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THE PEOPLE AND THE INTELLECTUALS

by

GYÖRGY ACZÉL

The text of a talk delivered by György Aczél, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party with special responsibility for cultural matters, at the 1968 general meeting of TIT (Society for the Dissemination of Knowledge).

There was a time when we used to open a discussion by leading up to the question from its antecedents, by showing its past. These days we are likely to begin with the tasks ahead and say less about what went before. But discussing culture, it is nevertheless useful to remind ourselves a little of the past.

Structurally Hungarian culture was characterized by a deep gulf between the culturally backward masses (who should not be blamed for their ignorance) and a thin relatively highly cultured layer.

Hungarian pre-liberation literature is the best evidence of the extent to which these scholars, artists, writers and educators felt responsible for the people, and how much they suffered because of its backwardness. The road Hungarian agrarian development took deeply affected also the shape of culture in our past. There was here, in respect of both culture and scientific knowledge, a staggering disproportion between the standards of the thin upper layer and that of the broad masses; that is, culture had no wide social basis, no firm scholarly creative element that might have stopped it being blown about by the winds of fashion. That is what basically characterized the cultural structure of our country before liberation. It is impossible to neglect this past when analysing the problems of the present.

Changes in Demands on Culture

A process of general and many-sided cultural development, which was only temporarily interrupted by sectarianism and revisionism, took place in Hungary after 1945. Particularly impressive advances in mass education took place in the past ten years. A further large number of workers, peasants

and intellectuals not only grew accustomed to culture but came to look at it as a part of their daily necessities. Their demands have substantially changed in this area also. This favourable trend is not the same everywhere, it is more vigorous as regards reading, the spread of verse and prose, and perhaps less so in the fine arts; it is more forceful in one branch of the natural sciences than in another. We have to take these differences into account in the interest of a more harmonious cultural development of the broad masses. Equally we have to bear in mind social changes which have taken place. The village of old, where the priest or parson, the schoolmaster, the notary and an occasional doctor were the intellectuals, has disappeared. There is no village today where the number of local intellectuals has not grown. But the number of peasants who have come into contact with one cultural activity or another has also increased many times over, and the cultural appearance of the whole countryside has changed with them. The same applies to the whole of our new society.

Amidst everyday problems, troubles and worries we sometimes forget about the long way our people have come, about the results achieved by the entire Hungarian nation. It is this failure of memory that breeds pessimism, defeatism and disbelief in certain people. In connection with these problems it is worth recalling some general symptoms which appear in our cultural and ideological work, or—I might as well say—in the propagation of knowledge.

Neither Isolation nor "Integration"

We come across two false views regarding the propagation of culture. In Hungary proponents of the first simply ignore that there exist ideologies other than Marxism, or if they take note of the existence of hostile ideologies, they simplify their essence and treat them as products of either absolute stupidity or absolute malevolence; therefore they want to fight them by administrative means. They demand that we close the frontiers against cultural and intellectual exchanges, they want to isolate Hungarian culture. This, however, we cannot do, and if we nonetheless tried, an unnatural situation would come about, we would become ill-informed, weak and powerless, for no vigorous plant can grow in a hothouse.

The second wrong view we encounter day after day is the notion of cultural "integration." The essence of this train of thought is that we live in an age of technological and scientific revolution where the class content of culture becomes less and less important. As a result of this revolution,

we are told, modern bourgeois sociology has set up, and dealt with many problems, all that has to be done is to take over the results. Today, according to such theories, Marxism can be made "competitive" if it is integrated on a broad basis with the achievements of bourgeois sociology. These ideas—once they are turned into theories and ideologies—mean the revision of Marxism; thus they are revisionist. They are wrong because they leave out of account the most important feature of our age, namely that what characterizes it in the first place is the world-wide struggle between imperialism and socialism, and not the fact that the so-called "industrial society" was born as a result of the scientific and technological revolution. For this reason we reject the integration and blending of the "achievements" of bourgeois sociology with Marxism, for they are not in a position to answer the fundamental questions of our age, and any integration with them would be surrender and submission to a bourgeois ideology. Our aim is to answer the principal questions of our age on the basis of Marxism–Leninism (that is, we demand that our ideology be scientific), and to fight and overcome the ideologies opposed to socialism. This fight is a historical necessity for us. Again and again we have to demonstrate to our people and to the world, that we know more and different things too, that we can provide better and more correct answers to the questions of our times than the bourgeoisie. And what makes us capable of all this is not integration, but the progressive development of our world outlook, our theory, our knowledge, our technology and our culture.

We oppose creative, living Marxism to the isolation of the dogmatists and the integration of the revisionists. The sort of creative Marxism which every day gains new adherents in all parts of the world, even among those who have not started out as Marxists. The ideological struggle can therefore be waged not by taking isolation or integration as a basis, but by answering the new questions reality poses boldly, on the scientific basis of creative Marxism, and by conducting a resolute struggle and polemic against bourgeois ideologies, relying on the same basis. So, in addition to saying no to bourgeois ideologies, to the rightist and leftist distortions of Marxism–Leninism, we seek and find positive answers to the principal questions of our age—that attractive yes which is capable of winning over the honest people who sincerely seek a solution to the problems of our world today.

We have immense potentialities ahead of us in this struggle. Technology and all the mass media are at our disposal. Sometimes we are inclined to overestimate or to underestimate technology. We often meet the notion that television and radio will supplant a live oral propagation of knowledge. We are convinced that technical means will never supersede direct human

contact or direct human communication, at most they can change the form, perfect the methods and improve the relationship between creative artists, scientists and public figures, on the one hand, and the recipients, the spectators and readers, on the other—a process which has already started to take shape and whose pace of development will, we think, quicken.

The New Intellectuals*

An indispensable ally of the people in the struggle fought in the cultural field are the socialist-minded intellectuals. We endeavour to make sure that those who are whole-hearted and unequivocal supporters of socialism will in the first place, and above all, be given the chance to be active in the social sciences. We are used to saying that a new kind of intellectual has come into being. The concept of "the new intellectual" must, however, be construed with all its complexity. A new intellectual is not necessarily one who graduated from university after liberation, and an old intellectual is not necessarily one who finished his university studies earlier. We consider that a new intellectual is one whose world outlook is new, that is socialist, and an old intellectual is one who has a conservative, non-Marxist, non-socialist world outlook.

The new intellectuals are closely linked with the people, and our people demand these ties. This applies also to the intellectuals grouped around the Society for the Dissemination of Knowledge which, together with a number of other associations, provides the organizational framework to satisfy this claim. We look on this Society as a highly important organization since it makes it possible for tens of thousands of people—party members and others—too, to take an active part in the shaping of our society, in the carrying out of the cultural revolution in the Leninist sense. It would be wrong to interpret this in such a way that there are those in charge of elevating the cultural standard of the people, and there are the people whose standard has to be raised. This "elevating action" coming from outside is substantially foreign to the real process, it is alien to socialism. The people act on the socialist, humanist, technical and scientific intellectuals within a framework of powerful mutuality and the work of these intellectuals acts upon the people. The dictatorship of the proletariat guarantees the people's cultural advancement, which is greatly helped by the old and the new intel-

* The term intellectuals is used here as the equivalent of the Hungarian *értelmiség*. It covers all those in an occupation that normally requires a university education, writers, artists, scientists, civil servants, and professional people (doctors, engineers, architects, journalists, schoolteachers, etc.).

lectuals, though not as a force rendering help from outside, but as a section which is actively working as part of an historical process.

We are aware that the raising of the cultural standard of the people necessitates dealing with a number of educational problems as well. Educational problems, not remedial teaching; for whoever in the people's state approaches the people as a "saviour of the people" or "friend of the people" is seriously mistaken. The people are healthy, the people are strong, what they need are not healers but men who work with them. This basic approach must prevail in our entire work of adult education, for otherwise we shall inadvertently adopt the manners of broad gestures and patronizing condescension, which are alien to the people and are bound to lead to an impasse.

We demand that popularizing of education be socialist. The Society for the Dissemination of Knowledge fulfils an important function also by undertaking to persuade those whose ideological interpretation of reality still differs from ours. In our country nobody suffers if his convictions regarding one or another question are different from ours. On political issues of prime importance we have cooperated and still cooperate in practice with those professing a different world outlook. We have evolved a style enabling cooperation also in the propagation of knowledge, except for sociological subjects whose content is of an expressly class character. The aim of this cooperation is to bring closer to us those who are still farther away, to involve in our work new and new sections of the people on the basis of socialism.

In our opinion (and this is one of the many criteria) one is a communist as long as one believes in the attractiveness of our ideas, in the malleability and educability of people, and believes that others also may meet our ideas and identify themselves with them. Of course, a condition of this encounter is firmness and consistency in principle on the part of Marxists.

This is the chief point of the discussions going on in our public life. We think that these discussions are in general useful, and even that we ought to make better use of them, for it promotes progress if we educate people to do more independent thinking. In this too we have good experiences, such as the discussions that took place prior to the introduction of the new economic mechanism. It is also obvious that the new economic mechanism itself has a stimulating effect on thinking, it turns discussions in a favourable direction.

Time was when some tried to oppose science to its popularization, as though the public dissemination of the results of scientific work reduced the scholars' scientific standing. The best of our scholars have always rejected

this and maintained that the propagation of knowledge can do harm only to pseudo-science and to doctrinaires. We think this view will prove increasingly attractive. The composition of the present audience is also a guarantee of this: academicians and university professors sitting side by side with medical practitioners and village schoolmasters.

The People Cannot Be Replaced

We often hear complaints—more often from artists and movie people, less often from musicians—about the people being "backward." Not only is this untrue in such a summary sense, we might also quote Brecht when he said on a different sort of occasion, that the people cannot be replaced. You can serve only the real people, and not some kind of imaginary ideal. As people and public tend to become identical notions, I think we can rightly recommend this saying of Brecht's to our writers and artists. We can boast magnificent examples also of how the people can be well served and still be raised: Béla Bartók in the past and until recently, Zoltán Kodály, who in the creative period of their lives did not consider it a senseless waste to wander around Hungarian villages and towns, to use radio, and later television, primary and secondary schools, and direct communication to teach the masses to love music. It is due to their work that our concert halls everywhere in the country are filled to capacity. And this is also a cautionary tale, perhaps the propagation of culture needs fewer complaints and more creative action.

Of course, we have to take into consideration that it is not enough to register demands, we also have to be able to change them. We want to educate every citizen to be a man living and thinking in a socialist manner, and this requires us to continue improving the culture, taste and interests of a good many people. We still have very much to do in this field, and we can succeed only if we work in close contact with the people.

Democratic Socialism and Culture

My starting-point has been that our potentialities and our tasks are enormous, but it is also true that we have to get our work done in an extremely complicated situation. New questions crop up, and the people need help to grasp and solve them. The biggest help to all of us would be if we managed to make larger masses understand that there is only one

possibility for the progress of mankind, socialism. Only this can provide mankind with a rational existence and life. Among other things, because we want to create for all not only materially better and more advanced, and humane living conditions—this, too, of course—but we want to ensure that life makes the individual pursue rational, humane purposes.

A view is emerging in the capitalist world, and it is sometimes heard here as well—the bankruptcy theory, which is actually a reflection of the failure of capitalism, for it is evidence that the theory of the "welfare state" has failed. That society is in a state of profound crisis, because it has been unable to give man something to live for, some content to his life even where material well-being has reached a relatively high standard. We have talked about this crisis so much in seminars—though in a somewhat vulgarizing manner—that now, as it appears in a form different from the one we expected, we do not grasp it properly, nor do we draw the right conclusions. Sometimes we get the impression that the conclusions of our discussions contain too many themes which result from a scepticism seemingly justified in capitalism, and few positive aspects that might be warranted by our conditions of existence.

I should like to remind you that the most controversial question ten years ago was: Does Hungarian agriculture need cooperative farms? Are the necessary preconditions there? When should they be established, now or in the next century. Or ought we to have set them up yesterday? One who in the course of years has followed the relevant discussion with attention could see how Hungarian national unity took shape in this apparently interminable debate which was frequently sidetracked. The dispute over whether cooperative farms were needed, and whether they consitute a good or a bad way of farming, is no longer relevant to the life of Hungarian society. The controversy is now centred on the different ways and means of finding out how the cooperative farm movement might be improved and perfected. This is also proof that a debate in this country is not a sign of crisis but a necessity dictated by development, a means helping to provide the answers to the questions of our age.

The Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party and the government are now looking for ways and means to develop socialist democracy further. Democracy is intended to strengthen socialism, and the strengthening of socialism expands democracy. So, when we speak of the expansion of democracy, we unequivocally think of the development of socialist democracy. The demand for democracy, the ability to make use of it, and a sense of responsibility are inseparable from one another. We know from experience that, just as cultural work was of immense help in establishing the cooperative farm

movement, the development of a socialist democracy also requires that the people possess a steadily improving and growing culture. In town and country, and in every workplace such an outcome demands that the culture and responsibilities of the people grow together with growing possibilities. Democracy increases the people's cultural demands and their culture, while the refinement and culture of the people increase the demand for a socialist democracy and the sense of responsibility necessary to make use of democracy.

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HUNGARIAN UNIVERSITY REFORM

by

BÉLA KÖPECZI

Heaven knows there is hardly anyone in the world today who has never heard of university reform; and if our methods are a little more peaceable than most, the subject itself is still of the utmost concern to us, and one which is exercising our minds at present.

1. Education—Principles and Methods

To begin with we must ask ourselves the purpose of university education. Let me give my own definition first, to clear the ground.

The first problem confronting us is the knowledge to be transmitted. Before 1945 Hungarian universities, generally speaking, followed the Austro-German model. Except for advanced training in technology and agriculture, all the other branches of knowledge were grouped in a single university devoted to theology, arts, the natural sciences, law and medicine. Such a structure is based on the assumption of the indivisibility of all knowledge—a concept which, with the advent of the scientific revolution, has long since lost all validity. The fiction, however, continued to be maintained, partly through force of tradition, and partly as an instrument in enforcing a rigidly ideological and administrative system of centralization. After the downfall of the 1919 Republic of Councils institutionalized religion and extreme nationalism were the dominating cultural influences in the Hungarian university, and its three main aspects, in the form of nineteenth century positivism, political amateurism in science and finally the German "Geistesgeschichte," pervaded the whole curriculum. The last-named of the three, the German *Geistesgeschichte* was indeed adopted by the better professors as the foundation stone for a more modern outlook.

These principles and the methods, therefore, with a few exceptions, dictated the selection of the type of knowledge to be taught in universities. There were, of course, a number of excellent teachers and scholars notwithstanding, who founded new schools of thought and initiated original research.

After 1945 the whole question of the subjects for teaching suitable to universities came to the fore in a radically transformed social and intellectual environment. First of all the ancient structure of the universities was changed. Theological faculties were converted into theological academies attached to their respective denominations, and the medical faculty into an independent university. The lessons of secularisation and of specialization in disciplines were thus put into practice in terms of university structure, but the reform could not stop there. A new concept of academic culture had to be worked out. Following 1945 the introduction to Marxism came with the impact of a real discovery to Hungarian intellectuals. The materialist character of Marxism, its historical approach, its avowed purpose of changing society, greatly attracted both the young—eager to create something new—and their teachers. Not that all teachers accepted it. Even after twenty years of socialist change the percentage of university teachers who are non-Marxists and without party affiliation is very high. In spite of this it can be said that Marxism determined the character of the new view of culture in a sovereign manner.

The achievements of this period were considerable and incontestable. There were also many mistakes. Among others, a certain hard practical approach in terms of the subject-matter of the curricula, examinations, and the future prospects of students, which, together with the introduction of teaching methods more akin to a secondary school than a university, crippled the syllabus and lowered the level of scientific research.

Starting in 1953 we gradually dealt with the damage done by dogmatism. In 1961 a general educational reform, which included higher education, was carried out. The general aims inspiring the reform were as follows: to adapt education more effectively to national economic, scientific and cultural needs; to bring the subjectmatter of study up to date, i.e. a sounder selection, to take modern scientific developments into full account, and finally to renew and enrich the teaching of Marxism in order to provide a valid world concept for young intellectuals. New programmes were introduced along these lines; universities, faculties and professors were given greater independence in their implementation. This led to further specialization in the curricula and a more scholarly choice of subjects. Professors and students were given greater freedom of initiative and personal taste. An effort was made to improve the teaching of the history

of philosophy, psychology, sociology, ethics, aesthetics, and theory of education. An atmosphere of free discussion came into being which made the development of several trends within the same discipline possible, the extension of seminars and practical instruction for instance, or the introduction of sandwich courses by the use of the fifth year to introduce the student to the practice of teaching or scientific research.

