller serrer la main.

Pardonnez[-]moi et plaignez[-]moi.

Je ne sais quel// jour madame Sand fixera pour notre Diner [dîner]. Voici ma dame Marliani malade – il faudra encore remettre; j'espère pourtant que nous nous réunirons au plus tard ici les ['aux' overwritten] premiers jours de la semaine prochaine.//

En tout cas je compte sur vous, car vous nous manqueriez trop si vous veniez à nous manquer.

À revoir biento[ô]t
Et toujours et partout.
T.a.v.
amicalement
F. Liszt

Letter 2

Pardon[,] cher Benedict[,] d'être ainsi en retard avec vous, mais j'ai eu mille inquiétudes ces jours derniers—dont je pourrai [*altered from* 'pourrais'] tout au plus vous parler—Je partirai décidément Lundi prochain 4 mai. Érard a eu la bonté de m'offrir un appartement que j'ai accepté. Ce// sera donc 18 Great Marlborough Street que nous nous reverrons. Je m'en

réjouis sincèrement à l'avance. Relativement aux term[e]s, nous les fixerons à 30 guinées, si cela vous convient. Mrs Anderson, et Mr Parry qui m'ont également demandé pour leur Concert me don[n]ent ce prix là au dessous duquel je ne voudrai pas accepter// d'engagement public.

Je ne sais com[m]ent vous remercier du soin que vous voulez bien prendre de moi ainsi à l'avance—je ne con[n]ais pas bien le terrain de Londres—Peut-être n'y aura-t-il même pas lieu à ce que je don[n]e un Concert—qu'en pensez-vous ? Je ferai la dessous ce que vous me direz. En attendant je vois qu'il est toujours utile de retenir un jour// pour un Concert probable, et je vous remercie cordialement d'y avoir songé. Nous nous entendrons aisément[,] j'en suis convaincu [written over 'sur' deleted] sur les points subséquents.

Mille remerciements encore et
à Bientôt.
Tout à vous amicalement
F. Liszt

27 avril 40

Letter 3

Veuillez bien cher Monsieur Beale, remettre 5 Billets[2] au porteur de ces lignes

Tout à vous
F. Liszt

Letter 4

Où en sont vos migraines cher Chorley? Je comptais vous faire aujourd'hui une chrétienne et amicale visite en allant vous soigner à Godesberg—mais des amis m'entraînent (sans entraînement) à Cologne et je ne puis trop refuser.

Si la distance ne vous épouvante pas, venez m'y voir, (40—Cäcilien Strasse chez M. Lefebvre). J'y passerai une huitaine de jours. En revenant je viendrai vous demander à dîner, et alors vous me reconduirez jusqu'à ma Roland'sburg.

Mille amitiés—ou plutôt une seule, bonne et franche et tout à vous

F. Liszt
Lundi soir

Letter 5

comme il convient de s'en faire c.à.d. *double.*

Gardez moi un bout d'affection et comptez toujours sur moi, comme je compterai sur vous.

Bien à vous
F. Liszt

J'ai dicté cette lettre car je me suis écorché les doigts l'autre jour aux Italiens.

Paris, Lundi 21 avril 1844.

Letter 6

Cher ami,

Il y a quelques jours, je priais M. Härtel de vous faire parvenir (sans frais) les six partitions de mes *Poèmes symphoniques* qui viennent de paraître – mais voici une bien meilleure occasion de me rappeler à votre souvenir que m'offre Mademoiselle Johanna Wagner, et je n'ai garde de la laisser échapper. De pareils messagers sont trop rares pour qu'on n'en tienne en compte particulier.

Aussi suis-je persuadé que quand elle apostrophera le public de Londres avec le Chant d'Orphée

Spectres, larves, ombres – terribles! – le parterre, les loges et les galeries changeront le "Non" des spectres, larves, et ombres terribles en *"Oui"* et en acclamations enthousiastes.

Indépendamment de ses hautes et rares distinctions d'artiste, je vous recommande à Mlle Wagner pour ses charmantes et simples qualités personnelles, dont j'ai pu apprécier tout le charme durant le séjour qu'elle vient de faire à Weymar—où j'espère à quelque beau jour avoir aussi l'occasion d'apprécier un peu plus à loisir les vôtres—car votre passade

[passage?] d'il y a un an ne compte pas nonobstant le change des chapeaux—et j'entends bien qu'à un de vos prochains voyages d'Allemagne vous veniez un peu causer à l'aise, sans chercher votre chapeau ni tirer votre montre[?], avec votre très cordialement affectioné ami

F. Liszt

Weymar 27 mai 56

Letter 7

Votre aimable billet me prend tout à fait au dépourvu, car depuis longues années les lettres que j'avais reçu[es] de Madame Sand m'ont été dérobées par des amateurs d'autographe dont je suis une des victimes désignées. Il m'est donc impossible en ce moment de satisfaire à votre désir; mais si dans la suite je recevais de Mme Sand quelques lignes qui puissent être mises à votre disposition, je me ferai un plaisir de vous les envoyer, en vous priant alors comme aujourd'hui de me croire

votre tout dévoué

F. Liszt

Weymar 8 mai 58

Letter 8

Que de merveilles vous dites... et plus merveilleusement encore! J'en suis plus mort que vif,—partant peu épistolaire; mais on ne saurait imaginer rien de plus "gimplique" que votre très infirme serviteur

FL

Sax sera d'une exactitude monstre
77

Letter 9

Sehr geehrter Herr Director,

Bestem[ns] dankend für die mir erwiesenen Freundlichkeiten, erlaube ich mir, in Folge eines Schreibens des Componisten der Oper "Der Geist der Wojewoden"[3]—Herrn L. Grossman[3]—Sie zu ersuchen, mir eine Loge bei einer der bevorstehenden Vorstellungen dieser Oper zu gewähren.

Hochachtungsvoll

F. Liszt

21 Februar 77, Budapest.

Letter 10

Cher Monsieur,

Dans votre obligeante lettre du mois de mai, vous m'indiquiez le mois d'août comme terme de l'envoi de mon petit manuscrit pour la nouvelle édition des illustres "Songs" de Tennyson. Ci-joint ma mélodie pour: "Go not happy day"—Si elle rencontre quelque ténor agréable, elle pourra se répandre dans les salons et concerts, sans malchance. Veuillez bien la remettre aux éditeurs, et m'en accuser réception, du 18 au 22 août, à Bayreuth—Deutschland, Bayern :// (non à Beyrouth, Syrie ....).

En réponse je vous dirai où m'adresser les épreuves, car je tiens à ce que l'édition de ce "Song" soit tout à fait correcte ; par conséquent je ne dispense pas l'éditeur de l'ennui de me faire parvenir les épreuves.

Agréez, cher Monsieur Cousins, l'expression de mes sentiments très distingués et affectueux

F. Liszt

7 août, 79/Weimar

Lundi prochain je quitte Weimar et serai le 18 août à Bayreuth.

Letter 11

Cher Monsieur,

Les épreuves ("proofs of the song") ne me sont pas encore parvenues, mais j'ai reçu hier l'honoraire de 26 liv. ster. J'en remercierai l'éditeur avec le renvoi des épreuves corrigées. Sans retard, cher Monsieur, je vous remercie d'avoir bien voulu accom[m]oder les quelques doigtés selon l'usage anglais, et vous prie de m'excuser de vous avoir occasionné cette peine// par un oubli momentaire, car je n'ignore pas que les doigtés se chiffrent autrement en Angleterre qu'ailleurs. Quant au Tempo[,] je l'indiquerai probablement par "Moderato" ou "Andantino".

Veuillez toujours compter sur mes sentiments très distingués et affectueusement dévoués

F. Liszt

8 octobre, 79, Rome [via del Babuino, 65]

Letter 12

Très honoré Monsieur

Depuis longues années ma règle est de ne point écrire sur des feuilles d'album.

Toutefois l'exception confirmant la règle, je me permets de noter dans l'album de la Princesse de Galles le motif de la Légende de Ste Elisabeth, que son Altesse Royale....

Letter 13

Madame Ma[c]kenzie, avec reconaissant souvenir de l'exemplaire direction de cette œuvre, à Londres et Sydenham palace, de Ma[c]kenzie.

Bien dévoué
F. Liszt

avril, 86, Sydenham

Letters by Anna Liszt

Letter 1

Paris, le 10 janvier 1865

Chère Madame Mortier,

J'ai reçue votre si affectueuse lettre et je vous remercie des vœux qu'elle m'exprime. Croyez bien que ceux que je forme pour vous ne sont ni moins sincère[s], ni moins chauds. Je désire de tout [mon] cœur que vos affaires contini[u]ent de[à] prospérer comme comme elles l'ont fait jusqu'ici et j'espère que votre santé se maintiendra bonne. Chère Madame[,] vous aurais[iez] reçue cette lettre plutôt [plus tôt] mais le froid si vif que nous avons éprouvé ce[s] temps-ci m'a retenue plusieurs jours au lit. Mon fils[,] dans sa dernière lettre[,] me dit qu'il viendra à Paris au printemps. Son projet pour revenir est qu'il veut faire exécuter quelques œuvres à Paris de lui et j'ai l'espoir d'en jouir de son séjoure ici plus longtemps que ça a été au mois d'octobre. Ça n'a été que 8 jours.

Il se portée[ait] très bien[;] il est toujours aimable est bon.

Madame de Bulow est à Munich, se portée[ait] bien aussi; elle est dans un autre état dans [en] ce moment[,] je suis inquiète pour elle. Elle ne m'a pas encore écrit pour le jour de l'An. Chère Madame, je vous renouvelle mes souhaits de Nouvel An, au[x]quels je joins l'expression de ma vive amitié.

Anna Liszt

Je vous en merci [remercie] pour votre photographie, elle est très bien fait[e]. A l'instant j'ai envoyer[é] au couvent pour avoir de[s] nouvelles à vous donner de votre bonne mère, elle vat assez bien, elle se lèvent tous les jours.

Letter 2

Paris, den 10[en] Januar 1866

Liebe Madame Mortier,

Ihr liebreiches Schreiben vom 29en *De[é]cembre* [Dezember] erhielt ich und freute mich sehr, dass Sie sich wohl befinden. Auch danke ich Ihnen herzlich für Ihre wohlmeinenden Wünsche zu dem neuen Jahre, und wünsche sie Ihnen doppelt zurück. Gesundheit vor allem anderen. Ihre Mutter befindet sich sehr wohl, seit 15 *jour[s]* [Tagen] war sie 2 mal mich besuchen [hat sie mich 2mal besucht], ist ganz zufrieden und vergnügt, so dass ich sie niemals so heiter [, wie ich sie niemals zuvor] sah. Sie grüsst Ihnen [Sie] vielmal herzlich und freut sich Sie im Monat *July* [Juli] zu sehen. Sie sagt mir immer so viel Gutes von die[n] *soe[œu]rs* [Schwestern]. Es ist ein wahres Glück sie in diesem *Convent* [Kloster] pla[tz]ci[e]rt zu haben. *La [Mère] supe[é]rieure* [Die Mutter Oberin] befindet sich nun auch ziemlich wohl. Man führt Ihre Mutter immer bis zum Hause, und ich lasse sie durch meine Magd zurückführen.