Should we be satisfied with the results? Far from it. I believe that the university needs—if not a revolution—at least a process of continuous reform. As far as the store of knowledge which universities impart is concerned, one is perpetually faced by what we call "maximalism". The progress of science leads to the accumulation of new facts and information demanding an unceasing selection and re-selection of the subject-matter. Unfortunately the majority of professors do no more than add new facts to the old, and academic culture is thus distinguished by its pseudo-encyclopaedic character.

Another problem concerns the general orientation of university education. I am increasingly convinced that university education, particularly in the first two years, should be directed towards "the basic formation" of the students, and that specialization should only come afterwards.

The third difficulty concerns the question of human attitudes, based on a scientific world outlook. Here it is of vital importance to create closer links between the general subjects and the more specialized disciplines, in order to give students a well-balanced culture, which excludes philistime barbarism and makes it possible for them to get their proper bearings in society.

To carry out these tasks not only the continuous re-assessment of the content of university education is needed, but equally a radical revision of teaching methods. I believe that seminars and practical work, conducted in small groups would prove particularly useful. Lectures, of course, are still indispensable, but they should not be used as a display counter for learned positivism or bombastic nonsense. Their purpose should be to focus attention on the general lines of development of a given discipline, on the interconnections of various phenomena, and on scientific problems awaiting solution. The number of compulsory hours students are required to spend at the university attending lectures or seminars should be reduced. In certain branches they may amount to as much as 36 to 38 hours a week; the target should be nearer 25. This would allow students to spend more time working on their own, which is essential if the standard of intellectual development and sound specialization is to be raised. Such a change in methods, however, cannot be carried out without certain facilities: well-equipped laboratories and libraries, new premises, and a larger teaching staff.

2. *Scientific Research: Impendiments and Possibilities*

I should now like to turn to the scientific research carried on in the universities. Until quite recently this had been relegated to the background, particularly in certain subjects and certain faculties. It can be explained—in part—by the growth in the number of students and the increase in the day to day tasks of teaching. But it was also due to a general theory of the "division of labour" which then prevailed, and which I believe had increasingly harmful effects. The result was that from 1949 onwards the Academy of Sciences founded a number of institutes, beginning with institutes devoted to the natural sciences and following later with others devoted to the social sciences. That these bodies are far more efficient in certain branches of research than the institutions of higher education—and particularly in team research—cannot be denied. This however does not justify the contraction of opportunities for scientific research in university departments traditionally associated with such work. With the exception of certain departments with a record of excellent work behind them, scientific research by the teaching staff is limited to the compilation of theses for the grade of candidate or for a doctorate, both of them qualifications for further academic advancement. According to official statistics the teaching staff are unable to devote more than 20 per cent of their time to research, and even this is only an approximate figure, since teaching duties will frequently interrupt research and impair its efficiency.

I believe that the university will be unable to discharge its educational task effectively unless the teaching staff is actively involved in contemporary problems of science. How can the recurrent modernization of syllabus and subject-matter be achieved without knowledge of the latest developments and without personal experimentation in the latest developments and without personal experimentation in the latest methods? The recruitment of research scientists, whether we like it or not, takes place at the universities. Can the teaching staff remain indifferent towards the choice made by students or be incapable of guiding them? Many of the university chairs are occupied by excellent scientists, qualified to contribute to the solution of scientific problems, and a small country like Hungary can hardly afford to set up a separate academic institute for every branch of science.

The development of scientific research at the universities goes beyond matters of higher education as such. All over the world—including the socialist countries—we find scientists or scientific institutes or movements attempting to assure themselves a monopoly in a given discipline. While subjectively understandable, such attempts are objectively harmful; the

remedy lies in the provision of other institutes capable of competition. The public has slowly come to realize this fact, and as a result scientific life is being reorganized on a new basis which will allow for competition in research.

3. *The University Structure: Democracy and Efficiency*

All these projects of reform affect the present university structure. The Hungarian university system has always been highly centralized and the dogmatic policies of 1948–1953 reinforced this trend. Since that time several changes have been introduced without, however, making fundamental structural changes. The higher university authorities, the Rector and the Deans of Faculties, are appointed either by the Council of Ministers or by the Minister of Culture. Election of the professors is by secret ballot, by the Council of the University and the council of the faculty concerned, yet they too are appointed by the Council of Ministers, on the basis of this vote. Readers are also appointed by the Minister, but lecturers and assistant lecturers by the Rector. The Rector is advised by a University Council consisting of the Vice-Rectors, deans of the faculties and a certain number of professors. The deans of faculties are similarly advised by faculty councils consisting of all the professors of each faculty. After the Liberation certain democratic measures in the structure of the University were introduced: party, trade union and youth organizations were represented on the University and faculty councils. Centralisation also applied to the content of the curriculum. The curriculum, after consultation, however, with the appropriate university authorities, is prescribed by the Ministry of Culture. Finally, the economic system also acted in favour of centralisation. The expenditure of the University budget was—and indeed still is—governed by a thousand and one rules and decisions of the Ministry of Culture.

The plans for reform envisage a greater independence within the universities themselves, as well as greater independence in their dealings with the Ministry of Culture. The university will have complete jurisdiction over all matters of teaching content, for instance, such as curricula, examinations, methods of teaching etc. It will also have more financial freedom within the limits of its budget.

The basic unit of every Hungarian university is the chair—which might be compared to a department in an English university. Depending on the changing number of students they may have a large or a very small teaching staff attached to them. There may moreover be several chairs in the same

discipline, either by reason of tradition, or because they specialise in different aspects of the subject, as for instance a Chair of Old Hungarian Literature and a Chair of Hungarian Literature of the 19th Century, etc. But these chairs are entirely autonomous and independent of one another. For some time now increasing efforts have been made to introduce some co-ordination among the various chairs in the same discipline or related ones, since this is as necessary for the purpose of teaching as for scientific research, the present divisions being inappropriate. The Faculty of Natural Science, for instance, could well organize institutes designed to co-ordinate the activities of several departments, with laboratories and libraries in common. The position of the Faculty of Philosophical Sciences, which is the equivalent of a British Faculty of Arts, is far more complex: specialization is more developed and the material resources needed for coordination are more limited. We are at present experimenting with a more flexible form of coordination, in which several departments have been grouped together under the control of a council, composed of teachers and representatives of trade union, youth and party organizations, which deals with curricula and plans for scientific research. It is believed in some quarters that these councils should be invested with a greater competence in the choice of personnel and in decisions on finance.

The plans for reform envisage further democratic progress in the form of a more balanced representation of the different categories of teachers and students on the university councils. Certain officers of institutions of higher education will probably be henceforward elected without need of confirmation by the Council of Ministers or the Minister of Culture.

These plans are still under discussion, but it is certain that their implementation will make a decisive contribution to the decentralization of higher education and a more equitable representation of the various interests. All forms of centralism, of course, must not be abandoned; coordination by the Minister at national level, more coordination between the various faculties with the help of the Rector and again between the various Departments through the Dean is essential. Democracy and decentralization must not be allowed to undermine efficiency.

4. The Students: Problems and Solutions

The essential duty of the university is to train intellectuals, conscious as human beings of the problems which confront them personally and the community at large, and capable of advancing scientific, economic and

cultural progress. In addition to the task of transmitting knowledge and arousing interest in scientific research it is consequently the task of the universities to help the individual student as a human being and not merely as a specialist.

As in every country in the world, social and scientific progress has, in Hungary, led to a considerable increase in the number of students. There are nine times as many today as in 1938, some 90,000 in all, including those who have matriculated through evening and correspondence courses. In 1937–1938 there were 15 institutions of higher education; today there are over 90. A marked differentiation has developed within the system of specialized higher education. Alongside the universities and more academic institutions with degree courses extending over four or five years, colleges of advanced technology with two to three-year courses have been established. This has all involved an immense increase in the teaching staff, which has risen from 1,700 to 9,000.

In Hungary changes in the social structure have been reflected in the number, composition and distribution of University students. The socialist state, which works on a system of planning in economic and cultural life, plans university entry on the assumption that a job will be available to every student on graduation. The National Planning Office calculates the numbers of experts required in the foreseeable future, say fifteen to twenty years from the anticipated development figures of the various branches of industry, agriculture, commerce, public service and other sectors. This figure goes to the ministries concerned, which in turn allot these quotas among the institutions of higher education.

University education is open to all, regardless of social status, political affiliation or financial situation. But the planning requirements which demand a specific number of entrants each year involve a stiff entrance examination by which a great number of applicants are eliminated from the beginning.

What are the admission requirements? To begin with, the student's school record. Half the number of points required for admission can be provided from the points awarded by the secondary school or junior technical college the student attended. The entrance examination is both written and oral. Special intelligence tests have also been introduced recently so as to obtain a broader picture of the capacities of the applicant. The oral examination takes place in the presence of a board of examiners nominated by the Dean and composed of teachers and representatives of the Communist Party branch in the institution and of the Young Communist League. Rejected candidates may appeal to the Rector of the university and to the Minister

for a revision of the decision. A high number of applicants have to be turned down every year, particularly in certain very popular faculties. There are always many more applicants than places for the arts and medicine, and more places than entrants in agronomy and for teachers of the natural sciences. Improved vocational guidance at an earlier age should remedy this difficulty, and efforts are being made in this direction.

While the entrance examination is rather severe, the number of students rejected in the first years of education is relatively low. Perhaps it might be desirable that a few more of the less gifted students were weeded out in mid-stream. Lately there have been voices raised in favour of the admission of a greater number of candidates, so to permit more selection during the university years. This is all the more urgent, as the problem of outlets (i.e. the placing of graduates) cannot be tidily and perfectly solved. The planning of future needs cannot go beyond approximate estimates in certain sectors, and the personal inclinations of students are often in conflict with the opportunities offered them. Until recently each student, once qualified, could count on being offered a more or less adequate job. Two years ago jobs were thrown open to competition, which means that vacant jobs are advertised and any number of students can send in their applications—sometimes competing with older and more experienced candidates. The number of jobs available is generally sufficient, but they are not always suitable, or what the young people want. It is, for instance, inevitable that graduates whose parents live in Budapest should refuse jobs in the provinces. The system is consequently far from perfect, but at least it eliminates a mass of unemployed intellectuals, due to bad foresight and incorrect assessment of social needs.

One of the essential elements in the democratization of higher education was the change in the social composition of the student population. Before the war not more than 3.5 per cent of them were the sons of workers and peasants. After the Liberation, what were called the "People's Colleges" made efforts to recruit students from the ranks of young workers and peasants, giving them every possible assistance. This movement did indeed help to create a new stratum of intellectuals who took an active part in constructing the new society. Certain difficulties in the colleges, however gradually, made themselves manifest. On the one hand in the early days of the revolution more emphasis was placed on the political education of these new cadres than on their professional and specialized qualifications, which frequently left much to be desired. And secondly the not unnatural desire of this young student generation to make their voices heard brought them into conflict with the party authorities. This conflict had both political and

ideological aspects; what is certain is that the dogmatic party leadership felt that it was faced with organised opposition. In 1949 therefore, it was decided to liquidate this movement. It must be remembered that "colleges" in Hungary were institutions where the students lived-in as a community. It is true that after 1949 Government measures increased the number of students coming from underprivileged families, but such collective conditions, and indeed very often suitable individual conditions necessary for their education, were not always forthcoming. The swollen and overcrowded student hostels provided no opportunity for this. Following 1953 colleges were again established on a new basis. They have an appropriate internal autonomy and they help those who live there not only with their studies but also with personal problems.

After 1949 the admission of students was by fixed percentage organized on a class basis; 55 per cent of the places were reserved for the children of workers and peasants, including those of former manual workers now in the civil service or in Government posts. The system, designed to make sure that a fair proportion of the underprivileged peasant and working class should have the opportunity of university education, led to greater justice and to a wider range of talent being available. It remained in force until six years ago. It was then decided that social political and cultural changes, including the far wider spread of primary and secondary education, made it possible to abolish this system of selection. Social background or class percentages play no part now in the entrance examination; generally speaking all candidates are selected on the basis of their achievements and general outlook.

Special help, moreover, is still given to the children of workers and peasants. There is no denying that despite the general advance in education children from intellectual homes have the advantage over children from a working-class or peasant environment in preparating for university life. The Young Communist League, which has been especially entrusted with this task, organizes special courses and seminars to remedy this disparity, mainly in secondary schools. The children of workers and peasants today amount to approximately 45 per cent of the whole student figure. The proportion may differ according to the type of university; higher in technical and agricultural colleges, lower in others. At the more academic Eötvös University of Budapest, for instance, with faculties of law, arts and natural sciences, the figure amounts to 25 per cent. There has been considerable discussion and dispute over these figures, which go to the root of university education. Should universities help working-class or peasant children in the upper classes of secondary schools, or should matriculating

at a university be left to complete spontaneity, which may lead to social and cultural injustice?

Practically all of our students receive financial assistance. In the academic year of 1966/67 92.4 per cent of the students in full-time education received some form of aid. Nearly half of these 50,000 students lived in university hostels, and nearly 80 per cent of them ate in university canteens. Some 50 per cent of them have grants. The grant varies according to the parents' incomes. There are thus the following kinds of grants:

1.) social aid
2.) study scholarships
3.) People's Republic scholarships
4.) Grants given by various institutions and enterprises.

40 per cent of the students who distinguish themselves in their studies are given bonuses (150–300 Ft) and, depending on where their families live (Budapest or country), the grant varies from 100 to 350 Ft a month. The best students have People's Republic scholarships (700 to Ft 1000). There are a few married students or others with parents in difficult circumstances, who have exceptional financial difficulties; these are helped with special grants. Nearly 20 per cent of the students, instead of the state grant, receive what is known as a "social scholarship"; it is a subsidy paid by a factory or a farmers' cooperative on condition that the student works there for a certain period after graduation. Altogether 45 per cent of the students pay fees. This depends on the income of their parents (100 to 500 Ft a half-yearly term). The scholarship system is, by the way, being reconstructed at present, and new regulations pay more attention to marks obtained, and to parental incomes.

Nearly 90 per cent of the students become members of the Communist Youth League, which has a special student section. The Communist Youth Organization encourages the students to take part in the social and political life of the country, helps them in their final choice of careers, carries out the duties of a social and welfare organization and protects their interests. The Young Communist League, for instance, plays a decisive role in the allocation of the various grants and allowances; in this matter the university establishment is limited to a purely administrative role. The students' cultural organizations are subsidized by the university, and managed by directors appointed by the Rector. These directors are responsible for the organization and implementation of the programme and for all financial affairs; the choice of the programmes and their activities are organized by the students themselves. The students thus have their own orchestras, choirs, dramatic clubs, groups for painting and sculpture, cinema clubs and so forth. The

students also have Literary, Science and other such societies; the chairman is generally one of the junior lecturers and the best of the papers and lectures which are given there are published. The Young Communist League has delegates in the various councils with a right to take part, to express their views, and vote. Discussions are now going on to give the students a greater say in the planning of the curriculum, examinations, practical work, etc. In the university hostels the warden, appointed by the Rector, is assisted by a student board which organizes day to day life.

A question that is bound to arise is why there is no movement by Hungarian students when protest campaigns of various sorts have broken out in most of the universities of the world. One answer could be that the historical experiences of the Hungarian nation advise prudence or resignation. Personally, I do not believe that the lesson of history is always scepticism or conformism, particularly not for youth. Another explanation is that students who have found it difficult to get a university place try their best to get as good results as possible in their studies. This is as it should be, but it cannot be denied that some of the students are too concerned with their own personal problems. This attitude, which appears to be highly practical, may lead to individualism and to the shaping of a way of life which is opposed to the principal trends in the development of a socialist society. While I would not reject such a possibility, I think that other, more convincing, factors are responsible. First of all a more open-minded and flexible attitude on the construction of the new society recently expressed in the new economic reform, which is of first importance, and also affects the political life of the country. The 1961 educational reform and the measures which followed also made it clear that the university had no desire to cling to outworn institutions and conditions. In this general atmosphere of reform, therefore, students do not represent an isolated group in society.

* * *

I have attempted to describe some of the features of the life of Hungarian universities. What I have tried to indicate is that in a continuously changing society while, science and scholarship keep on growing, universities cannot ossify either. University reforms are always necessary.