Von den Meinigen habe ich Ggott L[l]o gute Nachricht. Mein Sohn denkt im Monat März nach Paris zu kommen und hier einige seiner Composition[en]s aufführen zu lassen. Bülow wird auch kommen [und sich zu] ihm *rejoindre* [gesellen;] die *journeau[x]* [Zeitungen] sagen wohl das[s] er auch nach England gehen wird zur *Consécration* [Weihe] einer neuen église [Kirche]. Er selbst hat immer noch nichts davon[rüber] gesprochen. [Von] *L'Indépendance de Bèlge*[,] welche im Monat *Septembre* [September] von dien *fêtes musicale[s]* [dem Musikfestival] in Pest gesprochen hat[,] habe ich ein *exemplaire* [Exemplar]! wovon Sie [dessen] Lectu[ü]re [Sie vor]nehmen können wenn Sie nach Paris kommen.

Meine Gesundheit ist so ziemlich gut nebst [abgesehen von] dem abscheulichen Wetter und [ich] bin nur einen Tag vor *Noéële* [Weihnachten] im Bet[t]e geblieben, wir haben so viel *brouillard* [Nebel,] schneidende Winde, Regen, finstere Tage. Meine Augen [sind sehr] empfinden[lich gegenüber] diese[r] üble[n] Witterung sehr, dass ist auch die Ursache [der Grund,] dass Sie dieses Schreiben einige Tage später erhalten.

Nun adieu meine liebe Madame Mortier, ich versichere Sie meiner Freundschaft und Theilnahme [an] alle[m]s ihren a[n]genehmen und Ihren unangenehmen.

Gott erhalte Sie gesund und beschütze Sie auf allen Ihren Wegen und verstreue Segen über Ihren Geschäften. Von ganzem Herzen

Ihre

Sie schätzende Freundin

A. Liszt

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The present collection, a further thirteen Liszt letters, include twelve that appear in print for the first time. Two letters by Liszt from the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York are incorporated because they were originally in the possession of Sir William Cusins in London. Two communications by Anna Liszt conclude the compilation.

Grateful thanks are due to the Society of Antiquarians, Newcastle, for granting permission to publish Letters 1 and 3, and to Archibald Stirling of Keir, Bridge of Allan for sanctioning the printing of letter 2. Letters 4 and 9 appear by kind permission of the Syndics of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; Letters 5 and 6 are printed courtesy of the Taylor Institution Library, University of Oxford; Letters 7 and 8 are included on the authorisation of the Master and Fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge, and Letters 10 and 11 are published with the permission of the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. The two Anna Liszt Letters complete the collection and appear in print with the agreement of the Royal Society of Musicians in London.

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James A. Grymes

Monuments to Musical Romanticism

Two Major Compositions by Ernst von Dohnányi

Ernst von Dohnányi (1877–1960) was among the most highly regarded musicians of his time. In addition to being considered one of the premiere pianists of his generation, Dohnányi was an eminent pedagogue, who held prestigious professorships at the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin and the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest. He was also a respected conductor, who is credited with having led the Budapest Philharmonic to international prominence. Finally, Dohnányi proved to be a skilled administrator as the Director of the Franz Liszt Academy and the Music Director of the Hungarian Radio. He is also remembered as the composer of several well-known masterpieces, particularly his *Variations on a Nursery Song* for piano and orchestra, as well as a number of chamber works and compositions for piano.

Although Dohnányi selflessly promoted Hungarian musical culture through his performances, as a composer he tended to shy away from the use of "Hungarian" musical elements (e.g., folk songs) in his compositions, preferring to let his nationality speak for itself. He felt that "My themes are all original, and when people find that their style is Hungarian, it is because I am Hungarian."[1] Nevertheless, several of Dohnányi's compositions treat Hungarian topics, most notably his symphonic cantata *Cantus vitæ* [Song of Life], op. 38, and his Symphony No. 2 in E Major, op. 40, both of which are based on Imre Madách's dramatic poem *The Tragedy of Man* (1862).

In addition to being widely considered Hungary's greatest contribution to Romantic literature, *The Tragedy of Man* was among Dohnányi's favourite books. In 1957 Dohnányi wrote, "Though Madách's dramatic poem, written in Hungarian, has been translated into more than a dozen foreign languages, its recognition—while growing—is not yet as universal as the work deserves."[2] Dohnányi's interpretation of *The Tragedy of Man* formed an integral part of his personal philosophy, which was that the joy of life can be found in its struggles. Dohnányi himself once said, "I am a fighter, I enjoy facing difficulties."[3]

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On the eve of his eightieth birthday Dohnányi even attributed his seemingly endless virility to this philosophy: "Life is a struggle, and you have to love that struggle if you love life. That keeps you young."[4]

Dohnányi first started working on the *Cantus vitæ* during his successful debut tour of America in March and April of 1900. He had brought with him a copy of *The Tragedy of Man,* and he began selecting portions from it to create a libretto for a new composition. As Dohnányi himself explained, this took a number of years:

> For decades I carried the idea of making the philosophical substance of Madách's poem the basis of a big choral work. It took years until I found the right grouping of the parts which were scattered in the poem appropriate for music. The result was the *Cantus vitæ*.[5]

The process of compiling the libretto was protracted, because Dohnányi had decided not simply to create a condensed version of Madách's original text but instead to rearrange various excerpts from *The Tragedy of Man* to convey his own interpretation of the work. According to Dohnányi's *curriculum vitæ,*

> The task was to group the philosophical essence of the work in a way that it should fit for a musical composition. While Madách was a dark pessimist, Dohnányi, always inclined to optimism, tried to adjust Madách's pessimism to his own optimistic ideas.[6]

There is some debate over who actually created the libretto for the *Cantus vitæ*. According to one review of the work, "The Madách quotations were extracted by Ernő Innocent-Vincze," not by Dohnányi.[7] This was also asserted by music critic Ferenc Deák, who claimed,

> "The text, apart from a few extended Madách quotations, for example in the solo parts of the first movement, in the third-movement 'Funeralia,' and in practically all of the beautiful, glorifying apotheosis of the fifth movement, was worked out by Ernő Innocent-Vincze, the eminent writer on music æsthetics."[8]

There is, however, no evidence of exactly how involved Innocent-Vincze was in the creation of the libretto, or even that he was involved at all. In fact, Dohnányi's personal copy of *The Tragedy of Man* is replete with markings that indicate the various decisions he made when compiling the libretto.

Dohnányi, his second and third wives, and the majority of the articles about the *Cantus vitæ* that appeared before and after its premiere specifically credit Dohnányi with personally selecting the text.[9] Moreover, Deák's claim that Innocent-Vincze worked on the libretto contradicts his own earlier interview with Dohnányi, in which Dohnányi had discussed this topic:

> Dohnányi, who admitted that he considers the "Song of Life" to be the greatest accomplishment of his creative life, stressed the fact that in creating this huge work he searched for a long time for the form and musical potential through which he could forge a deep connection with the meaning of Madách's great dramatic poem. The maestro said that he did not attempt to put *The Tragedy of Man* to music; he was completely aware of the fact that this would be next to impossible... "The *Cantus vitæ* does not comply with the historic imagery [of *The Tragedy of Man*]," said Dohnányi. "Everything it conveys refers to the present time expressed through music, and the most important part of it is without a doubt its philosophy, which I tried to put in this form into music. Therefore do not listen for the characters from the drama; the audience should not wonder if the tenor solo portrays Adam, if the soprano is Eve, if the bass is Lucifer, or if the choir represents the masses. Despite this, I hope with all of my heart that the musical public of my country and my nation feels through it the thought that grabbed me from the depths of my soul, and which I really wanted to put into song, the "Song of Life."[10]

Music critic Viktor Lányi, a friend of Dohnányi's, also described Dohnányi's personal investment:

> Dohnányi's own profound spirituality and philosophy required poetic support. He found it in *The Tragedy of Man.* From this the *Cantus vitæ* was born. This "Song of Life" resounded in the musician's sensitive and receptive inner hearing while he was reading Madách's book during an American tour. The plan for the grand cantata matured in him for many years as he developed and perfected a libretto that would serve as the basis for the music. Does Dohnányi's work convey a different message than Madách's? Different, without doubt, because the libretto is neither an abstract nor a summary of the original work, but a rearrangement of fragments of text, patterned after Dohnányi's personal ideas.[11]

According to his second wife, Elza Galafrés, Dohnányi had still not created a score for the *Cantus vitæ* by 1938. He resumed its composition because "The creating of the music seemed the only way to divert his mind from the coming tempest" of the Second World War.[12] As war became increasingly imminent, however, Dohnányi lost interest in composing the *Cantus vitæ.* "Half way through the work," wrote Galafrés, "it seemed to stagnate; then inspiration died just before the 'bacchinal!'"[13] Dohnányi finally started scoring the work on 23 June 1939, but he did not finish the complete draft of the *Cantus vitæ* until 23 June 1940. According to an interview Dohnányi gave in July 1941, he was originally planning a different title for the work: "Soon I will complete a composition, my *magnum opus,* which is entitled *Madách* Cantata."[14] Dohnányi's eventual choice against *Madách* Cantata or even *The Tragedy of Man* as a title reflects his decision to not create a work that is a faithful representation of Madách's text. Music critic Géza Falk suggested that Dohnányi chose the phrase "Song of Life" because it "conveys the extraordinary content, aim, and form of the work."[15] Furthermore, by translating this title into Latin, even though the libretto is in Hungarian (and eventually German, as well), Dohnányi evoked a sense of universality, but more importantly sacredness, for the work. It was not until after the completion of the score, however, that Dohnányi settled on the title *Cantus vitæ.*

Dohnányi divided the *Cantus vitæ* into twenty-one numbers, grouped in five large parts. Each of the five parts has a unique programmatic content, and the second and third even bear their own titles: "Bacchanalia" and "Funeralia." In Part I of the *Cantus vitæ* Dohnányi summarized the pessimistic message of *The Tragedy of Man* by selecting passages that focus on the idea that human existence is a never-ending cycle of futile struggles. It takes the majority of its content from Scene 7, in which Adam, having assumed the persona of the famous crusader Tancred (1076–1112), witnesses the distorted values of the Crusades, and Scene 10, in which Adam, as the famous mathematician Johannes Kepler (1571–1630), learns of the corruptive potential of social democracy (see Table 1).