THE VIEW OF LIFE OF HUNGARIAN STUDENTS

(An International Comparison)

by

KÁROLY VARGA

1. National Character

National character has been the subject of human speculation for a long time, but systematic research into its nature has only been seriously undertaken in the last twenty to thirty years or so.

Zsigmond Kemény, the novelist, an important figure in the movement for reform and national renaissance in the 1840's, in an essay written in 1843, tried to find the English equivalent of what he considered an obvious Hungarian failing; he compared the Hungarian and English character through the particular forms of electioneering and electoral corruption in the two countries. He found electoral corruption in Britain was far more delicately organized—men angling for a Parliamentary seat would buy quantities of expensive goods from the workshops, retail shops of factories of influential citizens. Hungarian candidates simply made their electors drunk. "The English," he wrote, "play up to the better feeling of the people and save appearances, whereas our bribery involves the rejection of human dignity." In discriminating between the more delicate and the grosser forms of bribery Zsigmond Kemény did not fail to note the difference between an urban-industrial and a feudal-agrarian culture. In other words, he was able to discuss the question of national character in a sociological context, with none of the mystic atmosphere which usually surrounds it. National characteristics have become describable as one element in a given development.

But a national character appears to have certain features which survive into periods of progress and development and are basically unchanged over long periods of history. Such a Hungarian characteristic, for instance, it was claimed, is an inability to support a period of tension, short-term thinking, the lack of constructive continuity, their legendary "ephemeral enthusiasm." In his book "The Wanderer and the Fugitive," written between the two

wars, the philosopher Lajos Prohászka thought this propensity to intense but short bursts of wild enthusiasm was connected with the fact that they have always acted as a buffer between hostile forces, which taught them to isolate themselves physically as well as mentally, with a great deal of suspicion for anything foreign. The early frontier-guard life in wasteland and swamp, and later in border-fortresses, may have developed a quick response to momentary dangers and a disinclination for anything more long-term and constructive. But if so, it proved a vicious circle; isolation led to depression, depression to its economic counterpart of scarcity, continued scarcity to frustration, and hence to the old hot ferment again. Long-recognized characteristics like the fratricidal struggles of the Hungarian people, the failure to unite at the most critical junctures of history, and the tendency to seek any and all pretexts for a quarrel, can easily be attributed to frustration. Or, to put it another way, lacking scope for external expansion as a result of this isolation, our ancestors could only prosper at each other's expense.

This sort of theorizing can be found over and over again in the works of the great national Hungarian writers, busily castigating the sins of their country, or far-sighted statesmen like István Széchenyi, or prophetic lyric poets like Endre Ady—but they can be taken for stereotyped images as yet unchecked by reliably exact research. When I decided to undertake some research on this subject, I made use of the latest techniques of modern sociology, allied to certain principles of Marxist research, such as the principle that within the different classes of a society differences can exist, in terms both of their varying aspirations and a number of concrete facts, such as the effects of a wealth and poverty, for instance, so that unqualified talk of a national character becomes almost meaningless. As Engels clearly realized, an English worker is closer to a Continental worker than to an English employer in a good many ways; but he also understood that even though workers in England or the Continent might be alike in terms of historical materialism, there were differences in their respective patterns of behaviour which could not be disregarded when attempting to comprehend the course of historical development. This is a point he discusses in the introduction to the English edition of *The Development of Socialism from Utopia to Science* where he attempts to discover why the English worker is so disciplined and timorous, and why the Continental worker is so rebellious, in their relations with their respective employers.

It is very clear that comparisons are only valid if we compare workers with workers, employers with employers and students with students. But though this seems obvious it is a rule which has rarely been honoured,

even up to today. People still speak in generalizations like the lying Cretans, the industrious Dutch, and the profligate French. About fifteen years ago A. Inkeles and D. J. Levinson first worked out in detail the *multi-modal* concept of national character foreshadowed in Engels's theories. This concept concentrates above all on the *modal* personality of a nation. The term *modus* covers a statistical notion in contrast with the notion of the average. The average reduces different shades of colour to a neutral grey and obliterates extremes; the notion of *modus* picks out the particular colour predominating in the sum total of all the colours involved—rather like the colour predominating in a garden of mixed flowers. This colour, whether seen from a distance or noticed more closely, characterizes the garden at least as much as the average "general impression." It is clear that in fairly complex societies there is not only one predominating type or modal personality, comprising some 60–70 per cent of the population. There are rather half a dozen such types, each represented by 10–15 per cent of the population. And these types follow no accidental rules, they synchronize in terms of, for instance, income, education and other factors, which are valid for comparison between nations. We can legitimately speak of the modal Hungarian and English worker, the modal Hungarian cooperative peasant and Canadian farmer, and modal Hungarian, Polish and American students.

The chosen subject of this study is a modal character which transcends national frontiers—that of the student. When Hungarian students are compared with Norwegian students, the characters of the two nations are not, strictly speaking, compared. But the method used in the present comparison produces so thorough a cross-section of the patterns examined that—*mutatis mutandis*—the results of the survey give a valid picture of the mentalities of persons growing up in individual national cultures.

2. *The "Ways to Live" System of Charles Morris*

This at any rate, is the belief of Professor Charles Morris, the creator of the approach and method used. He examined the world views of students from the United States, China, India, Japan, Norway, Canada, New Zealand, Pakistan, Italy and England, with the help of his "Ways to Live" questionnaire.[1] He was unable, however, to reach a sufficiently large number of students in the last five countries named, and therefore refrained from any systematic analysis of them. His overall impression was that the choices of "Ways to Live" were so markedly and conspicuously different

1 See Appendix to this article.

in the individual countries that in comparison internal differences can be practically disregarded.

The "Ways to Live" method sprang from a great scientific undertaking in the thirties, the *International Encyclopedia of Unified Science*. Charles Morris took part in the work, as did Bertrand Russell. Morris came to the conclusion that exact mathematical methods can be applied to the socio-humanistic disciplines, and even to questions dealing with moral values and attitudes to life. In the books he wrote between 1940 and 1950, he carried out analyses of world views which he described by various names, such as Apollonian, Dionysian and so forth. Making use of the work of George H. Mead he discovered that these "world views" can be neatly tabulated according to the particular phase in the whole process of action which is given especial emphasis. The Buddhist attitude stresses what Mead calls the *perceptual*, or the meditative-reflective phase, the Promethean stresses the *manipulatory* or manipulative-creative and the Dionysian the *"consummatory"* relishing-consuming phase. Within the original framework of these three basic attitudes, minor particular views of life could be fitted, and in the end the whole was finally rounded off into a system containing 13 alternative world views, or "Ways to Live."

It is this system which has been used by Charles Morris as a basis for research into different cultures in the world in order to discover the extent and degree these "world views" are being accepted or rejected, and which of them predominates in any given culture. Morris discovered that the contemplative tendency predominates, relatively speaking, in Asian cultures, active and consuming tendencies are more favoured in America, and that European culture stands somewhere betwixt and between. He noted, however, that the sharpest contrast between the Orient and the West could be seen in the fact that in Oriental cultures very nearly each of the individual different "Ways to Live" had been given high marks by individual students, while in the West the students had given the different, individual, "Ways to Live" low marks, and reserved their highest marks or highest approbation for the seventh "Way" which can be regarded as synthesizing all the others—the Maitreyan "Way to Live," named after the last incarnation of Buddha—Maitreya—which is still to come, and which will reconcile all contradictions. Cultural diversity—that is, each individual possessing a single different outlook—is characteristic of the East as against psychological diversity—that is, each individual possessing a variety of attitudes— which is characteristic of Western culture.

3. The Hungarian Survey

Armed with Morris's questionnaire, containing 10–15 line resumés of the thirteen "Ways to Live", the Sociological Research Group of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences interviewed 800 Hungarian students. We chose them from three Budapest and two provincial universities: 184 students from the Budapest Loránd Eötvös University (23.2 per cent); 194 from the Károly Marx University of Economics (24.4 per cent); 117 from the Budapest Medical School (14.7 per cent); 124 from the Veszprém University for Chemical Industry (15.6 per cent); and 172 from the Debrecen University of Natural Sciences (22.1 per cent). 55 per cent of them were male students. We were greatly helped by the staff of these universities, as well as by students interested in sociology. All information gathered has been treated as anonymous. Students filled in the forms in groups of twenty; and all they were asked to do was to fill in a number opposite each "Way to Live" to express their approval or disapproval. Strong approval was indicated by a 7, descending to indifference with a 4, down to strong disapproval with a 1. In some cases the students were excused from putting down the subject of their studies where it might subsequently have led to their identification. In addition to information on their university life—number of terms, subjects, scholastic achievements—we asked them to give their home town or region and their parents' occupation, schooling and incomes. We included questions on the students' religious background and whether it had influenced them in childhood and adolescence. 40 students (5 per cent) did not answer this question, 475 classified themselves as Catholics, 185 as belonging to the two major Protestant denominations—Calvinism and Lutheranism—and 24 to the minor Christian denominations, 5 to the Jewish religion and 68 (9 per cent) wrote "none." The last group rather naturally included a higher proportion of those with professional rather than peasant parents. The proportion of those unaffected by religion is above 12 per cent in Budapest and below 3 per cent in Debrecen, which is traditionally called the Rome of Calvinism.

The high proportion of those admitting to religious influences indirectly guarantees the sincerity of the answer to the questionnaire, and it is against this background that one of the findings must be adjudged completely reliable. The passive "allowing oneself to be used," the introverted-disciplined "rich internal world of ideals," and the patient-forbearing-types, "the self waiting in receptivity" characteristic of religious views of life, in the main the "Ways to Live" Nos. 9, 11 and 13, are unhesitatingly rejected by the young people of Hungary.

University staffs were almost invariably very cooperative. There had been some doubt among them over the reliability of the survey. Some wondered whether a method worked out by Western sociologists was valid for the values existing and operating in a socialist society. We explained that the level of symbolic human behaviour on which these phenomena of value reveal themselves contains biological, psychological and ecological elements common to all cultures and societies—but this level contains specific elements characteristic of particular cultures and societies as well. The specific system of values in a socialist society cannot be separated from biological, psychological and ecological factors, or from European and national cultural traditions. We must not consider the part that a socialist existence and consciousness play as finally settled; research into this problem can be a useful instrument in producing an empirical answer to this question.

The fact—which we learned only later—that a similar survey had been quite independently undertaken in another socialist country—Poland—under the direction of Dr. Micieslaw Choynowski, head of the Psychometric Laboratory of the Polish Academy of Sciences, who has exchanged data with us—certainly helped to reduce their doubts.

4. The European Character of Hungarian Values

The table below shows the Hungarian results worked out from the questionnaire, placed between the data from India and the United States.

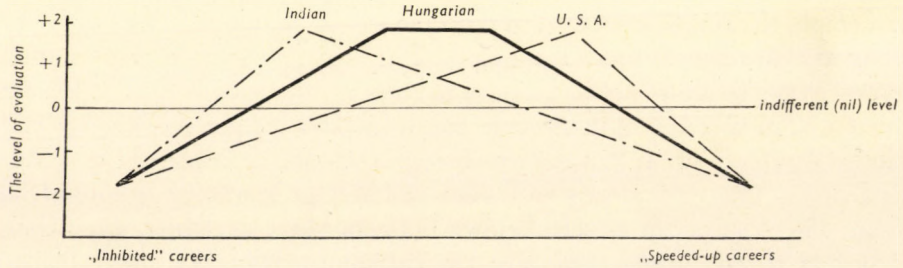
If we want to show the information supplied by the table in the form of a graph, the simplest method of doing so would be to put "Ways to Live" along the horizontal line of a graph. The negative section will contain those "Ways to Live" (Nos. 2, 3, in degrees of intensity) which represent the more "inhibited," or disciplined attitudes, and the positive will contain those "Ways" (Nos. 4, 7, 5, 6) which represent the "stimulated" or active tendencies. The vertical axis will show the average marks given to each of them. The results can be seen below. They, however sketchily, show that, according to the marks they gave the different "Ways to Live," Indian boys are more disciplined than boys in the United States, the latter being more active, and that Hungarian boys favour almost equally the ideals of discipline and collective activity, or, in Morris's terms, the Apollonian and the Mohammedan views of life. (The Mohammedan view of life, in this context, means to surrender the private personality to a considerable degree for the sake of the collective undertaking and collective initiative; it means the desire for struggle and entertainment in common.)

Table 1

The Average Values of the Three National Groups
(male)

Ways to Live*	India N: 724	Hungary N: 427	USA N: 2015
1. Apollonian	1.36	0.66	0.80
2. Buddhist	0.80	0.28	– 0.78
3. Christian	0.91	0.41	0.18
4. Dionysian	– 0.21	– 0.33	– 0.26
5. Mohammedan	0.54	0.51	0.20
6. Promethean	0.93	0.43	0.47
7. Maitreyan	0.46	– 0.06	1.24
9. Epicurean	0.19	0.05	0.26
9. Taoist	– 0.33	– 0.85	– 0.60
10. Stoic	0.98	0.08	0.06
11. (Somewhat disciplined passivity)	– 0.15	– 0.85	– 0.71
12. (Egocentric, enterprising, dynamic)	0.39	0.25	0.33
13. (Somewhat loose passivity)	0.06	– 0.92	– 1.17

The Values of the Three National Groups



The fact that the results of the Hungarian survey occupy an intermediate position between the quality of inhibition and the quality of stimulation, in other words, between discipline and activity, with the addition of various other secondary aspects (each concerned with the opposition of a traditionally inhibited attitude to an urban-industrial, more mobile view of life) indicates

* See questionnaire (p. 41) for definitions and descriptions of these "Ways."

nothing more than the general European quality of the Hungarian national character. The same intermediate position, indeed, is held by the Norwegians and the Poles, though strangely enough both these nations seem a little closer to the traditional Indian pattern than the Hungarians. If we want to go further than the basically European and socialist features of the Hungarian character, and discover qualities which are strictly national, we must compare our findings with the results of the Polish survey.

5. The Inflexibility of the Hungarian Character and Its Explanation

In comparing Hungarian and Polish findings, which revealed a number of similarities—the most significant perhaps being the high marks given to the Promethean "Way to Live"—we noticed some marked differences. In Poland the traditionally disciplined types stand out more vividly (i.e. the Christian or the reflective type, which, in Morris's terms, is called Buddhist). These received far lower marks in Hungary signifying, it seems, that Hungarian youth is more secularized and free from the influence of the values internalized in the older generation. Another marked contrast: the Poles are more individualist and value more highly the synthesis of different qualities in the Maitreyan "Way to Live" (No. 7), which can be described as pluralistic. In Poland low marks were given to the collective Mohammedan "Way," and the flexible-pluralistic-Maitreyan "Way" was very much favoured; just the opposite occurred in Hungary The collective-minded attitude of the Hungarians, indeed, comes first in all the samples: the Mohammedan "Way" is most popular in Hungary. But this is by no means a spontaneous inclination. It should rather be attributed to the demands of conscience, as the following will show. Morris had already carried out an experiment by asking his students to choose not the "Way" they liked best, but the "Way" they thought they ought to have liked. He then contrasted the findings of the P-rating (Personal preference) with those of the O-rating (Ought). We likewise asked our subjects which "Way" they thought was right, and to what extent, in our society. The collective-dynamic (or "energetic group activity" of the Mohammedan "Way to Live," No. 5) look a higher place in their "Ought" values than it did in their personal preference replies, and there were many signs that even there it had spilled over from their sense of "Ought." Even more marked is the divergence that has been observed between Hungarian and Polish findings, and then between Hungarian and all other samples, in reference to the pluralistic-Maitreyan "Way" (No. 7). The Hungarians

here have the highest number of rejections. This betrays an extreme inflexibility, an extreme lack of elasticity. The Maitreyan way is an elastic synthesis; it brings together all the possible "Ways to Live." Its acceptance, therefore, indicates the psychological diversity typical of all Western cultures *except Hungary*. But, now let us look at the other side of the medal, at cultural diversity, or in other words, the high value given to each individual "Way to Live." Here, most paradoxally, the Hungarians stand out again—at the bottom. The Hungarian marks for this category are the lowest in all the nations under examination.

To explain this paradox we have thought over very carefully not only the results of our survey, but also the means employed to achieve them, and have come to the conclusion that the essential finding cannot be challenged: the inflexible character of Hungarian students is both cultural and psychological. On the other hand, the true measure of this inflexibility is smaller than the survey has shown. We have discovered, for one thing, that the overwhelming rejection of the pluralistic-Maitreyan "Way" is typical of only one university—the Budapest Medical University—out of the five surveyed (even though admitting that a certain tendency to reject it is common throughout the Hungarian sample).

Table 2

Marks Given to the Maitreyan "Way to Live" at the Budapest Medical University and Four Other Universities

Universities	Marks							Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Budapest Medical University	25	15	17	15	–	4	–	74
The other four universities	54	53	38	52	51	55	50	353

The other four universities divided their marking of this category into equal numbers of positive (over 4) and negative marks. But the Budapest Medical University gave practically no positive marks at all. This may well be due to the frequent discussions on ethical questions among these students, especially in their youth organizations. A discussion in the national press recently, for instance, centred on whether the doctors of the future, who are assumed to be people with an extremely prosperous career in material

terms before them, are really only the consuming citizens of a socialist society, in other words, whether they are only responsive to consuming values, or whether they are able to make sacrifices for the community as well.

Hungarian students, moreover, and medical students in particular, have somewhat misunderstood the real meaning of the pluralistic-Maitreyan "Way," which is basically an understanding of the need to adapt oneself to the conflicting roles inevitable in complex industrial societies. Young Hungarians have interpreted this as unprincipled jockeying for position, and have in consequence rejected it. When we asked a few students to explain why they had chosen or rejected this or that "Way," an economics student, a girl of 21, who rated the Maitreyan "Way" lowest, said: "I dislike this particular 'Way' because to me it means a double-faced policy. A person living in this manner would be without ideals or principles about the world. One of my acquaintances, a teacher, has a rather reactionary view of life, which few people know. He had an important job in the fifties and still has an important job today. As his teaching job implies, he has to conduct political training courses, which he does without conviction. I know all this, and I think he is a man without character. This behaviour may have its momentary advantages, but to live like that forever is frustrating and destroys one's personality completely." The authoritarian and anti-democratic atmosphere existing before 1956 enabled people to abuse the power they possessed through the proclamation of principles in which they did not in fact believe; but, the young today, as a generation, despise this attitude.

6. *Dominant, Tolerated and Deviant Values*

To sum up the first findings of the Hungarian sample, those discovered through an examination of the marks, the 13 categories break into three main groups, according to their marking. Four "Ways to Live," the disciplined Apollonian, the collective-energetic Mohammedan, the realistic-active Promethean, "the realistic solution of problems" and the altruistic Christian, form the group which received the highest marks. These might be called the creative-humanistic or Socialist values. Arranged into Kluckhohn's scheme, by which all these "Ways to Live" or values can be divided into three groups, called the "dominant," the "tolerated" and the "deviant," they represent the *dominant* values of Hungarian youth.

Six "Ways" occupy an intermediate position. These are No. 12 (individualistic-enterprising and daring), the Stoic (No. 10), the Epicurean

(No. 8), the Maitreyan (No. 7) and—lowest in this group—the Buddhist (No. 2) and the Dionysian (No. 4), in other words, the most inhibited and the most stimulated two "Ways." A certain individualistic-egotistic basic quality is common to this group, reminding one of the values of competitive capitalism. Here the Hungarian sample shows a divided opinion. Again it is for the most part the active and enterprising elements of this group which are most favoured by the young Hungarians, who show little appreciation of the passive or enjoying qualities in these categories. In Kluckhohn's scheme this broad group belongs to the sphere of *tolerated* values.

And what about the third group, that of *deviant* values? Three passive "Ways to Live," with a strongly religious tinge, lag far behind: the Taoist, pantheistic-collective (No. 9), the dreaming-introverted (No. 11), and the-ready-to-be-used-by-others (No. 13). Such a unanimous rejection of the religious categories is hard for the outsider to believe, unless he takes what I have previously pointed out into account, namely, that more than 90 per cent of these young students freely admitted that religion had had an influence on their early selves. When they marked the different "Ways to Live," which carried no identifying labels to indicate the name of the type, they had to obey their own spontaneous reactions: they had no opportunity of considering whether they were discrediting a widely accepted view of life by giving it low marks. The victory achieved by the working and fighting ideals of life given them by their education can be gauged by the unusually fierce rejection of religious-passive attitudes to life.

7. *Comparison by Means of Factor-Analysis*

However, thirteen "Ways to Live" are too many to be easily comprehensible. The interactions of their differences become so complicated when compared on an international level that we are forced to content ourselves with very generalized conclusions on matters of detail which fail to convey their overall interdependence. To avoid this dilemma, i.e. to obtain conclusions lying between the large generalized and the small detailed conclusions, the mathematical and highly technical process of factor-analysis has to be employed. Its logic is based on the obvious fact that the separate "Ways to Live" and the respective marks given to each of them are by no means independent of one another. The student who has given the Dionysian Way (No. 4) 7 marks will obviously be more inclined to give the Epicurean "Way" (No. 8) at least 6, in contrast to the student who has marked the Buddhist (No. 2) or Christian (No. 3) "Ways" highest.

If then, we acknowledge certain connections between the marks given, running into several hundred in all, we observe certain deep-seated tendencies, independent of one another, which determine the surface choice. These processes have been worked out for us on an Elliott 803 computer and prove that our questionnaire was precisely equivalent to Morris's questionnaire, and is therefore valid for international comparisons. The factor-analysis showed that behind the thirteen "Ways to Live" five independent factors can be, as it were, distilled from the thirteen "Ways to Live." I have defined them as follows, using Morris's terms to explain them further.

Discipline — (Social Restraint and Self-Control)
Activity — (Enjoyment and Progress in Action)
Conformity — (Receptivity and Sympathetic Concern)
Sensuousness — (Self-Indulgence and Sensuous Enjoyment)
Introversion — (Withdrawal and Self-Sufficiency)

Each of these factors, or qualities, can be found in all the "Ways," either positively, in a greater or smaller degree, or negatively, in a greater or less minus degree. A positive, high "loading" of the Apollonian "Way to Live," No. 1, and a negative, high minus of the Dionysian, No. 4, can be found in the first factor, discipline.

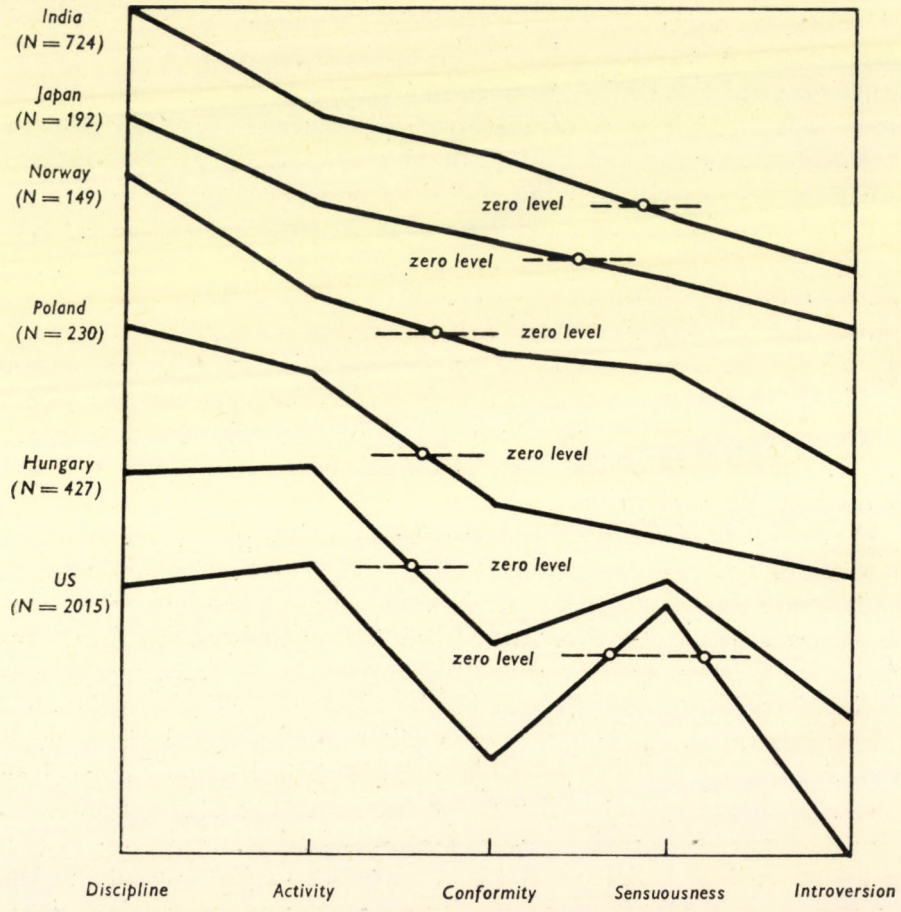
In the factors of discipline and activity all nations gave positive marks. In those of sensuousness and introversion, on the other hand, almost all nations gave very low marks. That is, the young people questioned prefer the opposite of the last two. Morris had already arranged the factors according to their favourable and unfavourable marks. He came to the conclusion that the graph lines expressing the marks of particular nations run almost parallel, almost indeed one along the other. The top of the graph curve is taken by the high marks given to discipline, whereas those given to introversion take the lowest point of the curve. The only exception has been the United States with a zig-zag instead of a downward slope, as seen in Figure 2. Morris did not think it important to pay attention to the differences appearing in the curve of the lines as well as the similarities. In his survey, indeed, the American sample stood completely alone within the group which contained all the other samples.

Attention began to be paid to the differences in directions of the value-slopes in the figure, however, as soon as the Polish and Hungarian results came out. These results were revealed as standing between the value-slopes of traditional societies and the USA.

As to the meaning of the information appearing in Figure 2, the logical order of the slopes of the six lines is determined by the following changes of content. In the upper three samples—representing Indian, Japanese and

Figure 2

The "Value-Slopes" of National Samples Expressed in the Five Independent Factors in the American Factor-Analysis
(males)



Norwegian male students—the value of discipline enjoys an unchallenged monopoly. Its rival, activity, does not really challenge the monopoly of the dominant value in these three samples, i.e. discipline. In the three lower samples, however—representing Poland, Hungary and the USA—the preference for activity gradually rises, equals and even overtakes the marks level of discipline.

Running parallel with this change of direction is the rise of sensuousness on the curves of the lower two samples, Hungary and the USA. Thus it is

Hungary that serves as the transitional pattern from the traditional countries to the markedly positive marking of sensuousness in the USA. The Norwegian and Polish marks are slightly lower, rather closer to traditional.

Three well-defined groups catch the eye where the last two types of attitudes, conformity and introversion, are concerned. India and Japan both rate conformity and introversion relatively high, whereas Hungary and the USA rate both of them low. Norway and Poland are intermediate.

It may be considered surprising that in the light of these complex and yet exact data, empirically and mathematically processed, the values of young Hungarians turn out to be the closest to that of the USA of all the three European samples. The similarity appears in the values of mobility and enterprise on the one hand, and a kind of secular, consuming, attitude on the other. The differences appear in the more individualist (mainly Maitreyan) choices in the USA as opposed to the more collective (in Morris's terms Mohammedan) elements in the Hungarian preferences.

8. *The Value-Structure of Hungarian Students (Male)*

On the basis of the data provided by the value-slopes of the graph lines as well as other information obtained by other research methods (e.g. "interviews in depth"), the "world views" or structure of values characteristic of the modal personality of male Hungarian students can be classified under the three following headings

a. *A Characteristic Rhythm of General Energetic Activity and Emotional Enjoyment*

Several investigators into the Hungarian national character have had recourse to categories such as Hungarian "ephemeral enthusiasm", "idle depression," and "inability to support tension." These stereotyped images of the Hungarian national character seem to be corroborated—as seen in Figure 2—by the information we have gathered: an unusually high figure in the factor of sensuousness. This may be true, but activity ranks extremely high among Hungarian ideals as well. Indeed, it ranks even higher than in the American sample, and takes first place among all the nations so far investigated in so far as approval of activity is concerned. These high activity-values do not corroborate the image of "the Hungarian wasting his energies in the form of emotions," neither do they satisfactorily explain a defensive image which stresses a sense of threatened danger in the Hungarian char-

acter. Our data rather seem to correspond to a tendency to expand and achieve.

The first meaning, then, that high sensuousness and activity values have in common would make it more plausible to accept an oscillating line that runs from high to low expressing the dual nature of Hungarian vitality; its restraint through purposeful Promethean activity, and its stimulation in Dionysian enjoyment. The sense of secular freedom is the common element in both activity and sensuousness, as against the non-relishing and non-active inhibited formalism or timidly passive spirituality which—as we have seen—is to a very large extent rejected by the young people of Hungary.

b. *Collective Existence Passionately Desired but not Completely Harmonious*

The category of activity contains several concrete qualities. Morris has observed that in the Indian sample students coming from the militant Kshatriya-caste have given significantly higher marks to this attitude than the Brahmans. Activity as measured in Morris's system, therefore, has a meaning which materializes in belligerency.

In analysing Hungarian values one cannot ignore the presence of this belligerency in their unusually high marks for activity alongside rational Promethean activity.

It is above all remarkable that our marks for conformity are extremely low. As Figure 2 shows, this is where the Hungarian value-curve reaches its first low-point, almost as low as the low-point of the American curve. This indicates a reserved mentality. At the same time, the figures they give for introversion are so low that only the USA curve, among all the nations observed, is lower. They do not, therefore, seem to be in any sense introverted. On the contrary, they are passionately extroverted, they take a keen interest in others, as if impelled by some inner force towards their fellows, their community. Their inclination towards companionship is not only expressed in the extremely low marks given to introversion, but also in the very high marks they have given to the strongly community-conscious Mohammedan "Way to Live"—the highest of all the nations, the only other socialist sample, Poland, included. This is the "Way" that favours "the merging" in energetic group activity and cooperative group enjoyment and rejects "detachment from the community" more strongly than any of the other 13 "Ways." This mentality, this readiness for relations with the community, together with an incapacity for a real sympathy for other people, is completed by the relatively low marks the Hungarians gave to the quality of discipline.

Hungarian social life, then, is indeed "turbulent." The Hungarians insist on having it, they plunge passionately into it, yet the regulating mechanism—sympathy and discipline—existing in their character are still not strong enough to make them observe the rules of higher social living or even to make it desirable. "Among Hungarians," wrote the poet Gyula Illyés, an excellent authority on Hungarian character, "singing together simply means seeing who can sing louder than the next man..."

c. *The Fear of Exploitation a Motive for Objections to Other People*

Examining the results of factor-analysis it is very probable that the low marks for conformity may largely be connected with the fact that young Hungarians reserved their strongest disapproval for the 13th "Way to Live." "A person should let himself be used. Used by other persons in their growth, used by the great objective purposes in the universe which silently and irresistibly achieve their goal..." This is how the 13th "Way to Live" begins, and it aroused the anger of the male students asked. 221 (52 per cent) marked this as "I dislike it very much," 131 (30 per cent) said "I dislike it," with only 4 (less than 1 per cent) saying "I like it very much" and 46 (10 per cent) "I like it."

It seems that a great dread of being exploited, abused, cheated and ridiculed exists; in a word, that an almost overwhelming lack of self-confidence in three-quarters of those asked lies at the heart of a specifically dual attitude, gregarious yet unsympathetic.

It will not do, however, to re-discover the old stereotyped images of the Hungarian character. Taking our results as a basis, we must now reach beyond them. Low marks for conformity—if we disregard the ineffectual extremes of nonconformity—have a positive part to play. This positive function reveals itself by characteristically lending force to the Promethean activity. It is clear from the studies of David Riesmann, Talcott Parsons and William H. White that achievement-oriented attitudes go hand in hand with inner-directed characteristics, concealing deep-seated purposes with the plans attached for realizing them, the whole system embedded in a creative, productive mentality. Opposed to this we find the outer-directed, conforming type which takes its criteria from popular standards, and lives according to consumption and fashion values, preoccupied with externals. Talcott Parsons and William White have pointed out that among American students the division into these types of character is a factor that significantly affects later academic careers. It can be clearly seen in the Hungarian sample as well. Those who have less intensive courses, for ex-

ample, become correspondingly more gregarious, while those on the other hand, who have too much work to deal with, tend towards the rat-race and individual dislikes and hatreds.

The older stereotyped image of the Hungarian—as laid down by Lajos Prohászka—looks one-sided when applied to contemporary conditions. The mentality, for example, that Prohászka regarded as a perpetuation of ancestral "belligerence in protecting one's rights," the mentality, in other words, which will not endure exploitation or trickery, is only one element in the whole picture. There is more in it than merely a reaction to threat or danger. According to interviews in depth, half of those questioned betrayed an element of the achievement-principle at the heart of this attitude. We cannot, of course, discard the hypothesis that a modified sense of this angle of the Hungarian national character only came into being in recent times inspired by the challenges of an industrial society and, to a significant degree, as an effect of socialist education.