The *Cantus vitæ* begins with the full chorus, proclaiming that man cannot direct "the tide of life," represented by undulating wave-like motives in the orchestra (No. 1). After the bass solo reiterates the idea that man has no control over his fate, the tenor responds by vowing that man will indeed overcome his problems (No. 2). In the middle of this assertion, Dohnányi quoted a Gregorian chant "Credo" melody, signifying the belief that this transcendence will be made possible through religion. This is followed by an extensive choral number that

Table 1. Sources of Text for Part I of the *Cantus vitae*

Cantus vitae			*The Tragedy of Man*	
No.	**Performer**	**Incipit**	**Scene**	**Character**
1	chorus	"The tide of life roars in; each wave is a new world"	11	London chorus
2	bass solo	"Time is a current that carries or covers you"	7	Lucifer
		"Because all of your feelings, all of your thinking"	13	Spirit of the Earth
	tenor solo	"Ideas are stronger than simple matter"	10	Adam (Kepler)
3	men's chorus	"Strive, Lord, with those who strive with me"	7	Chorus of Friars
	women's chorus	"My mighty God, why have you forsaken me?"	7	Chorus of Heretics
	men's chorus	"Glory to God, and to the stake with them"	7	Patriarch
	women's chorus	"But you are holy"	7	Chorus of Heretics
	tenor solo	"I took up arms for sacred ideas"	7	Adam (Tancred)
4	bass solo	"Everything that lives and sheds blessings"	7	Lucifer
	tenor solo	"Ideas are stronger than simple matter"	10	Adam (Kepler)
5	orchestral interlude			
	bass solo	"The beggar wants to be the rich man's brother"	6	Lucifer
6	bass solo	"Because all humans seek power "	4	Lucifer
7	tenor solo	"What idea is this, that breathes unity into people?"	12	Adam
	bass solo	"The idea is mere survival"	12	Scientist
8	tenor solo/chorus	"Oh, if a God who cares for us and rules us lives"	6	Adam (Sergiolus)

represents the perils of a society based completely on faith (No. 3). The chorus divides into a Chorus of Friars (men's chorus), who ask the Lord for assistance in fighting their enemies, and a Chorus of Heretics (women's chorus), who beseech God for mercy. The two choruses interact in a contrapuntal dialogue that culminates in an inventive section demonstrative of Dohnányi's love of formal complexity: the Chorus of Friars sings a four-voice fugue in counterpoint with a canon in the Chorus of Heretics. Dohnányi reinforced the religious character of the text with a brief reference to the famous Lutheran chorale *"Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott"*. After the Friars declare their intention to burn the Heretics at the stake, the tenor expresses his frustration with a culture that would allow people to be murdered in God's name.

In the next number (No. 4) the bass solo again states his skepticism about the future of mankind, to which the tenor responds by reasserting his belief that mankind will triumph. This time, however, the optimistic ideals are the liberty, equality, and fraternity of the French Revolution, as represented musically by quotations of the French anthem, the "Marseillaise."[16] Just as the choral number in No. 3 had served to show the perils of blind devotion, an orchestral interlude in No. 5 depicts the manner in which the democratic ideals of the late Enlightenment disintegrated into communism, as represented by increasingly dissonant quotations of the "Marseillaise" and the introduction of the socialist anthem "Internationale."[17] The bass solo then enters to contend that the downtrodden, when given the chance, become just as malicious as their oppressors, and continues by declaring that it is power, not fraternity, that man is looking for when he claims to seek liberty (No. 6). When the tenor solo finally asks what it is that brings mankind together, the bass simply responds, "the idea is mere survival" (No. 7). In a direction that seems to belong more in a staged opera than in a concert cantata, Dohnányi asked the bass to sing this line "with bitter irony."

For the final number in Part I (No. 8), Dohnányi returned to the Roman scene,

taking the prayer uttered by Adam at the end of the scene as he kneels, raises his hands to heaven, and asks God to show him a new ideal. These lines are sung first by the tenor solo, and the entire prayer is then repeated by the full chorus in a beautiful chorale style. Part I ends with several repetitions of the words "Hear me, my God" in a soft prayer.

This new ideal takes the form of the "Bacchanalia" of Part II, which is intended to represent the collapse of society that occurs when man seeks only pleasure. Not surprisingly, the majority of the text for Part II is taken from the Roman orgy of Scene 6, with the rest of the text coming from the morally corrupt London crowd from Scene 11 (see Table 2). The "Bacchanalia" begins with the chorus singing a raucous salutation to love and wine. This is interrupted several times by the alto soloist, who mocks the ideas of religious and patriotic devotion, and a Chorus of Workers (men's chorus), who drown their troubles in wine (No. 9). In the next number (No. 10) Dohnányi evoked the twentieth-century musical styles of jazz and bitonality, both of which he personally detested, to represent the total breakdown of culture. Following solos from the alto, tenor, and bass, an exceptionally dissonant outburst of jazz by the orchestra prompts the tenor actually to turn to the orchestra and ask, "Why do you spoil your art like this? Do you like what you are playing?" To this, a Chorus of Musicians (men's chorus) emphatically responds, "No, we do not!" Part II ends with the bass solo, accompanied by quotations of the well-known Gregorian chant "Dies irae" (from the Mass for the Dead), pointing out that man's hunt for pleasure is in vain, because he possesses an inner voice that will always drive him towards higher ideals.

Part III of the *Cantus vitæ,* titled "Funeralia," is the shortest of the five

Table 2. Sources of Text for Part II ("Bacchanalia") of the *Cantus vitae*

Cantus vitæ			*The Tragedy of Man*	
No.	**Performer**	**Incipit**	**Scene**	**Character**
9	chorus	"One can never have too much love and wine"	6	Hippia
	alto solo	"Once there were foolish times"	6	Cluvia
	alto solo/chorus	"Rejoice, we are wiser now"	6	Roman chorus
	chorus	"One can never have too much love and wine"	6	Hippia
	alto solo	"Those who live should rejoice"	6	Eve (Julia)
	men's chorus	"Let us laugh at misery and power!"	6	Catulus
		"Machines are the work of the devil"	11	Chorus of Workers
		"The worker who makes screws"	12	Scientist
		"Machines are the work of the devil"	11	Chorus of Workers
	chorus	"Joy, sweet joy, gilds our lives"	6	Hippia
		"Drink up; yesterday is gone"	11	Innkeeper
		"Joy, sweet joy, gilds our lives"	6	Hippia
10	alto solo	"The golden apple was once won from the dragon"	11	Prostitute
	tenor solo	"Oh, holy God, has poetry already disappeared"	11	Adam
	bass solo	"Not at all; be less choosy"	11	Lucifer
	tenor solo	"That is useless, as long as greed and avarice"	11	Adam
		"Men, why do you spoil your art like this?"	11	Adam
	men's chorus	"No, we do not! In fact, it is endless agony"	11	Chorus of Musicians
	bass solo	"You insatiably hunt after pleasure"	6	Hippia
		"You are not able to lull the voice"	6	St. Peter

parts. After a brief assertion by the bass solo that "All life is ceaseless growth and decay," the text turns to the passage at the end of Scene 11 of *The Tragedy of Man,* in which all of the London marketers dig a mass grave for themselves (see Table 3). A Chorus of Gravediggers (men's chorus) agrees that life on earth consists of little more than a continuous cycle of life and death (No. 11), but this sentiment is rebutted by the soprano solo, who sings of victory in eternity (No. 12). With this solo the tone of the *Cantus vitæ* begins to abandon the pessimistic message of *The Tragedy of Man* in favour of Dohnányi's more positive message of redemption.

Part IV encompasses the main philosophical message of the *Cantus vitæ.* It begins with a solo by the tenor, who finally asks to be shown the meaning of life (No. 13). These universal laws are revealed by an off-stage Chorus of Basses that Dohnányi named the *Chorus mysticus* (No. 14), which is always echoed by the chorus on stage. It is important to note that, as opposed to the majority of choral numbers throughout the *Cantus vitæ*, the text for this number is not taken from texts originally sung or spoken by a chorus in *The Tragedy of Man;* in fact, there is not even a *Chorus mysticus* in Madách's text. Dohnányi seems to have borrowed this title from the chorus that appears at the conclusion of the second part of Goethe's *Faust.*[18] Just as Goethe's *Chorus mysticus* summarizes the philosophical message of *Faust,* Dohnányi's *Chorus mysticus* serves as the most concrete expression of the main ideas of the Cantus vitæ, and, by extension, Dohnányi's interpretation of *The Tragedy of Man.* The majority of this text is taken from Scene 13 (see Table 4), including the words that, according to Dohnányi himself, represent "The essence

Table 3. Sources of Text for Part III ("Funeralia") of the *Cantus vitae*

Cantus vitae			*The Tragedy of Man*	
No.	**Performer**	**Incipit**	**Scene**	**Character**
11	bass solo	"All life is ceaseless growth and decay"	3	Lucifer
	men's chorus	"Just clink your spades quickly"	11	Chorus of Gravediggers
12	soprano solo	"Why do you stare at me, gaping abyss?"	11	Eve

Table 4. Sources of Text for Part IV of the *Cantus vitæ*

Cantus vitæ			*The Tragedy of Man*	
No.	**Performer**	**Incipit**	**Scene**	**Character**
13	tenor solo	"Oh, open up, infinite heaven"	8	Adam (Kepler)
14	Chorus mysticus/ chorus	"Family and property are the two movers"	3	Lucifer
		"Life without struggle and love has no value"	13	Adam
		"The goal is the end of the glorious fight; the goal is death, but life is a struggle!"	13	Adam
15	orchestral interlude:	"The Struggle"		
16	soprano solo	"Do not continue to ask about the secret mystery"	15	The Lord
17	children's chorus/chorus	"To choose freely between vice and virtue"	15	Choir of Angels
	bass solo	"So this is your goal: to God, the glory"	6	St. Peter

... of Madách's work:"[19] "The goal is the end of the glorious fight; the goal is death, but life is a struggle!"

This statement introduces a complex orchestral movement, titled "The Struggle" (No. 15), which reinforces the importance of the text of No. 14 by relying exclusively on its themes. This movement, the only completely orchestral number in the *Cantus vitæ,* takes as its structure a sonata form in which a fugue assumes the place of the principal theme. With this movement Dohnányi demonstrates a mindset that is typical of his Romantic outlook: that the most important philosophical ideas are best expressed not in text but through the abstract media of instrumental forms.