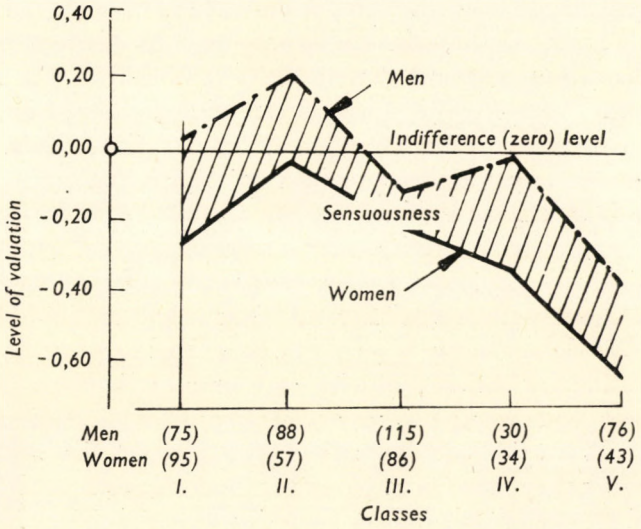
9. *Distribution Within the Hungarian Sample*

In the first place there is a difference between the sexes. This is, of course, completely understandable, since in Hungary as in all other cultures the feminine world view is in several respects radically different from the male. The international comparison was only in a position to deal with men, but on a national level a comparison of the sexes is useful. The first significant divergence in Hungary appears in the question of discipline. Women express greater approval for disciplined living and this, as might be expected, reflects their cultural role as being more reserved, shy and refined than men. The provinces show less of a divergence than the capital, since male students are more sensitive to the values of discipline in the provincial universities than in the capital.

The second significant difference appears in the factor of sensuousness. Men rate the values of sensuousness significantly higher than women, and this difference is consequently present throughout all the data we obtained. Figure 3 shows the marks for sensuousness according to the academic years of the university course.

The figure shows that, on a lower level, the girl students follow the changing attitudes to sensuousness of the men students with an astonishing precision over the years of the university course. First-year students, whether men or girls, betray a certain reservation towards sensuousness at the beginning. One year is enough, however, for the first "emphasis" to dissolve,

Figure 3
Values Measured in th. Factor of Sensuousness Given by Male and Female Students in the Different Years of a University Career



and for the marks of sensuousness to reach their high-point both with men and women students. A sense of security has set the student's inclination to sensuousness free. As the university years go by and the time to leave the university comes closer, both men and women students turn to other value-directions and pay less attention to sensuousness.

Even if the women seem to be more reserved than the men, as has been shown, this does not mean that they do not have close and intimate ties with their social environment. Indeed, their conformity-marks are higher than the men students', which shows that they are more gregarious and more anxious for positive relations with their fellow-students.

When we divide the Hungarian sample according to provinces only one remarkable fact emerges, namely, that students living and studying, or even coming from, the Eastern part of the country (or more precisely, the town of Debrecen) are more extraverted than students living in the Western, Transdanubian region or in Budapest. This tendency is crossed by another, which is that introversion increases in direct ration with the population of the place from which the student comes. Most students who have chosen values indicative of introversion, or more precisely, who have been mild in their rejection, come from Budapest.

The distribution of the sample according to socio-economic stratification

has shown some surprising results in the factor of activity. Our results seem to contradict Morris's findings in the American survey. According to his results as we go down the scale of the fathers' socio-economic status, so the sons' inclination towards activity diminishes. The reverse is the case in Hungary. Whether we consider the income-brackets of the parents or their education we invariably find that students coming from the lower social strata rate the "Ways to Live" connected with the dimension of activity higher than students coming from the middle or higher layers of society. We wonder why. In the data provided by Morris concerning the lowest income-brackets, the curve of activity reverses and begins to rise. Is it possible that the Hungarian activity-curve is a prolongation of Morris's income-brackets, since in Hungary we have students coming from a strata of society too low to figure with statistically sufficient frequency in Morris's questionnaire? We do not know. It would be hazardous to try to fit phenomena from such different societies in with each other. It is more probable that Hungarian students working their way up from such low beginnings possess the impetus of vertical mobility; these young people feel and know that the extra effort they make to catch up with more advantaged students gives them a real chance of reaching the more important positions in Hungarian society and Hungarian industrial production. The reasonable accessibility of their goals, together with the experience of their swift accent, prompt both the men and the women students to make these efforts, once they have embarked upon the drive to better themselves.

The influence of religious backgrounds on the students' values is very complex, in spite of the fact that the process of secularization is far advanced amongst them. A Catholic abandoning his or her religion is non-religious in a different way from the person who once belonged to the small Baptist community or the person who has never been touched by any particular religion at all. It is an amazing fact how very closely both men and women—though indeed, as we have seen, in very different ways—are affected by the influence of their former religion in all five factors or values. Persons still under the influence of the smaller religious communities, for example, produced the highest marks in the factors of discipline, conformity and introversion, and low marks in activity and sensuousness. The opposite is found, though not entirely, in persons untouched by religious influences. They gave the lowest marks for discipline and conformity, and the highest for activity, but in the field of sensuousness and introversion their reactions were extraordinary and surprising. They are almost as ascetic as those who have been under the influence of the various smaller sects, and they are almost as introverted. The explanation may be that the asceticism and reflective

tendencies of those untouched by religions influences correspond with a personal independence which concentrates the energies of the person on creative activity, whereas the aim of religious education—also through asceticism and inner meditation—has been the passive acceptance of the mental harness of a symbolic community. The two major Hungarian churches, the Catholic and the Calvinist, take an intermediate place in the three factors of discipline, activity and conformity among the religious background influences, and in the two remaining values they are lowest in introversion, and highest in sensuousness. They are, therefore, extroverted and the most susceptible to the values of sensuousness.

APPENDIX

The questionnaire taken from *Varieties of Human Value* by Charles Morris, on which the Hungarian Survey was based is published below:

WAYS TO LIVE

Instructions: Below are described thirteen ways to live which various persons at various times have advocated an followed.

Indicate by numbers which you are to write in the margin how much you yourself like or dislike each of them. Do them in order. Do not read ahead.

Remember that it is not a question of what kind of life you now lead, or the kind of life you think it prudent to live in our society, or the kind of life you think good for other persons, but simply the kind of life you personally would like to live.

Use the following scale of numbers, placing one of them in the margin alongside each of the ways to live:

7 I like it very much
6 I like it quite a lot
5 I like it slightly
4 I am indifferent to it
3 I dislike it slightly
2 I dislike it quite a lot
1 I dislike it very much

*Apollonian**

Way 1: In this "design for living" the individual actively participates in the social life of his community, not to change it primarily, but to understand, appreciate, and preserve the best that man has attained. Excessive desires should be avoided and moderation sought.

* In the questionnaire as given to the students these identifying titles were left out.

One wants the good things of life but in an orderly way. Life is to have clarity, balance, refinement, control. Vulgarity, great enthusiasm, irrational behaviour, impatience, indulgence, are to be avoided. Friendship is to be esteemed but not easy intimacy with many people. Life is to have discipline, intelligibility, good manners, predictability. Social charges are to be made slowly and carefully, so that what has been achieved in human culture is not lost. The individual should be active physically and socially, but not in a hectic or radical way. Restraint and intelligence should give order to an active life.

Buddhist

Way 2: The individual should for the most part "go it alone," assuring himself of privacy in living quarters, having much time to himself, attempting to control his own life. One should stress self-sufficiency, reflection and meditation, knowledge of himself. The direction of interest should be away from intimate associations with social groups, and away from the physical manipulation of objects or attempts at control of the physical environment. One should aim to simplify one's external life, to moderate those desires whose satisfaction is dependent upon physical and social forces outside of oneself, and to concentrate attention upon the refinement, clarification, and self-direction of oneself. Not much can be done or is to be gained by "living outwardly." One must avoid dependence upon persons or things; the center of life should be found within oneself.

Christian

Way 3: This way of life makes central the sympathetic concern for other persons. Affection should be the main thing in life, affection that is free from all traces of the imposition of oneself upon others or of using others for one's own purposes. Greed in possession, emphasis on sexual passion, the search for power over persons and things, excessive emphasis upon intellect, and undue concern for oneself are to be avoided. For these things hinder the sympathetic love among persons which alone gives significance to life. If we are aggressive we block our receptivity to the personal forces upon which we are dependent for genuine personal growth. One should accordingly purify oneself, restrain one's self-assertiveness, and become receptive, appreciative, and helpful with respect to other persons.

Dionysian

Way 4: Life is something to be enjoyed—sensuously enjoyed, enjoyed with relish and abandonment. The aim in life should not be to control the course of the world or society or the lives of others but to be open and receptive to things and persons, and to delight in them. Life is more a festival than a workshop or a school for moral discipline. To let oneself go, to let things and persons affect oneself, is more important than to do—or to do good. Such enjoyment, however, requires that one be self-centered enough to be keenly aware of what is happening and free for new happenings. So one should avoid entanglements, should not be too dependent on particular people or things, should not be self-sacrificing; one should be alone a lot, should have time for meditation and awareness of oneself. Solitude and sociality together are both necessary in the good life.

Mohammedan

Way 5: A person should not hold on to himself, withdraw from people, keep aloof and self-centered. Rather merge oneself with a social group, enjoy co-operation and companionship, join with others in resolute activity for the realization of common goals. Persons are social and persons are active; life should merge energetic group activity and cooperative group enjoyment. Meditation, restraint, concern for one's self-sufficiency, abstract intellectuality, solitude, stress on one's possessions, all cut the roots which bind persons together. One should live outwardly with gusto, enjoying the good things of life, working with others to secure the things which make possible a pleasant and energetic social life. Those who oppose this ideal are not to be dealt with too tenderly. Life can't be too fastidious.

Promethean

Way 6: Life continuously tends to stagnate, to become "comfortable," to become sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought. Against these tendencies, a person must stress the need of constant activity—physical action, adventure, the realistic solution of specific problems as they appear, the improvement of techniques for controlling the world and society. Man's future depends primarily on what he does, not on what he feels or on his aspirations. New problems constantly arise and always will arise. Improvements must always be made if man is to progress. We can't just follow the past or dream of what the future might be. We have to work resolutely and continually if control is to be gained over the forces which threaten us. Man should rely on technical advances made possible by scientific knowledge. He should find his goal in the solution of his problems. The good is the enemy of the better.

Maitreyan

Way 7: We should at various times and in various ways accept something from all other paths of life, but give no one our exclusive allegiance. At one moment one of them is the more appropriate; at another moment another is the most appropriate. Life should contain enjoyment and action and contemplation in about equal amounts. When either is carried to extremes we lose something important for our life. So we must cultivate flexibility, admit diversity in ourselves, accept the tension which this diversity produces, find a place for detachment in the midst of enjoyment and activity. The goal of life is found in the dynamic integration of enjoyment, action, and contemplation, and so in the dynamic interaction of the various paths of life. One should use all of them in building a life, and not one alone.

Epicurean

Way 8: Enjoyment should be the keynote of life. Not the hectic search for intense and exciting pleasures, but the enjoyment of the simple and easily obtainable pleasures: the pleasures of just existing, of savory food, of comfortable surroundings, of talking with friends, of rest and relaxation. A home that is warm and comfortable, a chair and a bed that are soft, a kitchen well stocked with food, a door open to the entrance of friends—this is the place to live. Body at ease, relaxed, calm in its movements, not hurried, breath slow,

willing to nod and to rest, grateful to the world that is its food—so should the body be. Driving ambition and the fanaticism of ascetic ideals are the signs of discontented people who have lost the capacity to float in the stream of simple, carefree, wholesome enjoyment.

Taoist

Way 9: Receptivity should be the keynote of life. The good things of life come of their own accord, and come unsought. They cannot be found by resolute action. They cannot be found in the indulgence of the sensuous desires of the body. They cannot be gathered by participation in the turmoil of social life. They cannot be given to others by attempts to be helpful. They cannot be garnered by hard thinking. Rather do they come unsought when the bars of the self are down. When the self has ceased to make demands and waits in quiet receptivity, it becomes open to the powers which nourish it and work through it; and sustained by these powers it knows joy and peace. To sit alone under the trees and the sky, open to nature's voices, calm and receptive, then can the wisdom from without come within.

Stoic

Way 10: Self-control should be the keynote of life. Not the easy self-control which retreats from the world, but the vigilant, stern, manly control of a self which lives in the world, and knows the strength of the world and the limits of human power. The good life is rationally directed and holds firm to high ideals. It is not bent by the seductive voices of comfort and desire. It does not expect social utopias. It is distrustful of final victories. Too much cannot be expected. Yet one can with vigilance hold firm the reins to his self, control his unruly impulses, understand his place in the world, guide his actions by reasons, maintain his self-reliant independence. And in this way, though he finally perish, man can keep his human dignity and respect, and die with cosmic good manners.

Way 11: The contemplative life is the good life. The external world is no fit habitat for man. It is too big, too cold, too pressing. Rather it is the life turned inward that is rewarding. The rich internal world of ideals, of sensitive feelings, of reverie, of self-knowledge is man's true home. By the cultivation of the self within, man alone becomes human. Only then does there arise deep sympathy with all that lives, an understanding of the suffering inherent in life, a realization of the futility of aggressive action, the attainment of contemplative joy. Conceit then falls away and austerity is dissolved. In giving up the world one finds the larger and finer sea of the inner self.

Way 12: The use of the body's energy is the secret of a rewarding life. The hands need material to make into something: lumber and stone for building, food to harvest, clay to mold. The muscles are alive to joy only in action, in climbing, running, skiing and the like. Life finds its zest in overcoming, dominating, conquering some obstacle. It is the active deed which is satisfying, the deed adequate to the present, the daring and adventuresome deed. Not in cautious foresight, not in relaxed ease does life attain completion. Outward energetic action, the excitement of power in the tangible present—this is the way to live.

Way 13: A person should let himself be used. Used by other persons in their growth, used by the great objective purposes in the universe which silently and irresistibly achieve their goal. For persons and the world's purposes are dependable at heart, and can be trusted.

One should be humble, constant, faithful, uninsistent. Grateful for the affection and protection which one needs, but undemanding. Close to persons and to nature, and secure because of devotion. One should be a serene, confident, quiet vessel and instrument of the great dependable powers which move to their fulfilment.

Instructions for ranking your preferences: Rank the thirteen ways to live in the order you prefer them, putting first the number of the way to live you like the best, then the number of the way to live you like next best, and so on down to the number of the way to live you like the least:

Final Word:... If you can formulate a way to live you would like better than any of the thirteen alternatives, please do so...

Sex... Age... Height... Weight...

If you have a physical disability, please describe it:

Where was your father born?

Where was your mother born?

To what religious group, if any, did your parents belong?

In what place did you spend your childhood?

The population of the above place was

over 500,000
between 100,000 and 500,000
between 25,000 and 100,000
less than 25,000

To what income group did your parents belong in the community in which they lived:

upper income group
upper middle income group
middle middle income group
lower middle income group
lower income group

Do you feel that our society is satisfactory for the development and expression of your own particular abilities and wishes? Why or why not?

ENDRE ADY

POEMS

A STROLL IN THE COUNTRY

Silence all round, and I stroll in silence
across this small old Guignol-country
rinsed out by grubby autumn floods
and weeping eaves of each thatched cottage.
And perched on the crest of this great quiet,
strutting and swaggering, the peacock's envy,
a vulgar, all-usurping, gun-clutching
blackguardly rout of hunting gentry.

Here and there the gloomy thrust
of factory chimneys and urban towers:
how many crippled, begging, slaving
in Sin, live silent there in tears.
And heroes from old savage wakes
dress up to gnaw man's-heart today,
and serfs that once rebelled are nowhere,
they live serfs still if not swept away.

They are living still, but their soul is Silence,
there is silence, yes, but never such silence:
from half-a-country's choking breasts
revenges rattle, black and scarlet.
Town greets village with silence-sign,
a terrible word lurks dumb in these emblems:
soundless pit-shafts with damped-down curses
hoard their hellish unheard-of engines.

Silence will redeem everything here,
explosions dream in its deaf lap,
and this little thousandfold-strangled
land will explode. Let the usurpers clap
the grateful levy of this cold and silent
soil to their hearts, winter-secure:
at a flash, like an avalanche, unasked
the fury of buried guns will roar.

(1912)

A GRACEFUL MESSAGE OF DISMISSAL

Let the spell break a hundred-and-first time
that has broken a hundred: I dismiss you yet again
for ever, if you believed I still held you dear,
and believed one more dismissal stood in line.
A hundred-times-wounded, here, I throw at you
the sumptuous king's-robe of my forgetting you.
Wear it, for the weather will come colder,
wear it, for I am sorry for us both,
for the huge shame of such unequal fight,
for your humiliation, for I don't know what,
and for you I am sorry, for you alone here.

How long, how silently it has been like this:
how often, to reassure you in your fate
by dazzling favours, you were given a golden
Leda-psalm, sent white-hot to the fairest
of the fair. I received nothing, withdrew nothing:
it was my grace to give you false belief
in kisses "wont to wanton otherwhere"
and loves I was "wont to love otherly":
and I am grateful for all these embraces,
and despite everything I thank such wisps
of Leda-gone as any man can thank
on leaving behind him an old listless kiss.

And for how long I have not sought you out
in gritty past, in muddy present, how long
since I took leave of you, on that slave-track
where your sex steps into its circumscribed fate.
For how long now I have looked for nothing
but what you might keep of my splendid self,
of the magical attributes my verse drew youwards,
so that you can find consolation, lonely, loving,
in having existed too, as well as the man
who left a world unclaimed at last to hang
adornments from his store upon a woman.

From this proud breast "wont to be gaping great",
I had to see your stylish, majestic fall—
oh not the bitch-revenge of a jilted piece
who sets a raging ambush for her venging-mate:
not anything to mock your poor scant self
since you go branded by my Croesushood
and your once-been-mine was a belief for you,
to pass so deftly none can sense or tell,
the one in whom I planted my embrace
so that she too might take delight in it,
she who had been the merest question-mark
and needed me alone to find fulfilment.

Now will you frou-frou down, well-wilted flower
fallen from its dust-smothered prayer-book,
or will you rush about and rub threadbare
your borrowed halo, your sad bridle's power,
and what at last trembles to its blessing in a girl,
my own self-idolizing act of prayer?
I ask Fate now to ask your fate to leave
thinking it can twist round the fate in my stars,
and I am easy whether flood or fire devours
you, for through me you live, I saw you first
and you are long dead long out of my eyes.

(1914)

Translated by Edwin Morgan

ENDRE ADY

1877–1919

by

DEZSŐ KERESZTURY

The Background

Endre Ady died fifty years ago on January 12, 1919, in the turbulent days of the collapse of old Hungary and the transient victory of Count Mihály Károlyi's republican revolution. He was one of the leaders in the social and spiritual transformation of Hungary which had begun to take shape just before the turn of the century. The nation mourned him to a man, and a huge crowd followed him on his last journey. The heated debates which had raged around his personality, his journalism and his poetry seemed to subside; Hungary in the throes of long overdue reforms looked on the poet as the spokesman embodying in visionary words her problems of existence.

The political and public commitment of major Hungarian poets has always been more marked than that of the poets of the West. And this is particularly true of Endre Ady. Without some knowledge, consequently, of the Hungarian background important aspects of his poetry remain inaccessible. He came of that gentry class which regarded itself as the embodiment of thousand-year-long Hungarian history: his ancestors were impoverished noblemen. Up to the sixteenth century Hungary had been a major power in Eastern Europe. With her overthrow as an independent kingdom, however, she had become the battlefield or the possession of foreign powers, and in succeeding centuries she only attracted world attention through her struggles for independence. In 1867 the Hapsburg Empire had been transformed into the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy. In Hungary, becoming independent as a sister-state and undergoing rapid industrialization, power, based on common interest, was in the hands of the alliance between feudalism, appealing to its historical privileges, and capitalism, coming increasingly into its own. A section of the ruling classes had lapsed into a rigid, lifeless conservatism. Other members of these classes had cut themselves free from their traditionally provincial way of life only to lead a rootless

life in the big towns and cities. A third group, newcomers of Austrian, Slovak and Jewish origin, were barely assimilated. Though enfranchised, the peasantry had been left to fend for themselves in the subsequent period of free enterprise, and the more adventurous had emigrated to America. The expansion of industry had produced growing masses of workers slowly coming to political consciousness. The first demonstrations of organized workers and the agrarian socialist movement had taken place. National and minority feelings had flared up from time to time. All this had inevitably foreboded revolution.

The forces working for change found their expression in a literature created by exceptionally talented writers. The revolution in letters allied to a new revolutionary outlook in politics brought about new standards of aesthetic values. Ady, the outstanding poet-leader of this revival, appeared as a revolutionary at once in poetic expression, language, attitude and politics.

Controversies

Acrimonious controversies over Ady broke out anew shortly after the failure of the revolution and the poet's death. The Hungarian opposing camps inside and outside the borders of the territorially truncated country fought over the dead poet and his living work as opponents had once fought over the body of Patroclus. Those who accused him of obscurity, immorality and treason carried on the battle with great bitterness against those who cherished him as the reviver of poetry and as a true and stainless fighter for social justice.

Ady regarded himself as a typical representative of his people. This knowledge continued to inspire his life-work. In a provocative poem announcing his poetic faith (*Góg és Magóg fia vagyok én. . .*—"I am the son of Gog and Magog. . .") he wrote in a famous final passage that though his poetry may be damned by the conservative nationalists, "still it is triumphant, still new and still Hungarian."

Coming as it does from a Hungarian poet this much-commented line may strike an almost comical note for the non-Hungarian reader. Why should the obvious be emphasized with such provocative vehemence? And why is what is natural provocative? It must be borne in mind, however, that centuries of foreign domination had alienated native Hungarian culture or replaced it with an alien culture. In a Hungary craving for revival, with revolutionary changes ripening, a simultaneous struggle was being waged for social reform and national independence. In this stuggle

it was only natural that a vigorous voice raised for the right of the Hungarians to their own culture, morality, independent nationhood and politics, in other words, for the freedom to express the true spirit of the nation, should have found a wide public response. Especially if we remember that Ady was one of those who revolted against the superficial veneer of patriotism as passionately as against pervasive foreign influences. They looked for the sources of the authentic Hungarian personality in living memories of bygone centuries, and still more in the ancient culture submerged and fixed deep in the life of the common people.

The Danube Region

They included the culture of the neighbouring Danube peoples in this traditional folk culture, the culture of the peoples who had so often been made to fight against one another in the course of their history. Hence the dialectic of Ady's view of Eastern Europe. On the one hand: "The Danube region attracts thunderbolts; a pillory of shame for half-men, small half-nations." On the other: "Why in the end is not one strong will born of a thousand benumbed desires? Since Hungarian, Rumanian, Slav sorrow remains for ever the same sorrow." The "Hungarian Jacobins," as Ady called his ideological comrades-in-arm, meant the oppressed classes which were to be liberated in the Danube basin to play a major role in the fight for national independence.

Ady was no active revolutionary. In his writing the heritage of national liberation movements was fused with thoughts and experiences arising out of contemporary social struggles. He wrote and sang not only of the great revolts and uprisings of the past, not only of the misery and rebelling anger of the peasantry; he was also the first Hungarian poet to write about the proletariat in his poetry. Nonetheless he did not identify himself with any of the organized revolutionary movements: he considered himself an exceptional individual, a person apart. His entire poetry was informed with the worship and agony of reason. His view of life and ethics were new in a revolutionary way; and the expression of this unrestrained individualism, this consciousness of his genius was likewise revolutionary. He called himself "a faun-like rustic Apollo" and "the scion of King Midas," "tomorrow's hero," "death's kinsman," "a bound soul" and a "prince of rapture," "the martyr of the holy Orient" and "the wanderer of the virgin peaks," "the poet of the Hortobágy *puszta*" and "the lost rider," "the striker of flame" and "the Hungarian Messiah"—and how many other things besides! He

never considered poetry a craft, but always as a form of expression: "I am the master, poetry nothing but a bedizened servant." He touched every painful and disquieting sore in contemporary Hungarian life; it was this quality of his poetry that has made it an inspiration for the Hungarian reform movements, a Bible for the Hungarians at home and the Hungarians scattered through the world.

"The Hungarian Hell"

He started his career with the treadmill of provincial papers, wild revels and carousings, aimless and meaningless love affairs. A longer trip to Paris and through Italy made him conscious of himself: his experiences there included a liberating ill-fated love, political radicalism, a broadening outlook through European horizons and an acquaintance with modern poetic expression. Just as Ady changed the name of his love from the middle-class Adél to the mythological Leda, making a symbol of it, so he turned the traditional Hungarian romantic motives of the *puszta*, the horse, the watering well, the *fokos* (a kind of long-helved axe or spontoon) and the county hall into symbols evocative of "the Hungarian hell," including the objects world capitalism had brought in its train. He soon made his name as a journalist. But his real pioneering work was done in poetry. The birth of modern Hungarian poetry is justly reckoned from the dates of publication of his first three volumes *Új versek* (New Poems, 1906), *Vér és arany* (Blood and Gold, 1907) and *Az Illés szekerén* (Elijah's Chariot, 1908). All the problems of modern existence are expressed in his poetry, with the help of a system of symbols in which elements of the most ancient and most modern mythologies, superstitions, faiths and symbolisms are combined. His is a poetic world at once imaginative and provocative, unapprehensible and fascinating, prolific, yet crystalline in structure. His language both flows freely and is as concise and mysterious as runes; now trivial to the point of banality, now majestic and arcane as mystical liturgies. The language of Ady's poetry is the idiom of modern poetry, complex, unhackneyed, allusive and oblique.

Incomprehensibility?

From this the reader may begin to see why this kind of poetry is so hard of access, and why in the renewed discussion on Ady's work the charge of "incomprehensibility" has been levelled once more, on two different

grounds. In Hungary his poetry was received with astonished incomprehension or zealous enthusiasm, but in both cases with the kind of perplexity all major innovators have to face. Abroad the specifically Hungarian character of his poetry hampers or prevents understanding: not merely the fact that his poetry is full of references to contemporary topical events in Hungarian life, but also the fact that an integral part of his poetic system of symbols is unknown to the western reader. I emphasize "western" because, as I said earlier, the peoples of the Danube basin find him much more comprehensible, and easier to assimilate and his impact on them has consequently been considerable. To clarify every aspect of his poems would need the same sort of annotation and explanation for the uninformed reader as we need for the *Divine Comedy*.

In the last decade of his short life Ady's poetic horizon widened greatly. In his later volumes—*Szeretném, ha szeretnének* (I Would Like to Be Loved, 1910), *A minden titkok versei* (Verses of All Secrets, 1910), *A menekülő élet* (Fugitive Life, 1912), *A magunk szerelme* (Self-Love, 1913), *Ki látott engem?* (Who Has Seen Me? 1914)—the themes of the first volumes appear again and again. This is all the clearer since Ady always organized his volumes around cycles of poems, and the same themes re-appear and show their resemblances to one another. Three of these themes, however, were particularly significant and developed in richer and more completely expressive forms.

Love and Death

The love themes became more concrete and imbued with even greater agony. He had married, and he seemed to have found repose in "the haven of young arms." But the shadow of increasing gloom and the resigned anticipation of death fell even on these poems of happy consummation.

His philosophical poetry might seem at first glance the disconnected, delirious confessions, ravings, prophecies of a wild barbarian sage. In reality they are the expressions of the metaphysical agonies, the contemporary frustration and search for faith of the whole of European civilization. "Unbelieving, I believe in God"—this might be said for all of them. These poems gave occasion for more than one critic to rank him among the great religious poets of the century; although, or because, this religious inspiration is free from all the limitations imposed by churches, and a kind of early existentialism plays at least as important a part in it as living Christian traditions. The system of symbols in these poems may therefore be more easily accessible to the Western European reader, since the symbols used

are common to all Christianity, and are becoming increasingly well-known in modern literature, especially those found in the Scriptures and in literature, from Nietzsche to Rilke.

The Dilemmas of Hungarian Destiny

The third theme—the dilemmas of the Hungarian destiny—is less accessible, if indeed at all. In this sphere, I repeat, there are many symbols and allusions which are common to Hungarian and East European history. During the First World War Ady, turning against the new Behemoth, total war, warned and wept for Hungary and humanity slipping down on a doomed slope. As he was opposed to the authorities who waged the war he was unable to publish new volumes of poetry for several years. His last collection *A halottak élén* (In the Vanguard of the Dead, 1918) published while he was still alive, contained a selection of the poetic harvest of those four years. This marked the peak of his career. Dying, he forced his people's destiny and his own to face the ultimate metaphysical powers, threw the authority of his genius into the scales against the horror of the war. His anti-war poetry reached its highest peak in these apocalyptic poems, which expressed the sufferings of the Hungarian people and mankind drowning together in a whirlpool of barbarism. "Poor men kill," he wrote, "do nothing but kill. In their fevered dreams they make peace and are happy. Rising in the morning they rage again, die and are damned, grow down into savage beasts. Gallows go up in Death's fields, fat carrion crows sit atop them gorged with dead flesh, they fly off and back. Only men do not tire of death."—"Now is God's famous son, Man, the shame of all the beasts And the prophets themselves can only gibber. A yet deeper Hell, yet more Nothingness—grant us this, grant us this, you far-famed God of Heaven!"

The Problem of Translation

It is difficult to draw a convincing portrait of Ady for the writers and critics of other nations. This is not merely because his problems, his system of symbols, and his idiom are closely involved with the life and history of the Hungarian people, but also because those values of his poetry which extend beyond this strictly limited world—those which are universal—have no parallel. In part, because the storm of time blew over them and fanned the sparks which had only barely begun to glow in his poems into flames

elsewhere. Partly, however, because they represent innovations which have only reappeared in isolated examples of the newest poetry. His contemporaries considered him influenced by the French moderns. For a time he too regarded himself as one of the Symbolists, but in fact they acted on him rather as releasing agents. In Ady's mature poetry Baudelaire's ascetic adoration of beauty, Verlaine's softly vibrating music, Apollinaire's playful surrealism, Mallarmé's taut abstraction are all completely transformed. Ady was their contemporary, not their follower. Professor C. M. Bowra in his excellent and convincing book, *The Creative Experiment*, mentions seven poets, Apollinaire, Mayakovsky, Pasternak, Eliot, Lorca, Alberti and Kavafis as the major pioneers of the new poetry. We Hungarians think Ady is the eighth. Not only because he raised lyric poetry of national inspiration to universal heights, but also because he arched our age's poetic metaphysics of over dizzying ancient depths. Of the seven poets mentioned six used world languages; the Alexandrian Kavafis is so ascetic in his means of expression that he is relatively easy to interpret. But only one or two of Ady's poems have been successfully and adequately translated, and these are only valid and really understandable in terms of his whole poetry: his life work has rightly been called the creation of a poetic cosmos in which everything is related to everything else and the whole is more than the sum of its parts. And who would dare, or wish, or be able to undertake to translate the whole?

THE IMPORTANCE AND INFLUENCE OF ADY

by

GYÖRGY LUKÁCS

I suppose it follows from the Hungarian situation that the true revolutionary is not a typical Hungarian phenomenon. I cannot analyse this further within the scope of this study, but it is certainly connected with the specific nature of Hungarian development and the fact that in the 1848–49 revolution the gentry filled the role which the lower middle classes and the proletariat filled in France. With the development of capitalism the gentry went steadily downhill and the potential revolutionary elements which were still part of its make-up in 1848–49 increasingly declined. Even the objectively-minded progressive movements, the bourgeois and labour movements adapted themselves to this peculiar state of Hungarian development. Now under true revolutionary conditions a great man always appears—personified by Petőfi[1] in 1848 and at the turn of the century by Ady—combining in themselves all that should have existed in Hungary, but in fact they had no real group of adherents or followers. I believed, and I still believe, that no matter how enthusiastic people were about Ady and made use of him as a battering-ram against reaction, he remained isolated, even within the movement connected with *Nyugat*.[2]

The situation was roughly the same in 1848, under quite different circumstances of course, and Petőfi too was an isolated figure at the time. Ady saw the situation clearly. It would be a forced *post facto* assertion, without justification, to maintain that there was an important political left wing in Petőfi's 1848. The kind of left wing represented by Marat and Robespierre in France simply did not exist in the Hungary of 1848. And still less at the beginning of the twentieth century, in that period of transition, the period of *Nyugat*. It should be remembered that the famous article

[1] Sándor Petőfi (1823—1849). Hungary's great revolutionary poet.