The final two numbers of Part IV are taken from the last of *The Tragedy of Man*'s fifteen scenes, where the Lord and a Choir of Angels tell Adam not to concern himself with discovering the future of mankind but instead to trust in the Lord's plan. After a soprano solo sings the Lord's warning to Adam not to continue the search for the secrets of the universe (No. 16), a Choir of Angels (children's chorus) in the balcony and the full chorus sing the words of Madách's Choir of Angels, who suggest at the end of *The Tragedy of Man* that man should instead simply trust in God's mysterious ways (No. 17). Had Dohnányi chosen to endow the *Cantus vitæ* with the same pessimistic message as *The Tragedy of Man,* this passage would have sufficed as the finale to the symphonic cantata. Dohnányi, however, had a different plan for Madách's text, and he expressed his optimism by instead ending Part IV of the *Cantus vitæ* with St. Peter's advice to Adam from the end of Scene 6, which is that man has only one task: to love. This addendum changes the philosophical message from Madách's advice merely to "struggle, and trust in faith" into one of religious exaltation.

The fifth and final part of the *Cantus vitæ* is an extended praise to the Lord. To demonstrate this religious adoration Dohnányi chose texts from the beginning of *The Tragedy of Man,* in which the Choir of Angels, followed by the archangels Gabriel, Michael, and Raphael, sing congratulations to the Lord for His creation of the universe (see Table 5). The significance of Dohnányi's choice to end the *Cantus vitæ* with the festive material from the beginning of *The Tragedy of Man* was not lost on Dohnányi's Hungarian audience. Viktor Lányi wrote, "The final apotheosis is the angelic hymn with which *The Tragedy of Man* began. The circle is therefore complete."[20] The full chorus and the Choir of Angels offer their glorifications (No. 18), then the tenor solo (No. 19), the bass solo (No. 20), and the soprano solo (No. 21)

Table 5. Sources of Text for Part V of the *Cantus vitæ*

Cantus vitæ			*The Tragedy of Man*	
No.	**Performer**	**Incipit**	**Scene**	**Character**
18	chorus/children's chorus	"Glory to God in the heavens"	1	Choir of Angels
19	tenor solo	"You, who measured the infinity of space"	1	Gabriel
	chorus	"Hosanna to you, Thought"	1	Gabriel
20	bass solo	"You, who united the eternally changing"	1	Michael
	chorus	"Hosanna to you, Power"	1	Michael
21	soprano solo	"You, who allows abundant prosperity and joy "	1	Raphael
	chorus	"You, who allows abundant prosperity and joy"	1	Raphael

sing hosannas to God for his Thought, Power, and Virtue, respectively. Each solo is echoed by the full chorus. The symphonic cantata ends with the chorus repeating the words "Hosanna to you, Virtue" several times in a style reminiscent of the prayer with which Part I concluded. With this, the *Cantus vitæ* ends, not as an accurate representation of Madách's pessimistic message, nor with a triumphant celebration of God's love, which would be a logical choice for the jubilant nature of the text. Instead, Dohnányi chose to end his *magnum opus* softly, as a quiet prayer of reverent devotion.

A second examination of Tables 1 through 5 demonstrates that despite Dohnányi's admonition "Do not listen for the characters from the drama,"[21] he nevertheless assigned the texts of Eve, Adam, and Lucifer to the soprano, tenor, and bass soloists, respectively, with remarkable consistency. As a result, the soloists assume personae that are similar to the main characters from *The Tragedy of Man*. Additionally, the texts for the choral parts are generally taken from portions of *The Tragedy of Man* that represent the masses, such as the London chorus (No. 1), the Roman chorus (No. 9), and the Choir of Angels (Nos. 17 and 18). The chorus also splits into a female chorus for the Chorus of Heretics and a male chorus for the Chorus of Friars (No. 3), while the men's chorus also assumes the roles of the Choruses of Workers, (No. 9), Musicians (No. 10), and Gravediggers (No. 11).

The *Cantus vitæ* was premiered on 28 April 1941 in the Hungarian Royal Opera House. It was performed by the Budapest Philharmonic, conducted by Dohnányi himself, with the Municipal Choir and the girls' choir from the Erzsébet School for Women. The soloists were Magda Rigó, soprano; Mária P. Basilides, alto; Endre Rösler, tenor; and György Losonczy, bass. In describing the audience's response to the performance, Ilona von Dohnányi reported,

> At the première, which had been postponed from 4 April to 28 April 1941 because of Teleki's funeral, a cloud of depression filled the Budapest Opera House. This quickly dissolved when the Budapest Philharmonic, with its President-Conductor, appeared on the stage, surrounded by the chorus, to start the performance... When the premiere of *Cantus vitæ* ended, there was complete silence in the opera house. People were so gripped, so deeply shaken that they sat motionless. It was only after several moments that they burst out into thunderous applause.[22]

The reviewers praised the *Cantus vitæ* as Dohnányi's finest composition. For example, Falk wrote, "In the great noise of war the poet barely sang. Dohnányi broke this silence and surprised the public not with a pleasing little work, but by instead presenting the musical world with the greatest and maybe the most important creation of his life."[23] Deák added, "These are surely the deepest expressions of Dohnányi's amazingly versatile musical character and his composing genius. ... Dohnányi may have given us the greatest creation of his triumphant career."[24]

Immediately following the success of the *Cantus vitæ*, Dohnányi turned his attention to a work that "arose under the influence of the same ideas" as the symphonic cantata:[25] his Symphony No. 2 in E Major. Dohnányi had first begun to compose his second symphony in 1906; this symphony, however, "hardly progressed beyond the initial impetus", and Dohnányi had only completed the sketches.[26] He would not return to the idea of composing a symphony until the summer of 1928, at which point the libretto to the *Cantus vitæ* had been completed but had still not been set to music. By that time, according to

Galafrés, "His second symphony had taken shape in his mind, but for lack of time had not been written."[27] Before Dohnányi began the composition, however, his manager, Gusztáv Bárczy, had discouraged him, asking, "Who prints Symphonies these days? Write pedagogical works! That's what's in demand, and they bring money too."[28]

After the Germans occupied Budapest in March 1944, the American military began to concentrate bomb attacks on the city. Dohnányi resigned from his positions and fled to Gödöllő, Hungary, with Ilona Zachár, who would later become his third wife. Gödöllő was far enough from Budapest to be safe but close enough for Dohnányi to see the smoke from the factories, hospitals, and homes that had been bombed. In spite of all this devastation, Dohnányi continued to compose his symphony; he completed the first movement in July 1944, while staying in Gödöllő. As the Russian army worked its way towards Hungary, Dohnányi returned to Budapest to find transportation out of the country. Even on this voyage of despair Dohnányi continued to work on his latest manuscript; in October he completed the fourth movement of the symphony in Budapest. Working on the symphony "may well have provided a form of escapism" for Dohnányi as he watched the destruction of his beloved city.[29]

On 24 November 1944, when the Russians were invading Hungary, Dohnányi fled with his family to Vienna, packing only a small suitcase, into which he placed his formal suit, a dictionary, and Casanova's memoirs of his travels through Hungary, which was his favourite book.[30] He also took with him the manuscript for the symphony, as well as the complete draft of the *Cantus vitæ* and its copyist's manuscript, which was most likely created after the 28 April 1941 premiere and to which Dohnányi had made corrections; Dohnányi left the sketches, autograph score, and parts for the *Cantus vitæ* behind. When he arrived in Vienna, Dohnányi was given a room in the Collegium Hungaricum, where he buried himself in the completion of the second and third movements of the symphony. While Dohnányi was in Vienna, the city was bombed daily; one bomb even struck the wing of the Collegium Hungaricum in which he was staying. Although his new family usually sought refuge from the bomb attacks in the cellar, Dohnányi stayed in his room and worked on the symphony. He was "so absorbed in his composition that he seemed absolutely unmindful of the thunderstorm raging around him."[31]

Dohnányi remained at the Collegium Hungaricum for several months and barely escaped when the Russians began their assault on Vienna. Although he had known for weeks that the Russians were working their way towards the city, Dohnányi was too occupied with the symphony to consider his personal safety. As a result, he was unable to obtain the permits he and his family needed for transportation and entrance into another city. They were rescued by Rudolf Frankovszky, a Hungarian colonel stationed in Vienna, who agreed to drive them toward Linz, Austria.

In the spring of 1945 Dohnányi and his family settled in Neukirchen am Walde, in the mountains of upper Austria. At this time, Dohnányi created a vocal score of the *Cantus vitæ*, which he completed on 22 May 1945. He would later return to the vocal score and add to the original Hungarian text his German translation in red pen, along with a few editorial changes in the music. Dohnányi also revised his Symphony in E Major in Neukirchen. When he played the symphony on the piano for his family and friends, they "all were deeply moved."[32] Dohnányi's protégé Edward Kilényi, recalled that when he visited Dohnányi in Neukirchen, Dohnányi brought out the treasured manuscript of his symphony,

wrapped like a package. Dohnányi was eager to show the new work to his student, proclaiming, "This is the last symphony."[33]

Dohnányi summarized the meaning of the entire symphony with the two lines of text from *The Tragedy of Man* that had served as the basis for the orchestral movement in the *Cantus vitæ* (No. 15): "The goal is the end of the glorious fight; the goal is death, *life is a struggle.*"[34] Dohnányi also quoted lines from *The Tragedy of Man* to explain the ideas behind the four movements of the symphony. The first movement is in sonata form, a time-honored dramatic plot that has often been thought of as a conflict between two themes: in the first section (the "Exposition") the first theme is always presented in the key of the symphony (in this case E Major), and the second is always in a contrasting key (in this case B Major); in the middle section (the "Development") portions of the two themes are placed in opposition to each other to create an unstable harmonic environment; and in the final section (the "Recapitulation") the two themes are again presented in their entirety, but this time the second theme is resolved into the key of the symphony. Because the second theme returns in the key originally associated only with the first theme, the first theme is said to have heroically prevailed. Dohnányi himself stressed that in this movement, "The strife is merely musical in the development section between the first subject and the closing themes of the exposition. The first subject triumphs in the recapitulation."

The second movement was intended to represent Eve in Paradise at the beginning of Madách's Scene 2, as she says, "How sweet, how beautiful to live." Not surprisingly, the movement is a slow and sentimental pastorale, in which the instruments, according to reviewer Stephen J. Haller, enter timidly, "as if they had been waiting to see whether the strife of the first movement had truly spent itself."[35] For the third movement, a playful movement labelled "Burla" (Mockery), Dohnányi did not provide a quotation from Madách but simply wrote that it is "The opposite of the 2nd." The fourth movement includes variations on Johann Sebastian Bach's "Komm, süßer Tod" [Come, sweet death], but, according to Dohnányi, "the movement has nothing to do with actual death. The words of the chorale tell only of the longing for death of the tired man. The variations alternate between this feeling and the desire to live, which finally wins out at the end of the Fugue (a triple fugue) and the beginning of the Coda." This coda brings back the themes from the first movement of the symphony in their original key of E major. Dohnányi intended this triumphant ending to represent "Life's victory over Death!"[36]

After the end of the war Dohnányi was able to publish the symphony but not the *Cantus vitæ*. In her biography of her husband Ilona von Dohnányi recounts Dohnányi's October 1946 meeting with Bernard de Nevers, who was the head of the London publishing firm of Alfred Lengnick and Company: "Lengnick was interested in Dohnányi's new works, and de Nevers made a contract with Dohnányi to publish his Sextet, op. 37, the *Suite en valse,* op. 39, which Dohnányi had arranged for two pianos (op. 39a), his Second Symphony, op. 40, and the *Six Pieces,* op. 41."[37] Mrs. Dohnányi gives no explanation for the omission of the *Cantus vitæ*, op. 38, from this agreement, but it is likely that Lengnick was unwilling to make the considerable investment of having new parts created to replace the set that Dohnányi had left behind in Budapest, especially since the market for the *Cantus vitæ* was inherently limited by its scoring, length, and difficulty.

The symphony was premiered in London by the Chelsea Symphony Orchestra on 23 November 1948 with Norman Del Mar conducting. *The Musical Opinion* proclaimed that, although the symphony lasts almost an hour, "the time is profitably spent," adding that Dohnányi "has an unending resource and a wealth of ideas, and his new symphony undoubtedly maintains its hold on our attention throughout its protracted course."[38] The reviews of the symphony's première demonstrate that the British critics appreciated Dohnányi's conservative compositional style. William McNaught of *The Musical Times* complimented the symphony by saying, "It has one advantage over many rivals in being thoroughly intelligible, for the phraseology is late romantic."[39] *The Musical Opinion* agreed that the late-Romantic language of the symphony "is vastly preferable to the artificial and affected idioms adopted by certain contemporary composers."[40] Oddly enough, Dohnányi's rejection of avant-garde techniques is one of the main reasons why his musical legacy went largely ignored in the latter half of the twentieth century.

By the time the symphony was premiered, Dohnányi had left Europe; he eventually settled in Tallahassee, Florida, where he spent the rest of his life teaching at The Florida State University. Dohnányi carried with him the final manuscripts of the *Cantus vitæ*, which he kept with him until his death. The manuscripts stayed in his family until 1997, when his grandson, Dr. Seán McGlynn, brought them to The Florida State University as the cornerstones of what would become the Ernst von Dohnányi Collection at The Florida State University.[41] On 2 February 2002, over forty years after Dohnányi's death, The Florida State University School of Music performed the work for the first time since its première, as part of its International Ernst von Dohnányi Festival.[42]

The symphony, on the other hand, would be performed again during Dohnányi's lifetime. Although Dohnányi had not heard the Chelsea Symphony Orchestra's première of the work, he later admitted that he had never been satisfied with it and felt that it was in an "unperfected form."[43] In spite of the fact that the symphony had already been published and performed, "after ten years sleep in my [Dohnányi's] desk the symphony underwent a thorough rewriting."[44] This revised version was premiered on 15 March 1957 by the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Dohnányi's nephew Antal Doráti. Those who attended the concert responded to the symphony enthusiastically. The piece received a standing ovation, and Doráti called Dohnányi to the stage to share the bows. Dohnányi himself wrote, "The symphony had a tremendous success. Doráti conducted the complicated work by memory. The performance will be repeated next season on Nov. 15."[45] The Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra's 15 November performance included a revised fifth variation for the symphony's final movement.

Both performances of the revised symphony were well received. Like the British critics, the Minneapolis reviewers appreciated Dohnányi's conservatism. John H. Harvey of the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* wrote, "Dohnányi never has felt the desire or necessity to explore new fields, but can illuminate familiar surroundings with new lights, and so his traditionalism makes this work both comfortable and fresh to the listener."[46] The Minneapolis reviews also admired the large scale of the symphony: Norman Houk of the *Minneapolis Morning Tribune* praised the symphony as being "a monumental and extravagantly scored work.,"[47] and John H. Harvey de-

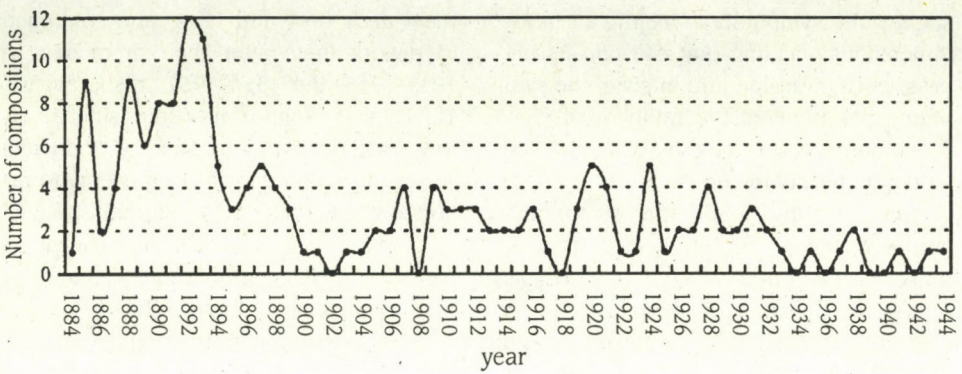
scribed the symphony as being "of heroic dimensions," adding that "despite its bigness, both in design and in style, the symphony has none of the rather lugubrious monumentality often associated with works of this character."[48]

Unfortunately, after the symphony's première, these "heroic dimensions," like those of the *Cantus vitæ,* discouraged orchestras from performing it. On 26 February 1957 Bernard de Nevers wrote to Dohnányi, "I am now taking steps to persuade the B.B.C. to give us a Studio performance here, and the Conductor, Norman Del Mar, who did the performance in its original version, has already asked if he may give the first Studio performance."[49] In a 28 November 1957 letter, however, de Nevers lamented, "I fear it will be difficult because of the length of the work and the large number of Horns required [eight]."[50] Even Antal Doráti, who conducted the work twice in 1957, promised "to program the symphony in other places,"[51] and even recommended it for a Pulitzer Prize,[52] never again showed interest in the work. Although Dohnányi and his publisher hoped that Doráti would record the symphony,[53] the first commercial recording of the symphony was not made until 1996.[54]

The *Cantus vitæ* and the Symphony in E Major occupy distinctive positions in Dohnányi's oeuvre. Dohnányi himself considered the *Cantus vitæ* his magnum opus and reportedly said of the symphony, "This work I consider the most monumental of all I have created, and I know that this is the one which most fully expresses my way of thinking, the principles by which I live."[55] Furthermore, finding the means to express the philosophical depth of both works seems to have presented unique challenges to Dohnányi. He began composing the *Cantus vitæ* and the Symphony in E Major in 1900 and 1906, did not complete them until 1941 and 1944, and continued to rework them after their premières, in 1943–1945 and 1954–1957, respectively.[56] This type of long-term compositional effort, which was very unusual for Dohnányi, seems appropriate for a composer who reportedly said, "Life is an eternal struggle. ... Creation itself is part of this struggle, is perhaps its centre. It is more demanding, more exhausting, than any other."[57]

After working on both compositions for such a long time, the sixty-year-old Dohnányi may have been inspired finally to complete them in a desperate attempt to finish his most important works before it was too late; in addition to the mounting political turmoil in Hungary, during this period of his life Dohnányi was beginning to develop health problems. In 1934 he contracted thrombosis, which left him immobilized for several months. After a concert tour from 2 to 10 April 1937, in which Dohnányi conducted the Budapest Philharmonic in nine cities in as many days, he collapsed with a fever and subsequently committed himself for two weeks into a hospital. In 1940 he was hospitalized for three months after having been diagnosed with nicotine poisoning and having also contracted thrombosis for the second time in his right arm. Three years later Dohnányi contracted thrombophlebitis in his leg. Although these illnesses no doubt served as a constant reminder of his advancing age, they had the fortunate side effect of finally giving Dohnányi the time he needed to commit his ideas to paper; during his second affliction of thrombosis he completed the *Cantus vitæ*.

Dohnányi also composed the *Cantus vitæ* and the Symphony in E Major during a time when his commitments to the Budapest Philharmonic, the Liszt Academy, the Hungarian Broadcasting Society, and the Hungarian Senate were limiting the time that he could spend on other activities. In



Dohnányi's compositional output by year (1884–1944).

the 1930s Dohnányi's compositional output reached an all-time low, averaging only one composition per year, in contrast to the number of works that he had composed in earlier years of his life (see Figure 1). Dohnányi seems to have been willing to make time in his busy schedule only for compositions that were deeply important to him.[58]

In addition to his desire to express his personal philosophy through his music, Dohnányi seems to have composed the two compositions based on *The Tragedy of Man* as part of a mission to demonstrate the full potential of the Classical-Romantic musical style. As early as 1928, Dohnányi's manager had told him that symphonies were out of fashion, and in 1946 Dohnányi told Edward Kilényi that the Symphony in E Major was "the last symphony," meaning that this work represented not only his own final symphony, but also the last work in the genre.[59] Dohnányi was very much aware that he was one of the last composers in the Classical-Romantic tradition, and, much as J.S. Bach's late works are among the last and most thoroughly developed compositions in the Baroque style, Dohnányi's two compositions based on *The Tragedy of Man* represent paradigmatic monuments to musical Romanticism. ❧

NOTES

1 ■ Ilona von Dohnányi: *Ernst von Dohnányi: A Song of Life,* James A. Grymes, ed. Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2002, p. 51.

2 ■ Ernst von Dohnányi: Letter to Donald Ferguson, 17 February 1957 (The Ernst von Dohnányi Collection at The Florida State University, Letter 219).

3 ■ Doris Reno: "A Serene Artist" in *The Miami Herald,* 7 February 1959.

4 ■ Nancy Gene Brown: "'Work Hard,' Says 80-Year-Old Ernst Dohnanyi" in *The Summer Flambeau,* 26 July 1957.

5 ■ Ernst von Dohnányi: Letter to Ferguson.

6 ■ Ernst von Dohnányi: "Curriculum vitæ" (British Library Add. MS 50,807A, folio 69).

7 ■ "Cantus vitæ", in *8 Órai Ujság,* 29 April 1941.

8 ■ Ferenc Deák: "Cantus vitæ Dohnányi zeneköltéményének bemutatója" (Cantus vitæ: the Première of Dohnányi's Symphonic Poem) in *Nemzeti Ujság,* 29 April 1941.