[2] *Nyugat* (West), literary periodical published from 1908 to 1941. All significant poets, writers, philosophers and artists of that age were contributors to *Nyugat*.

by Ignotus[3] against what he called "persecutional aesthetics" demanded no more than that the contributors to *Nyugat* should receive acknowledgement and not only the official Hungarian literary establishment. It was never its purpose to oppose or undermine Hungarian officially sponsored literature. Ady, alone, had this purpose in mind at that time, and while, at best, there were writers who sympathized with and defended Jászi[4] and his political party, and others, attracted by the labour movements, who turned to Austro-Marxism, Endre Ady was a unique phenomenon from a political point of view. Although he captivated many of his readers time and time again, he never had a broad mass following in Hungary at that period. I think that one must start from this point for a proper assessment of Ady's importance, for it explains the tension in Ady's poetry, without parallel in the literary work of any other writer of this age. The others were either of Jewish origin and concurred—with slight leftist leanings—in the compromise of the Jewish bourgeoisie, or came from gentry or half-gentry families and did not want to sever their links with their origin. In the case of Babits,[5] for instance, this was particularly clear.

Those who did not find the compromise acceptable did not take what might be described as a specifically Hungarian stand: Ervin Szabó,[6] for one, was really in the opposition and sought a remedy for the opportunism of the Hungarian workers' party in French syndicalism. Or let me take my own case: I tried to reconcile Ady's "faith in protest, mission in veto" with Hegelian dialectics. This sort of experiment naturally, could not be expected to have much effect, and consequently the peculiar situation arose whereby Ady, the great battering-ram and standard-bearer of *Nyugat* was, in point of fact, isolated within *Nyugat* itself. I think we have to be fully aware of this paradox.

The history of Ady's influence is an interesting question that still has to be written. It starts with a thumping lie: the line that, starting with Dezső Szabó[7] after 1919, wanted to turn Ady after his death into a Hungarian nationalist. This, of course, is absolutely untrue, for it was just Ady who was the first Hungarian poet to see the connection between the fate of Hungary and the national minorities. Petőfi was not conscious of this in

3 Ignotus (1869—1949). Journalist and poet, one of the founders and editors-in-chief of *Nyugat*, an enthusiastic supporter of Ady. Lived abroad from 1919 to 1948.

4 Oszkár Jászi (1875—1957). Historian and journalist, leading left-wing politician. Head of the Radical Party. Left Hungary during the Republic of Councils. After 1926 he lived in the USA, where he was a professor of sociology at Oberlin College.

5 Mihály Babits (1888–1941). He and Ady were the great Hungarian poets of that age.

6 Ervin Szabó (1877–1918). Historian, librarian, left-wing social democrat leader, Marxist sociological writer.

7 Dezső Szabó (1879–1945). Novelist and pamphleteer, had a considerable literary influence between the two world wars. His ideas were nationalist and racial.

1848; he had no realization of this problem as Ady and one other had—Béla Bartók—the only other person in Hungary to be aware of it. The fact that Bartók extended his work of collecting folk songs to Rumanian and Slovak territories amounts to the same awareness in the sphere of music as Ady's more general perception. Bartók's music was a protest against the kind of Gypsy music the gentry favoured; it was anti-gentry, not anti-Rumanian or anti-Slovak Magyarism. In this respect—although it seems that they did not meet personally or at least were not closely associated with each other—there are many common traits in Bartók and Ady. Hence, Dezső Szabó's plan was doomed to fail. What demonstrates the poet's real place, and I consider it an interesting piece of literary evidence, is the fact that Ervin Sinkó's[8] revolutionary novel *Optimisták* (Optimists) contains a number of young characters who constantly refer to Ady. In the Sinkó–Révai[9] revolutionary circle in which the scene of this novel is laid, Ady was a living influence in 1918–19. It was in all probability not the only group of this kind, though the only one that left evidence in the form of literature behind it.

It is very important in considering the development of Ady's influence that, in my opinion, all revolutionary movements ceased again after 1919. In the period that followed 1919 even the most Leftist poets were inclined to compromise. For this reason I find István Vas's[10] autobiography of great interest, for it reveals the petty-bourgeois, compromising nature of Kassák[11] even more clearly than Kassák's poetry itself. At that time Ady was even more of an isolated figure with a single echo—devoid of the Ady kind of social problems—resounding in the poetry of Attila József.[12] The poem Attila József wrote in memory of Ady calls up the memory of Ady the revolutionary; in a poem of Attila József, as in a great poem of Endre Ady's, stones crash against castle windows, and this expresses the only true continuity from Ady to be encountered in Hungarian poetry. I do not deny

8 Ervin Sinkó (1898–1967). Hungarian novelist who lived in Yugoslavia, and was a university professor in Novi Sad. In the inter-war years he emigrated to Paris, where he moved in the circle of Romain Rolland, Barbusse and Mihály Károlyi. His more important novels deal with the Hungarian revolution in 1919, and the Moscow trials in the Stalin era.

9 József Révai (1898–1959). Politician, journalist, historian and essayist. Foundation member of the Hungarian Communist Party. Lived in Moscow from 1934 until the liberation of the country. From 1949 to 1953 Minister of Education, he put into practice the Stalin–Zhdanov policy in literature and art. Author of several studies on Ady.

10 István Vas (b. 1910). Poet, translator, on the editorial board of *The New Hungarian Quarterly* and a frequent contributor. His poems appeared in Nos. 23 and 29, and an essay on Apollinaire in No. 34.

11 Lajos Kassák (1887–1967). Poet, novelist, painter, left-wing socialist. Between the two world wars was a pioneer of Hungarian avant-garde art and letters. See his poems in Nos. 23 and 28, and parts of his autobiography in Nos. 19 and 31.

12 Attila József (1905–1937). Great Hungarian poet in the period between the two world wars. See his poems in No 31 in Edwin Morgan: "Modern Hungarian Poetry."

that there have been disciples of Ady among the revolutionary elements of the Communist Party; it is beyond dispute that Révai was one of Ady's most intelligent followers. After 1945, however, the revolutionary movement promptly became a manipulated movement. An excellent—unfortunately unpublished—study by Ferenc Donáth[13] describes how all political parties, including that of Rákosi, agreed to extinguish the revolutionary councils about to be formed east of the river Tisza, for the aim of these councils was to become a second power against the Debrecen National Assembly. Revolutionary fervour, full of the illusions so characteristic of Benjámin's[14] poetry in the forties and fifties, soon changed into disenchantment; the theme of disillusion dominates the mentality of the young today, and this is why Ady's elevated style sounds so strange to them. This elevation of Ady's is genuine and concrete, and consequently stands in fierce contrast to bureaucratic pomposity; it is however, also diametrically opposed to what might be called the political cynicism with which the young have followed events for a long time.

This is a peculiar, although possibly not unique, situation. It would be worth investigating whether there are, *mutatis mutandis*, similar characteristics in the relation between the German people and Heine. He too has been a central figure in German poetry for close on a hundred years, and yet there is scarcely anyone who could be regarded as a true Heine enthusiast. Everybody, even a Karl Kraus[15], holds aloof from Heine. I do not, of course, in the slightest degree intend to draw a parallel between Heine and Ady. That would be quite impossible, if only for the difference between 1848 and 1900 and the different development of Hungary and Germany, regardless of any others. But none the less I believe that Ady is not a case without precedent, and I wonder—although I have not gone thoroughly into the history of literary influences—whether it would be possible to find a similar phenomenon in English literature with Shelley? I find it highly characteristic that the Eliot circle fiercely reject Shelley, and if I may be permitted to draw an analogy, I should say that the Eliot kind of nonsense over Shelley is very similar to the Kosztolányi[16] rubbish over Ady. Of course, these are bold parallels without specific evidence, but I think that in the whole process of European development after the French Revolution there are common elements which point in that direction, and that in Hungary they show themselves even more specifically.

13 Ferenc Donáth (b. 1914). Sociologist, former Deputy Minister of Agriculture.

14 László Benjámin (b. 1915). Poet. See a poem in No. 23.

15 Karl Kraus (1874–1936). Austrian social and literary critic.

16 Dezső Kosztolányi (1885–1936). Poet, novelist, writer of short stories, essayist, translator, one of the most significant Hungarian writers in the first half of this century.

There is a difference in the Hungarian process of development between things as they actually are and the way they should be. Petőfi, Ady and Attila József stand for what should be, which is not some Utopian "ought to be" from nowhere, but the expression of an effective subjective response to the objective needs of Hungarian development. Large numbers, on the other hand, were anxious to evade the tasks of historic importance confronting Hungary and the chief concern of a good deal of Hungarian poetry in the final analysis is to lay ideological foundations and to idealize the evasion of these tasks. Against them stands Ady, the great remonstrant.

Is Ady archaic in terms of style? Born and bred in a certain epoch, the idioms and the figures of speech of every poet are quite naturally typical of his age. This applies with equal force to Heine, Shelley, Petőfi and Baudelaire, and of course to Ady as well. I must admit that I take a poor view of all those categories of style, and particularly of *Sezession*, *Art Nouveau*, and the like when they are mentioned in connection with Ady. In the metaphors and the vocabulary of Ady obvious marks of the 1900–1918 epoch can be seen; the same, I think, is true of Babits and Kosztolányi, though of course in another form. Any intelligent critic could discover that Ady and Babits were contemporaries.

In analysing lyrical poetry particularly it is fair to say that there is no lyric poet whose poems all reach an equally high standard. It is usually said that Keats is an exception, but I for one cannot acknowledge that even all of Keats' poems are on a level with the great odes. With the progress of time all that is written on impulse and for the ephemeral moment increasingly fades and in poetry only the great symbols survive in which the poet has succeeded in epitomizing the aspirations of his age. From the many hundred poems Ady has written there are—let us exaggerate—perhaps two hundred poems in which these find expression, and these two hundred verses are the intrinsic treasure through which Ady survives. Neither Ady, Petőfi nor any other poet ever became immortal through his collected poetical works. It is sheer rubbish to say Ady is obsolete: he is not out of date at all; but it is true, on the other hand, that he wrote verses in, say, a January issue of *Nyugat* that were already dead in February. This is no disparagement of Ady; it is true of all poets. I believe—and this is again quite another matter—that in Hungary, after the country has truly passed beyond the Stalin era and begun to build a living socialism which relies on a new proletarian democracy, there will be many more people who will become aware that Ady is the poet they like best. Since I read *Új versek* (New Verses) in 1906—that is more than sixty years ago—I have not lost touch with Ady for a single day. This, however, is a piece of biographical

information; and without wanting to exaggerate my own importance, I really cannot consider myself a typical phenomenon in the Hungarian development.

Then why is it so difficult to break a way for Ady into world literature? In the first place it is far easier to introduce narrative and dramatic works into world literature through translations. There are many million people all over the world whose favourite reading is *War and Peace*, the *Iliad* or Swift, of whom only five or ten per cent at most have read these masterpieces in the original language. I read *War and Peace* in the German Reclam Edition when I was a schoolboy in the seventh form of the secondary school (during lessons on the sly) and the badness of the translation is still fresh in my memory. Even a bad translation, however, cannot shatter the epic grandeur of *War and Peace;* it comes through everything. And this is true for Shakespeare and the Greek tragedies as well. Lyric poetry, however, can hardly ever be reproduced; that is one of its characteristics. In my youth, when I was closely in touch with all things German, I read French poetry in German, translated by lyric poets of the calibre of Stefan George, and I have to admit that if I had not read Baudelaire in the original, the Stefan George kind of Baudelaire would never have impressed me at all. I mention Stefan George on purpose, for no one can say he used literal translations or that he could not write verse—and yet just that got lost in his translations which is so humanly, so deeply moving in Baudelaire's poetry. There are certain things whose emotional accents in French or German are radically different. And this all holds good to an even greater degree in the case of Hungarian, the language of a small people, and its remote literature. I think we would be deceiving ourselves if we were to believe that Petőfi has in fact found a place in world literature. And indeed, speaking of world literature, two things must be decisively distinguished. In the first place, what achieves the level of world literature, and what only achieves a national level? This is an objective judgement. In the second place, the actual fact of what is in truth part of world literature has to be established. This does not depend exclusively upon its value. (The term value is not used here in an aesthetic sense only, but in the context of the entire personality and the whole work.) A somewhat distant illustration is provided by Heine who really was part of world literature, and moreover, at a certain time exerted a considerable influence on French literature. Now, Heine had a German contemporary, Gottfried Keller, and I would not dare to say that he was of any less significance than Heine. Yet Gottfried Keller never achieved a place in world literature. He never had any influence outside German literature. That is to say that whether a writer becomes part of world literature depends

on various literary, social, linguistic and other circumstances, and it must be admitted that no Hungarian writer so far has really done it. Petőfi has not, and in Ady's case certain specific additional difficulties arise, for since many of his greatest poems take a profound knowledge of Hungarian development and history for granted, the text would demand a number of annotations if the foreign reader is to understand it and this, particularly in lyric poetry, is an almost unsurmountable barrier. Our particular age, moreover, must also be taken into account. A dislike of elevated style and any compromise with manipulations is a characteristic of modern lyric poets. As a result—with the possible exception of a certain group of French and South American lyric poets—the content of Ady's verse would sound very unfamiliar to contemporary poets.

Nor should we entertain too great illusions over Attila József. It is true that Attila József is more easily translated, and there are therefore better Attila József translations, but it is out of the question that Attila József will be accepted as part of world literature in the sense that Mayakovsky and Eluard have been accepted. I think that this kind of bad luck has to be accepted by a small nation like Hungary. Everything must be done to produce adequate Ady translations in foreign languages but—if I may say so—without cherishing great hopes. A lyric poet who in fact achieves a place in world literature in this way is a rare bird indeed. Take Pasternak. I cannot form an opinion, but my Russian friends assure me that Pasternak must be regarded an important lyric poet. Yet not even the fact that his very bad epigonistic novel became a world literary sensation was able to boost the circulation of Pasternak's poems.

I would like to mention in passing that there is a third sort of world literature to which I, for one, attach little significance, namely, the literature classified as world literature by literary experts. A simple example will put the reader straight: English literary critics regard twenty-five contemporaries of Shakespeare as belonging to world literature, though the utmost that Webster or Ford or the others have effected is that one has got to know their names; they have not had the slightest influence on the development of contemporary drama or on ideas of tragedy. World literature as seen by experts is very narrow and artificially invented by professors and academicians. In Hungary likewise we all learned about the great triumvirate of Petőfi, Arany[16] and Tompa,[17] but this never succeeded in imprinting Tompa on the general literary consciousness of Hungarians. No matter what was

[16] János Arany (1817–1882). He and Petőfi were the greatest Hungarian poets of the nineteenth century.

[17] Mihály Tompa (1817–1868). Romantic poet of lesser significance, representative of what was known as the "folk-national" trend of writing.

said of Petőfi and Arany, and some were pro Petőfi others were anti, anything might be possible, but in the whole of my life I never met a single person who cared about the poetry of Tompa in any form for even five minutes. So I am quite uninterested in what literary experts consider world fame.

The great crisis that drew Europe into the First World War was echoed more or less consciously—through a variety of underground channels—in the entire literature of almost the whole world. It is my personal opinion that Ady was the first to react, and to react most effectively, and that Ady is supreme among all those who voiced recalcitrance and the necessity of revolution—hence, Ady is the greatest lyric poet of this age, both humanly and poetically. I have no fear of being branded a chauvinist for expressing this opinion.

ONE-MINUTE STORIES

by

ISTVÁN ÖRKÉNY

THOUGHTS IN A CELLAR

The ball bounced through a broken window and dropped into the basement passages.

One of the children, the fourteen-year-old daughter of the porter, went limping down after it. Poor creature, a tram had run over one of her legs and she was happy when the others allowed her to retrieve their balls.

The basement was dim, but she caught a glimpse of something stirring in a corner.

"Pussy!" called the peg-legged porter's daughter towards it. "What are you doing here, pussikins?"

She picked up the ball and hurried off as fast as she could.

The old, ugly ill-smelling rat—mistaken for the kitten—was dumbfounded. Never before had anyone spoken to it like that.

Up to that moment everyone had abhorred it or pelted it with bits of coal or run from it in horror.

That was the moment when the thought first came to it of how different everything would have been had it been born a cat.

Or even better, it went on imagining—we are all so insatiable—what if it had been born the wooden-legged daughter of a porter?

But that would have been too beautiful. That the rat could not imagine.

ART AND THE ILLUMINATING EXPERIENCE

Victor T. the painter was shot into space.

He was not the first painter. But he was the first passenger.

He was away for six days. When he was half way he was asked which would he rather see: the rings of Saturn or the spots on the sun.