9 ■ See "*Cantus vitæ:* Dohnányi Ernő szimfónikus kantatájának bemutatója az Operaházban" (*Cantus vitæ:* the Première of Dohnányi's Symphonic Cantata in the Opera House) in *Magyarság,* 29 April 1941; "Dohnányi új alkotásának bemutatója" (The Première of Dohnányi's New Work) in *Uj Nemzedék,* 29 April 1941; Géza Falk: "*Cantus vitæ:* Dohnányi Ernő új zeneműve" (*Cantus vitæ:* Dohnányi's New Musical Work) in *Magyar Színpad.* 23–29 April 1941;

"Filharmóniai hangverseny" (Philharmonic Concert) in *Magyar Színpad,* 23–29 April 1941; Endre Gaál: "Dohnányi *Cantus vitæ*jének bemutatója" (The Première of Dohnányi's *Cantus vitæ*) in *Magyar Nemzet,* 29 April 1941; and Géza Hanvay: "*Cantus vitæ:* Dohnányi Ernő szimfonikus cantatája" (*Cantus vitæ*: Dohnányi's Symphonic Cantata) in *Uj Magyarság,* 29 April 1941.

10 ■ Ferenc Deák: "Dohnányi Ernő a *Cantus vitæ* bemutatójáról" (Dohnányi on the Première of *Cantus vitæ*) in *Nemzeti Ujság,* 2 April 1941.

11 ■ Viktor Lányi: *"Cantus vitæ:* Dohnányi szimfónikus kantátájának bemutatója a filharmonikusoknál" (*Cantus vitæ:* The Première of Dohnányi's Symphonic Cantata) in *Pesti Hírlap,* 29 April, 1941.

12 ■ Elza Galafrés: *Lives... Loves... Losses.* Vancouver, Versatile, 1973. p. 398.

13 ■ *Ibid.* The "Bacchanalia" is the second of the five parts of the *Cantus vitæ.*

14 ■ "A hatvanhárom éves Dohnányi Ernő élete főművén dolgozik (The Sixty-three-year Old Dohnányi at Work on His Magnum Opus" *Film-Színház-Irodalom,* 12–18 July 1940.

15 ■ Géza Falk: *op. cit.*

16 ■ Just before the Paris scene (Scene 9) in *The Tragedy of Man,* Adam hears the "Marseillaise."

17 ■ Throughout his life Dohnányi remained a staunch anti-Communist, and his quotation of the "Internationale" was no doubt a sour reminder of Hungary's tumultuous Communist dictatorship of 1919. According to Béla Bartók, during this period, "it was ordered that the outrageous 'Liedertafel' [Glee Club] melody of the 'Internationale,' utterly devoid of both harmony and mentality, be sung daily before every performance at the Opera." Béla Bartók: "Hungary in the Throes of Reaction" in *Musical Courier,* 29 April 1920.

18 ■ By using a *Chorus mysticus,* Dohnányi aligned himself not only with Goethe but also with the great Romantic composers who had set the text of Goethe's *Chorus mysticus,* such as Robert Schumann *(Scenen aus Goethe's Faust)* and Gustav Mahler (Eighth Symphony). The most obvious musical influence on Dohnányi's use of a male-voice *Chorus mysticus* is Franz Liszt's Faust Symphony, in which the text is sung by a tenor solo and men's chorus.

19 ■ Ernst von Dohnányi: letter to Ferguson.

20 ■ Viktor Lányi: *op. cit.*

21 ■ Ferenc Deák: "Dohnányi Ernő a *Cantus vitæ* bemutatójáról," *op. cit.*

22 ■ Ilona von Dohnányi: *Ernst von Dohnányi: A Song of Life.* pp. 119–20.

23 ■ Géza Falk: *op. cit.*

24 ■ Ferenc Deák: *"Cantus vitæ," op. cit.*

25 ■ Ernst von Dohnányi: Letter to Ferguson.

26 ■ Elza Galafrés: *op. cit.* p. 158.

27 ■ *Ibid.* p. 348.

28 ■ Ibid. pp. 348–49. Instead of a new symphony, Dohnányi published *A legfontosabb ujjgyakorlatok biztos technika elsajátítására a zongorán* (Essential Finger Exercises for Obtaining a Sure Piano Technique, Budapest, Rózsavölgyi, 1929) and *J.B. Cramer: Válogatott tanulmányok. Átdolgozta és részben átírta Dohnányi Ernő* (J.B. Cramer: Selected Studies. Revised and Partly Transcribed by E. Dohnányi, Budapest, Rózsavölgyi, 1931).

29 ■ Chelsea Symphony Orchestra: Programme Notes, 23 November 1948.

30 ■ Ilona von Dohnányi: "Inventory of Furniture and All Objects Located in the Room (Not in the Drawers) of Ernst von Dohnányi" p. 3 (Currently in the possession of Dr. Seán McGlynn, Tallahassee, Florida).

31 ■ Ilona von Dohnányi: *Ernst von Dohnányi: A Song of Life.* p. 128.

32 ■ *Ibid.* p. 147.

33 ■ Edward Kilényi: Interview by author. Tallahassee, FL, 25 November 1997.

34 ■ Ernst von Dohnányi: Letter to Ferguson.

35 ■ Stephen J. Haller: "Dohnanyi: Symphony 2" in *American Record Guide,* September/October 1996. pp. 113–14.

36 ■ Ernst von Dohnányi: Letter to Ferguson. Dohnányi seems to have created this phrase himself; it is not a quotation from Madách.

37 ■ Ilona von Dohnányi: *Ernst von Dohnányi: A Song of Life.* p. 153.

38 ■ "London Concerts: Chelsea Symphony Orchestra" in *Musical Opinion,* January 1949. p. 199.

39 ■ William McNaught: "Dohnányi's Second Symphony" in *The Musical Times,* December 1948. p. 380.

40 ■ "London Concerts: Chelsea Symphony Orchestra." p. 199.

41 ■ See James A. Grymes: "The Ernst von Dohnányi Collection at The Florida State University" in *Music Library Association Notes* 55:2, December 1998. pp. 327–40.

42 ■ For more on the *Cantus vitæ,* see James A. Grymes: "A Critical Edition of Ernst von Dohnányi's Symphonic Cantata *Cantus vitæ,* op. 38." Ph.D. Dissertation, The Florida State University, 2002.

43 ■ Ilona von Dohnányi: *Message to Posterity from Ernst von Dohnányi.* Jacksonville, FL: Drew, 1960. p. 42. Although Ernst von Dohnányi is listed as the author of this book, there are questions as to how much of the text is actually his. It is likely that Ilona von Dohnányi projected onto the text the image of her husband as she wanted him to be remembered and then put his name on it.

44 ■ Ernst von Dohnányi: letter to Ferguson.

45 ■ Ernst von Dohnányi: letter to Karl Kuersteiner, 19 March 1957. Cited in Marion Ursula Rueth: "The Tallahassee Years of Ernst von Dohnányi." Master's Thesis, The Florida State University, 1962. p. 151.

46 ■ John H. Harvey: "Minneapolis Symphony Review" in *St. Paul Pioneer Press,* 16 November 1957.

47 ■ Norman Houk: "Violinist Reveals a Rare Power With Symphony" in *Minneapolis Morning Tribune,* 16 March 1957.

48 ■ John H. Harvey: "Concert Reviewed" in *St. Paul Pioneer Press,* 16 March 1957.

49 ■ Bernard de Nevers: letter to Ernst von Dohnányi, 26 February 1957 (The Ernst von Dohnányi Collection at The Florida State University, Letter 195).

50 ■ Bernard de Nevers: Letter to Ilona von Dohnányi, 28 November 1957 (The Ernst von Dohnányi Collection at The Florida State University, Letter 170).

51 ■ Antal Doráti: Letter to Ernst von Dohnányi, 30 March 1957 (The Ernst von Dohnányi Collection at The Florida State University, Letter 178).

52 ■ Antal Doráti: Letter to the Pulitzer Music Committee, 26 April 1947 (The Ernst von Dohnányi Collection at The Florida State University, Letter 177).

53 ■ Ernst von Dohnányi: Letter to Antal Doráti, n.d: "I would like it very much ... if you were able to record it [the symphony]" (The Ernst von Dohnányi Collection at The Florida State University, Letter 180). Arthur Cohn (Mills Music): letter to Antal Doráti, 4 March 1957: "I hope that you may consider Dohnányi's symphony in your future recording plans" (The Ernst von Dohnányi Collection at The Florida State University, Letter 192)

54 ■ Ernst von Dohnányi: *Symphony No. 2, Op. 40.* BBC Philharmonic, Matthias Bamert, conductor (Chandos CHAN9455), 1996. For more on Dohnányi's E Major Symphony, see James A. Grymes: "Compositional Process in Ernst von Dohnányi's Symphony in E Major." Master's Thesis, The Florida State University, 1998. See also James A. Grymes: "Ernő Dohnányi's Revision of His Symphony in E Major, op. 40" in *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 40, 1999. pp. 71–84.

55 ■ Ilona von Dohnányi: *Message...* p. 26.

56 ■ Dohnányi apparently later returned to both works in an effort to make them more accessible. His 1945 piano-vocal score to the *Cantus vitæ* includes a German translation of the Hungarian text, suggesting that Dohnányi intended to have the piece performed outside of Hungary. Of the many changes Dohnányi made to the Symphony No. 2 in E Major, the most significant was the shortening of the work from over an hour to just under fifty minutes, presumably in response to criticisms of its première such as "It can hardly be said .... that the interest never flags." "Editorial Notes" in *The Strad,* January 1949. p. 195.

57 ■ Ilona von Dohnányi: *Message...* p. 11.

58 ■ It is interesting to note that the work that Dohnányi composed between the profound *Cantus vitæ,* op. 38, and Symphony in E Major, op. 40, is a playful *Suite en valse,* op. 39. As Dohnányi explained, "After I wrote my *Cantus vitæ,* which is an oratorio-like big piece... very serious music... I had a longing to write something easy, I mean in a ligher style... I chose waltzes because my wife likes waltzes very much." Ernst von Dohnányi: Interview with Colin Stern and Edward Kilényi, Jr. *Heritage Series* 6: "Ernst von Dohnányi," No. 4 (National Educational Television, WQED, Pittsburgh, PA).

59 ■ Dohnányi held the deep conviction that the genre had been exhausted and that nobody, including himself, could make further significant contributions to the repertoire.

Tamás Koltai

"Thinking... Our state to be disjoint and out of frame"

József Katona: *Bánk bán* • Magda Szabó: *Kiálts, város!* (Cry, City!)
Csaba Kiss: *Hazatérés Dániába* (Coming Home to Denmark)

Claudius rails against Fortinbras, Prince of Norway's supposition that Denmark is in a parlous state. Railing is the prerogative of rulers; it is the prerogative of theatre directors to decide what conditions of which states are represented in stage works.

The tragedy *Bánk bán (The Viceroy,* transl. by Bernard Adams and Kálmán Ruttkay, Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 2003), which József Katona, one of the classic Hungarian playwrights, had privately printed in 1821, takes as its subject the assassination of the Hungarian Queen Gertrude, consort of Endre II, in 1213. This aroused a huge furore in the Europe of the day and later became a literary subject that floated from country to country. It was worked up as a play by, amongst others, Hans Sachs, the bootmaker *Meistersinger* of Nuremberg in the sixteenth, the English tragedian George Lillo in the eighteenth, and the Austrian Franz Grillparzer in the nineteenth century. The plot unfolds in the royal court, with Bánk as Ban, or viceroy, of Hungary, appointed to carry out the sovereign's functions whilst King Endre is waging war in foreign lands. As the play opens, Bánk has just returned from a tour of the country—undertaken not of his own accord but at the request of magnates who, aggrieved at Queen Gertrude's high-handedness, are plotting against her. To add more force to their plan, they inform Bánk that Prince Ottó is preparing to seduce the Ban's wife, Melinda, a scheme which Gertrude, Ottó's sister, is actively assisting. Recoiling from the idea of conspiracy, the viceroy is late in getting home: the treacherous Ottó has already succeeded with the help of a sleeping draught, and faithful Melinda displays all the signs of having been unhinged by this. Bánk entrusts her safeguarding to Tiborc, his long-time serf who is a spokesman for the grievances of the people, whilst he proceeds to upbraid Gertrude for her crimes. The Queen attacks him with a dagger, but the Ban wrests this from her and turning it on her, kills her. This sparks a rebellion, which is then put down by the soldiers of the returning king. At his wife's bier, Endre II prepares for a showdown with the rebels, but when the body of Melinda, drowned whilst trying to flee, is brought in, he refrains from inflicting further punishment on the distraught Bánk.

Tamás Koltai,
editor of Színház, *a theatre monthly, is* The Hungarian Quarterly*'s regular theatre critic.*

For all the many virtues it can justly claim in regard to content and form, the play has also been subject to many criticisms on structural grounds. The story itself is too readily passed off—much to the disgust of schoolchildren, who have little enough enthusiasm for set works—as a patriotic drama. The underlying conflict is that of Bánk, a pursuer of *Realpolitik* in the modern sense, who tries to rise above the petty strife of the political factions who figure in the piece. One of these issues is that of "nationalism". Though they deny it, the disaffected Magyar magnates take exception to Queen Gertrude's German origins. And when censured for speaking "hatred of her race", they respond that "we will not to a woman subject be", or in other words, they fail to meet the more advanced standards of contemporary western Europe in that respect too. Bánk is more European than they are, and not just because his own wife, Melinda, is also a "foreigner", Spanish by birth. The royal court is teeming with Germans and Spaniards, and one character, the cynical knight-adventurer Biberách ("the knight", as he is referred to in the play), continually speculates on whether he can expect greater material reward by allying with the Hungarians or the foreigners.

These ingredients would give bite to a performance of the play that is valid even today were it not that the director's task is hampered by constructional defects. Too much reliance is placed on chance and misunderstanding; the plot is driven too much by contrivances—concealed doors, eavesdropping, sleeping potions—rather than by the characters; the royal palace is treated as little more than a public footpath, with a peasant able to drop in on a ball unchallenged; whilst the Queen, who prides herself on the personal nexus of power that she has built up there, only learns about the murder of a knight in the room next door from a casual remark by one of her ladies-in-waiting. This may be why Attila Vidnyánszky, the young director of this new production at the National Theatre, Budapest, decided to abandon the historical dimension, dispensing with a realistic stage set to envisage the plot as an uninterrupted ritual in which all the characters are, in essence, present throughout. Gertrude, for instance, sits in on the scene in which the conspirators plot against her. Bánk makes his entrance onto a thronged stage, so his return can hardly be a secret, thus it is somewhat perplexing why later on, following the text, several people should express surprise at finding him back. Power administered carelessly, giving us good reason to suppose "our state to be disjoint and out of frame."

The point is not that, of course, but the notion of the piece as a ritual, rejecting the traditional narrative frame. And the essence of that ritual is the dance-like ornamentation, with choreography providing a thread through the performance. A white-costumed dance group, which puts on the opening gala ball scene, remains on hand throughout to add folkloristic motifs to the plot. That concept is also extended to the characters. Melinda, for example, appropriately clothed in a Spanish ruff and farthingale, is repeatedly spun like a top, as a metaphor for her being a toy in the hands of others; Gertrude is dressed up now as a haloed Virgin Mary in the manner of a devotional picture, now as a Tartar khan's wife, now as a Hollywood-style Oriental diva; Bánk, with his pigtail, is got up like a Japanese samurai. The international flavour is immediately evident in the casting as well, with the Thuringian girl Izidóra Bendelei speaking clearly accented Hungarian, the role being played by a young Ukrainian actress whom the director, himself from the Magyar-inhabited southwestern border region of Ukraine,

brought to Hungary and who is presently a member of the alternative theatre company that he also directs.

Right now, with Hungary poised for accession to the European Union, this international take on a "national tragedy" might be said, with a touch of irony, to be topical. *Bánk bán*, however, is too clumsy, too ponderous, too earthbound to be so easily transposed into poetic metaphors or rites of general validity. On that account, certain parts of the production have a distinctly parodistic feel, which would not matter were that clearly not the director's intention. At one performance, members of the audience, feeling cheated by this take on the "classic", gave voice to their disapproval mid-scene, a highly unusual reaction in Hungary. This critic, for all his misgivings, is minded to take the side of the director, who is at least seeking to throw off convention in search of something new. He may well have been aided in this by the irony that is undeniably present in the ending. The cast, elbows propped on the footlights, watch the weavers who have been working away on the stage throughout—Hungarian versions of the Parcæ of Roman mythology—weave a tapestry of the nation: a rag carpet of readily recognisable motifs.

Another historical moment for a country "disjoint and out of frame" is the subject of the play *Cry Out, City!* by Magda Szabó, the writer and dramatist who recently turned eighty-five. (Her recent autobiographical novel is reviewed on pp. 96–98 of this issue.) This was first performed in 1973 and has recently been revived by the Csokonai Theatre at Debrecen, which mounted the original production. The curious aspect of the play is that its central figure never makes an appearance. Gáspár Borzán, a newly elected senator to Debrecen's Grand Council, is a young man engaged to marry, whose presence is felt through his absence. He is repeatedly poised to make an entrance; on one occasion "he's waiting outside", with the Chief Justice about to have him called, when history steps in. The play is, in fact, about history intervening; about how ideology and politics exert an influence on the fate of the individual. Gáspár Borzán cannot get married, cannot live his life, cannot enter into the action, because he has to die. His fate is mirrored in the fate of others. He is not to be given the opportunity of dramatic presence, and through this seemingly bleak, demonstrative procedure Magda Szabó introduces a rational, near-Brechtian motif into what is fundamentally a sentimental story.

That goes for the prologue too. A sort of footnote or counterpart to the unhistorical frivolity with which G. B. Shaw prefaced his *Saint Joan* is to be discerned here in a scene where assorted historical figures (the Turkish sultan, Phillip II of Spain, Emperor Rudolf II of Austria, John Calvin, Count John Jacob Belgioioso), in the transcendental eternity of their afterlife, attempt to clarify who is responsible for the murder of Gáspár Borzán, "the anonymous Debrecener", in 1604. There is indubitably a Shavian irony in this mutual shuffling-off of historical responsibility onto one another, this washing of hands by crowned heads, a religious reformer, and a military adventurer alike of guilt for the death of this common man. It is just as important that, having forewarned us of Borzán's death from the start, the plot unfurls without the tension of uncertainty but in the certain knowledge of the eventual outcome. At issue is not whether Borzán is going to be murdered, but why. It is the process, rather than the result, that is important, giving the play an incontestably "epic", Brechtian dimension.

The reason why is to be sought in history. At the time in question, Hungary was

split into three, its territories controlled by Austria, the Ottoman Empire, and a more or less autonomous Transylvania. In a country wrenched out of its familiar frame and organisation and transformed into a permanent theatre of war, the only chance of surviving was to hone any talents one had for wheeling and dealing, and often even that was not enough—Hungarians themselves made sure of that. Magda Szabó is quite critical of the laws of Calvinist Debrecen, her own birthplace, which granted citizenship to Calvinists, but excluded all others as "foreigners". That intolerance, manifested in the on-stage action by the rejection of a petition by a Greek merchant to purchase a property in the city, is what leads eventually to the death of Senator Borzán. The Chief Magistrate, endowed with plenipotentiary powers under the city's rigorous code, and also personally involved in the matter as the prospective father-in-law, bargains with the Greek, whom he needs to lend the ransom money that must be paid to the imperial forces for the young man, whom they are holding hostage, to the point where it is too late, and Borzán is executed. Far from being outdated, the question of whether a "foreigner" can become a "citizen" has, if anything, gained in topicality. To that extent, the 30-year-old *Cry Out, City!* is a genuinely topical play, and one cannot overestimate that message from a time half-slipping into the past with which Magda Szabó, as a loyal native, dishes out a stern verdict on the (historical) theory and practice of exclusion.

János Meczner's production is attuned to the play's dramaturgical needs, which prescribe an unhurried working out of events. The one exception is the prologue, which offers a certain scope for fantasy. The director has the characters in the waxworks of the historical afterlife suspended from cables, dangling—with the stage designer's assistance—over a maquette of Debrecen, so that these administrators responsible are, so to speak, sustained by philosophies attached to nothing as they hover between heaven and earth (or between timelessness and the city). The imagery is graphic and the idea witty, but it does have the drawback of restricting the actors to swinging movements, which makes for a very static stage. One undoubted advantage is that, through amplification, every word is audible, and so that a key precursor to the action is clearly comprehensible, but on the other hand it does make for a slightly monotonous scene, lacking the irony that, in a less constrained and possibly more anachronistic setting, closer to the present day, would have allowed a freer play and association of ideas.

The director strikes a balance between the play's two basic strata, that of the stiff formality of the world which is portrayed, and that of the private conflicts which pry that world apart. In that respect, the key scene is the one presenting the session of the Grand Council, which entrenches what is to come through its rigorous ritual and the ceremonial formality with which the successive matters are accepted. When the victim's betrothed hears the death penalty pronounced at the end of the performance, she comes forward to the footlights without any show of breaking down, objectively stepping out of the drama, as it were, and, having tugged her engagement ring off her finger, flings it to the ground—tossing it into the audience, as if to blame the city, the model of which has meanwhile re-emerged behind her.

Csaba Kiss's *Coming Home to Denmark* goes back to the original Shakespearean "disjoint state". This is not the first (and, no doubt, not the last) paraphrase of *Hamlet.* Of course, back in times (e.g. the nineteenth century) when copyright and an

author's right to be identified as such were unknown concepts, all performances of *Hamlet* were, in a sense, paraphrases; nowadays, every production is a legitimised rewriting. Kiss, though, who is also director of this production, has concocted a genuinely new play from the familiar ingredients whilst still keeping a close connection with the original.

A number of the alterations are striking. For instance, it is not the ghost of the old king which returns but the king himself, his decaying body, stolen from the bier, slowly dying from the poison that was administered to him but able, through Horatio's ministrations, to croak out the story of his murder in person. Laertes does not depart as a gilded youth for Paris but as the Danish ambassador to Norway, whence he comes back crippled with frostbitten feet. Polonius is not stabbed behind the arras but is accidentally injured in a brawl. Other, more minor divergences have no great bearing on the plot, or indeed the characters; it is just the background elements that are altered—the internal relationships, the way we view the details.

First and foremost, the difference in outlook between Claudius and the Prince is made more acute (of all the characters, the only one not to retain his or her original name is Hamlet, who is referred to throughout as the Prince). Claudius is a hedonist, taking uninhibited pleasure in living, ruling, gorging himself, having sex. He has made a real woman out of the Queen, who addresses her new husband by the diminutive Claude, in the French style, having endured thirty years of a withering marriage. The Prince is overly rational, even compared with his original self; Horatio refers to him, with no little irony, as "my sweet, sensitive, distant Prince", and Claudius, with a goodly dose of sarcasm, as "a High-German mind, a fine intellect from Wittenberg", whilst he characterises himself as feeling nothing, "only an infinite remoteness from everything". This not only chimes with his well-known propensity to postpone any action but, over and above that, is attended by many disagreeable consequences. On the night that he returns home, for instance, he is driven by drink to deflower Ophelia —a deed that he does not care to recall on sobering up. Then he coaches the players for the "Mousetrap" scene, which does not work because one of them becomes upset by the fraudulence of his own life and the corruptibility of art. Moreover Claudius, far from taking fright at being shown up, brazenly admits his crime and eggs the Prince on to publish his evidence, whereupon the Prince is even more paralysed than before and, however much the hot-blooded Horatio may seek to persuade him, unwilling to take a step himself. "Must I do everything for him?!" the staunch friend bursts out on one occasion whilst he is bedding the orphaned Ophelia, and again on crippling the gourmand King with poison disguised as sweet Jutland mustard.

This grand guignol, in which Denmark's not so much a prison as a (perhaps more familiar) brothel given over to private pleasures—in the words of the country's sovereign: "the sordid Danish society, which has to be royally screwed on a daily basis", with the old Gravedigger declaring that he can only say he prefers the late king, Hamlet's father, in relation to the present one, but when the late king was alive he "would have happily buried him at half price"—is obviously intended to be farcical. The intellect from Wittenberg truly is "unsuited", as Claudius says, to this petty feudal kingdom. Scrupulous intellectual that he is, the Prince is estranged from reality and, not least, from his own play. Everyone around him is ruined—Polonius,

Sir,—*The Hungarian Quarterly* has done an admirable job over the past few years underlining the significance of Ernő Dohnányi for Hungary's cultural life. This is why I am aghast finding an article with the ambitious sub-title "Two Hundred Years of Hungarian Opera" by Tibor Tallián in the recent issue of the journal (Spring 2003, p. 144-156). The Director of the Institute of Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and eminent Bartók scholar must have overlooked that between the two Word Wars there lived and worked in Hungary a world renowned musician, conductor, composer and teacher, the friend and patron of Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály by the name of Ernő Dohnányi. Between 1921 and 1927 said Dohnányi composed three operas at a time when not many operas were written in Hungary. Was Zoltán Kodály wrong when in 1922 he wrote about one of them *(The Voivod's Tower)* that it is "significant not only in Hungarian relation but internationally as well"? Did the Hungarian recording company Hungaroton commit a blunder when they recently issued a CD with another of his operas *(Tante Simona)*? Why would these not be worth mentioning today? Does the shadow of Stalin and Zhdanov still loom over the Hungarian Academy of Sciences?

By the way, how does Professor Tallián know that in the last third of Béla Bartók's life "sexuality ceased to be of central importance to him"?!

Lajos Koncz
Boston, MA

Sir,—In his review of my book, *Imre Lakatos and the Guises of Reason* (*HQ* Spring 2003), György Litván misleadingly describes the book as about the "life and work" of Imre Lakatos. Certainly the book is about Lakatos' English-language philosophy and history of mathematics and science. But I state "this book is not about Lakatos the person, or is about him very little" (p. 3). I also say the book "is not an intellectual biography" (xvii) but rather "an expository history of ideas, including some political history"(ibid.) With reference to Lakatos's "two souls," meaning his notorious Hungarian past and his philosophical career in England, I say the book's "goal is not to understand these two souls but the philosophy possessed by them"(20).

Rather than studying Lakatos's life, what I establish was an overwhelming correspondence between Lakatos's ideas and many ideas of Hegel and Lukács, regardless of any personal connection. I did not make, as Litván says, an "assumption that, besides Hegel and Marx, Lukács had the greatest influence on Lakatos." The book makes no substantive claims about influences on Lakatos at all. I even raise the possibility that because "Lakatos was a voracious and even somewhat indiscriminate consumer of ideas... the appearance of all kinds of traces of Hegel and others [e.g. Lukács] in his work expresses no more than that"

What was Lakatos's relationship with Lukács? Lakatos was not a student of Lukács in a formal sense; nor was Lakatos a member of the well-known circle of students closely associated with Lukács after his lecturing was curtailed. But directly after the end of World War II and Lukács's return to Budapest, Lakatos attended Lukács's lectures along with many others. Lakatos invited Lukács to Debrecen on completion of his doctoral disseration there, and Lakatos's writing in the 1940s clearly reflects Lukács's influence. Sometime around 1948 or 1949, relations soured considerably. Nonetheless, Lakatos was still among the few admirers of Lukács's book *The Destruction of Reason*, published in 1954.

As Litván points out, I do ask in the title of my Introduction, "Who was Imre

thrown against a wall, breaks his skull; Ophelia hangs herself; Laertes is an invalid on his return from the enemy camp; the gangster King becomes a wreck—whilst he himself, blond and elegant in his white, padded fencing jacket and dreaming of a gymnasium full of German cherubs, waits for someone to accept his challenge and step up to the piste. Needless to say, he is cut to ribbons before the wolf pack of barbarous Norwegians breaks in on the scene.

Humanistic illusions run up against bloody reality, just as in the original, but ending, through the intervening historical distancing, on a more mordant, mocking, hopeless note. The fact that the imagery only coheres in the second act can be put down, in part, to failings in the performance at the Petőfi Theatre, Veszprém. One can hardly accuse Csaba Kiss, an experienced director in his own right, of not understanding his own play, so this is much more a question of failures on the part of some actors, the task calling for greater engagement than was available. The stage design is adequate: the hall of brick columns that divide up the stage is imposing and lends itself to pretty lighting effects, though it might be a bit more mobile. By the interval it is still not clear what the reason was for writing the piece, for only later does it become evident that, to a considerable extent, the story is really about Claudius and his somewhat contrived, provincial (and, to some degree, East European) hedonism; about the feminine ardour of Gertrude, blossoming into a real woman in her forties; about Ophelia, the anaemic "marmoset", who, terrified on hearing an excited royal vulgarity, seeks refuge under Gertrude's bedclothes; about the Prince, swanning around in his white costume (the playwright maliciously adapts Treplov's monologue from Chekhov's *The Seagull* for the Mousetrap scene); and about the corpse of Old Hamlet, faded to an astral body, and the Old Player, acted by the same person. Virtually every death is the result of some tragicomic, bloodstained yet horrifically funny accident. The envoy who was dispatched to Norway is lured into the interior of the land of ice-fields in order that, at the end, the howling of distant hordes of wolves should break in on the scene without any warning.

As to whether the "state out of joint" is "Denmark" or somewhere else is a discussion better not entered here. ❧

Lakatos? *Ki volt Lakatos Imre?*" He then implies I answer this question by my statement that "Lakatos was a charismatic and treacherous member of the Communist underground during World War II, after which he worked and studied with Lukács" (xvi).

But my statement does not appear in the Introduction. It appears in a summary of a chapter on 1956 which concludes the book, some hundreds of pages away. The statement is clearly not meant to answer the question, "Who was Imre Lakatos?" Litván is right that this one statement, which is taken out of context, overstates the relationship between teacher and sometime student. He is also right that for Lakatos in 1944, "Communist" should be "communist."

Aside from that, Litván's review creates a false and biased representation of my work, and gives almost no idea of what the book is about. Most disappointingly, he ignores my lengthy account of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution—a topic on which he is a leading expert—and the relationship I describe between Hungarian Stalinism and Lakatos' work.

John Kadvany

Sir,—I am sorry that Mr Kadvany is dissatisfied with what I had to say about his book. As the caption indicates, my review was originally of Lee Congdon's *Seeing Red*. Since two other books on Imre Lakatos, one of the principal characters, were published in 2001, I considered it my duty to inform readers about them. True enough, Mr Kadvany's is not a biography but primarily deals with Lakatos's writings in English on philosophy and the history of mathematics, fields in which I have no competence. Therefore I could not undertake to write on the book as such. Kadvany, however, repeatedly, albeit briefly refers to Lakatos's activities in Hungary (thus in a long sub-chapter headed "Lakatos' Road to 1956" (pp. 286–292). I mentioned these references, precisely citing the text and context, whatever the chapter may have been. Exaggerations connected with Lakatos's role in Hungary ("a charismatic and treacherous member of the Communist underground" and his closeness to Lukács are all the more important since they are also characteristic of the other two works which I discussed. Such fast-spreading legends must be acted against in time. The Lukács-question receives special emphasis in Kadvany's case since *Guises of Reason* in his title refers directly to Lukács's *The Destruction of Reason*. As regards the chapter on the 1956 Revolution and its antecedents, that does not concern the present subject, though, as a participant in the events and a student of the period, I read his thorough account with interest.

György Litván
Budapest

Official statement by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

Thanks to long and heated struggle championed by the Board of our Society, the Rabbit Stew and Fish Soup Plant has just inaugurated a new workshop called the Can Opener.
There the newly canned tins of rabbit stew and fish soup are reopened, drained of liquid, and the chunks of meat and fish are reconstituted and returned to their original habitat, where they are released.
We herewith wish to express our sincere gratitude to the management of the Rabbit Stew and Fish Soup Plant, who have finally come to interpret correctly the true meaning of humanitarianism!

From: István Örkény: One Minute Stories, p. 45.

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