He didn't really mind, he said.

Then the sunspots—maybe they would be more interesting to a painter.

"May be," he said.

Upon his return T. sat bored and wrapped in stubborn silence among the reporters in the cosmoport restaurant. He refused to answer their questions and kept his eyes fixed on an orange one of the reporters had just peeled.

In a few week's time, however, a great change took place in his pictorial approach. In his celebrated still-life paintings of olives and billiard balls (his "olive-green" period) the first oranges appeared.

In his old age he also started to paint lemons and finally even eggs, but the orange was never absent from his canvas.

It was then he became a great painter.

SELF-FULFILMENT

I have to admit that as a child I was given to day-dreaming about silly things. I wanted to be a pilot, an engine-driver, or, at the lowest, a locomotive. Sometimes I was more audacious; I'll be the Viennese express when I grow up!

A distant relative, Dr. Kniza, a churchman, an educated and prudent man, tried to persuade me to become a pebble. I must admit that the finality and rounded silence of it appealed to me. My mother, on the other hand, would have liked me to find something connected with time. "Be an egg, my darling," she would urge me. "Look, the egg is birth and death at the same time, the fragile shell encloses passing time. Anything can come of an egg," my mother argued.

But Life is inscrutable in its ways. Today I am sand in an hour-glass. Perhaps to let both of them be right, since sand is time without end, and the hour-glass is the ancient symbol of its passing. It was one of the Egyptian hieroglyphic forms and meant "The sun goes down," "My God, how time flies!" "The birds are flying south" and "What causes this giddiness of mine, Doctor?"

It is not so easy to fix oneself a cushy job like this, but Uncle Kniza, one must give him credit for it, though he himself was against this compromise, nonetheless pulled strings on my behalf. And that was how I was taken on as casual sand. (Casual because I am only employed boiling eggs, so here too mother proved a bit right.) For a long time everything went smoothly, and I began saying, thank God, I was nicely provided for when,

quite unexpectedly, trouble began. From one day to the next I started to clot, which is just as disastrous for sand as when a ballet-dancer grows a paunch. (But with us this does not come with age. Sand does not grow old.)

More and more frequently this is what happens. I can get my legs through, but my bottom gets jammed in the narrow bit. Of course I have tried the other way about, head first, but it all comes to the same thing in the end: for minutes, sometimes hours, I claw and push with hands and feet, and meanwhile the eggs stop boiling, and the hour-glass stops too, as the rest of the sands wait uselessly above my head. They do not press me and they do not say a word and yet their mere presence brings such moral pressure to bear on me that I am becoming a neurotic. And I can't say it is not my fault because in fact it is, since the propensity to clot must have been in me from the very first. In other words, I am fundamentally a rebellious, unmanageable misfit of a fellow absolutely unsuitable for sand.

At such times one thinks of all sorts of things. Those who meet me now would hardly believe that I might have been a vacuum in an incandescent lamp. And, just think, there was a girl called Panni, very pretty though a bit of a goose, who worked in the Cambric Silk Mill. I say, she once said to me, come out to us and we'll make a pair of panties of you... I was hurt at the time, but even that seems heavenly bliss to me now. Not that being a pantie is a very exciting existence, but nonetheless it has a spot of piquancy about it.

And now here I am again stuck in the narrow neck. Let me tell everyone who was expecting something of me that even though the advice I received from my loved ones was all wrong, in the last analysis it is entirely my fault for choosing this dull but safe occupation. If I had only dared to take a chance then with a bit of luck and without any sort of recommendation, because I knew the designer of the world's biggest ocean-going ship, I might have easily got further by now than I have; yes, because if I had happened to occur to him instead of the 70,000-ton *Queen Mary* I would not be tucking my stomach in trying to slip through this goddam neck but proudly ploughing the seas, riding sky-high on the waves and defying the tempests.

Just a minute. I've made it. Squeezed through. I'm trickling down.

ON MY HEALTH

"Good morning."
"Good morning."
"How are you?"

"Fine, thanks."

"And how's your body treating you?"

"No grounds for complaint."

"But why are you dragging those lengths of rope behind you?"

"What rope?" I asked, looking back. "Those are my bowels."

INTROSPECTION

At first it was only something like a cloud floating across his vision. Or a veil? Or mist?

"What's wrong with the mirror?" he asked the charwoman.

She dusted the glass surface once more. "Nothing wrong with it," she said. "There's not a speck on it."

And indeed for some time nothing was wrong. And then, when he had forgotten about that little misty veil, he suddenly saw that he was a carp of about three pounds, a wild carp they call it, with a body covered with scales.

He had the mirror re-silvered and then all was peace for another couple of years. And then—but it happened gradually, imperceptibly, not suddenly—his reflection began to be independent. It winked, for instance, when he would have sworn he hadn't. Or it pulled a face, or puffed out its cheeks. He rang up the panel doctor and asked him if it had ever occurred before in his experience.

"Everything has occurred before," said the doctor, and advised him not to look in the mirror any more.

Easier said than done when you keep on feeling that there's something going on in the mirror! Still, he didn't look in it, though his curiosity made him itch, especially after the char had once asked him:

"Dear me, are you feeling ill?"

For his face was grey, his cheeks sunken, he looked more than ill... But on the other hand, looking him straight in the face, how very odd, that same face was the picture of health! How could it be? Hadn't he looked at it in the mirror only a minute ago? Why hadn't it looked well there?

He did not look there, of course, but from that moment the mirror attracted him more than ever. If he stood with his back to it, the feeling that he was missing something seemed to centre in his back. None the less he did not break his promise to the doctor. It was only a good while later, and then only in an absent-minded moment, that he found himself

standing in front of the mirror. He looked in it and to his astonishment he saw his reflection pull out a revolver from the hip-pocket, aim at him, press the trigger, and fire... In that fraction of a second it disappeared, but when he moved closer and bent forward he saw his reflection lying on the floor, blood oozing from its heart... And the oddest thing of all was, there was no hole in the glass.

TO THE SALT CELLAR

There was the whole family sitting round the table with Ursula, a remarkably pretty girl of sixteen, on an exchange visit from Warnemünde. She had already been taken sightseeing in Budapest and around Lake Balaton, and tonight Hungarian cooking was the thing. They put their best food forward: they produced fish soup, paprika chicken with sour cream and three kinds of pastry with different fillings. They were at the chicken when Károly Valkó looked round and said:

"Where's the salt?"

For the benefit of Ursula everything had to be repeated in German. Valkó definitely enjoyed this: the answer to the question, the smile encountering a smile. In the general uproar of talk and laughter no one paid any attention anyway.

"*Der Salz!*" he said, smiling at Ursula.

"*Das Salz,*" she corrected, returning the smile, and pointed to the salt-cellar. Then, a pity, her attention wandered.

The salt-cellar was not far. At least it did not seem far. Since he had turned fifty Valkó's left eye had been steadily deteriorating, and he had been in constant dread that his driving licence might not be renewed. He was bad at judging distances, and glasses were no help.

He reached for the salt-cellar. He could not manage it. He groped farther. Someone would oblige, he thought, but at that moment Tildi, his younger daughter, was offering round *galuska.*

"*Das sind die ungarische galuska.*"

"*Nudeln?*" asked the attractive girl from Warnemünde, because she only knew noodles.

"*Nicht Nudeln, sondern galuska,*" Mrs. Valkó explained, and everybody laughed.

In the meanwhile the corpulent head of the family, left to fend for himself, leaned across the table, practically spreading himself over it, then scrambled up on it and stood up on the white tablecloth in his down-at-heel

lace-up shoes. No one paid any attention. They were all engaged at that moment in trying to explain to Ursula the ins and outs of Hungarian pickled cucumber, which was comparatively hard going because none of them knew how to say yeast in German. So Valkó started out on the table, diagonally, towards the salt-cellar.

Two more steps, he thought, and I'll be here.

But that was not quite what happened. Not that the salt-cellar receded; one might rather say that the whole table with the things on it and the people round it appeared to have expanded in space. The small objects had grown bigger, the big ones bigger still. The saucer for the pickles had expanded to the size of a fountain basin, a toothpick lying apart to that of a prefabricated ferro-concrete girder. (Valkó was in charge of supplies at the 71st Building Enterprise. Hence the image.) It was no wonder that in this expanding universe Valkó kept on walking, and then quickened his steps, but the salt-cellar (though not in any way receding) came not an inch closer.

At such a point there is no stopping. Something buzzes in the mind: go on, go on... In his excitement Valkó was unaware that the noise of the party had subsided. He broke into a run, then remembered that the panel doctor had forbidden him even to walk upstairs, because of the valvular insufficiency from which he suffered. He stopped panting and looked round.

He was lucky. He only had a knife-blade, the length of a sword, to step over, and there was his car, a Fiat 1500, waiting for him. He had got it from Canada second-hand from his brother-in-law, who had fled abroad because of some money he had embezzled. He opened the door and got in.

The windows were frosted over, and it was also difficult to start the engine. He warmed it up for a few minutes, then slowly and cautiously moved off into the snowfield. Caution had become second nature to him ever since he had misjudged the distance half-way across the Margaret Bridge and had run the car under the projecting crane of a breakdown lorry from behind. (As a matter of fact he had been lucky; for they hooked him on right on the spot.)

But now he was even more cautious in the snow. He steered clear of the crumbs lying about on the tablecloth, put on the brakes at every crease—but to no avail. He had barely done ten or twelve kilometres when—crack—he hit a road sign.

The pole was knocked over. The radiator was crushed into the engine, which stopped dead. Valkó looked at the sign half-buried in the snow, on which was written: To the Salt-cellar. To no point, by the way, because the salt-cellar, though half-buried in the snow, was clearly visible from the

spot. His wife, however, was only dimly visible to his eyes, she was merging into the winter half-light of the snowfield. She was laughing. You bet she said something wrong in German, the supplies manager thought. And he went on ploughing through the knee-deep snow.

Its upper layer was icy, which made walking in it even more difficult. But he kept on, because at such moments there is no stopping, not even when dragging loads of caked snow on one's lace-up shoes. He was nearing the end of his tether when again something turned up. His traditional luck held out. A sleigh drawn by dogs suddenly swung round and stopped in front of him.

First he smiled. What was a dog sleigh doing on the table? he thought. But then he became thoughtful and serious and even moved, thinking of his favourite adolescent reading, *The Last Journey of Captain Scott*, which had adorned his hero-worshipping and romantic dreams as a boy. He had only to close his eyes to become the English captain who had frozen to death at the South Pole... And would you believe it? Here he stood, though going bald and having heart-trouble, in that catastrophic six-day blizzard, cracking his whip and trying to goad on the pack of strong shaggy polar dogs.

His predicament was perilous and it was getting worse. With the temperature falling he had neither tent nor biscuits, nor an oil-stove to keep him warm. One after another his dogs dropped off in the snow, for he had no dog food either. But on he drove and on, three days and three nights, starving and parched with thirst, frozen, hoping against hope for a rescue party, until on the third evening the last of his dogs perished.

Complete silence descended on him. Snow as far as the eye could see. The horizon empty, the relations, his wife, even the dazzling blondness of the Warnemünde girl—all, all vanished. Only a small golden flame flickered on the black sky, right by the salt-cellar. It was Tildi's idea. She had persuaded them to have two candles on the supper table in honour of the German guest. The supplies manager looked at it enraptured. "God," he said to himself, "the Northern Light!" The ice was slowly creeping up his legs.

He took out a diary where he made notes on his business trips and with numb fingers and a half-frozen fountain pen he wrote: *God Save the King!* although even as a young man he had been a Soc. Dem., certainly not a royalist. Then yet another memory came back from his youth, and he added: *Long Live England!* although he had never been to England and had never wanted to go anywhere but Italy, although last year when he had got his passport and the seventy dollars allowance for the trip he had got cold feet at the thought of making such a long journey.

DIAL 170–100

If you dial this number the Special Information Service of the Telephone Exchange answers your call, and any questions you care to ask.

More and more people make use of it and ask more and more difficult questions. (Did the Virgin Mary have her periods after the Immaculate Conception? Had composers missed the piano before it was invented? Did Marx and Engels come together by accident or was their meeting predestined? Is it conceivable that a normal pair of zebras could give birth not to a striped but to a chequered foal? And even wilder queries.)

An increasing number of scholars and experts have been taken on, some 120 work groups set up, and what is practically a brains trust established at the Telephone Exchange. They are in contact with the Holy Synod and the British Royal Society. So they are now equipped to handle the most enigmatic questions, though naturally the administration has become somewhat complicated.

That, however, does not in the least stop them from being most conscientious in their answers. For instance:

"Excuse me for bothering you. We have a little crocodile here and a ball has hit it."

"How little?"

"Well, about five inches long."

"Then it's only a lizard."

If you think they don't bother with trifles like this you're mistaken. They do. The Exchange promptly switches them through to the First-Aid Group. A doctor, distinguished for saving several lives, is on the line. His first question:

"Are you lizards too?"

"No, sir. We're pupils of the Stephen I Secondary School."

"So you're not related to the victim? That's different. We are not allowed to give relatives a diagnosis."

"It's the first time we saw it. We were playing football when the ball hit it."

"Is it breathing?"

"Yes."

"Pulse?"

"Normal. The only trouble is that it doesn't want to leave the field."

"Well—try tickling it."

They go and tickle it with a blade of grass. Then they go back and report that it winced a little but would not budge.

"Concussion with locomotor paralysis complications. I'll put you through to the Neurology Department."

Do we see the nerve specialist gesturing a vigorous hand: "Oh, kill it!" No, that's not what happens. After a period of lengthy meditation he asks:

"What do you have more confidence in, sonny? Classic treatment, or shall we call in the psycho-analyst?"

"Perhaps what you said second."

A voice, clear, fresh and female, sounding all encouragement: The case was not very serious, in fact, it was quite easy to cure. "The patient has been suffering from early childhood from a bad inferiority complex and now this recent trauma (that is the ball that hit it on the head) has wiped out everything connected with itself from its memory. It doesn't move only because it isn't conscious of being a lizard. Which is what it has to be made conscious of now."

"So what are we to do?"

"Explain to it that it is a lizard."

"Yes, but it doesn't understand human speech."

"Then it's no concern of mine."

"Well, then, whose?"

"There's a Linguistic Group here which deals exclusively with reptile speech. But I could also connect you with the Philosophical Association... Perhaps you would like to speak to the Almighty?"

You bet.

The analyst lady with the fresh voice explained that three times a week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday) the Materialists were on duty, and on the remaining days the Monotheists and the Polytheists, the Zen Buddhists and the Existentialists. She could promise nothing, she said, but wonderful to relate, God Almighty himself lifted the receiver.

"What do you want me to do? Resurrect your little lizard?" he asked.

"Well, perhaps that would be the easiest thing."

"All right. Don't mind if I do," the Almighty said. "Go back to your football."

And so they did. They looked round. The lizard was gone! They could go on playing. (And with this, incidentally, conclusively ended the centuries-old debate whether God existed or not.) It is in this reliable and conscientious way that the Special Information Service works. Or, to be more exact, worked.

Unhappy country! If there is anything that works well along come the mischief-makers, the fault-finders, the fuddy-duddies and the hoaxers! A bad egg like one of these dialled 170–100 and inquired:

"What ho?"

The Exchange caught its breath. It did not know what to do. Who knows the answer to such a question? It kept switching connections, buzzing here and there and back again, but it couldn't get a proper answer, until at last it got itself completely confused. In the end all that could be heard in the receiver were pathetic clickings and cracklings. Since then the Special Information Service has gone from bad to worse, and recently it has been unable to answer the simplest questions.

Ask the time, and a quavering voice replies:

"We dont't know."

Poor creatures, their self-confidence has gone.

THE DEATH OF THE SPECTATOR

Eight to ten actors and actresses (the average number required for a play) pay a visit to the spectator. They have fixed it up previously and at the time arranged they arrive by bus or taxi (or for those who own one, by car). The usual time is 7 p.m., except for the 3 o'clock matinée on Sundays.

They leave their coats and hats in the foyer, enter, take their seats, and sit in silence or, at most, converse quietly. Without giving any indication of it, the spectator is in a state of high tension. Disregarding it he tries to behave in a natural way as if his guests were not present, since now the performance is already under way.

He gets up, sits down, meditates a little while, then goes to the tap and fills the kettle with water and makes tea. He only pretends to drink the tea because, as everyone in the room can see, his thoughts are elsewhere, though he composes his face to a look of indifference, blows his nose, even yawns. At that moment, however, a violent outbreak occurs: he steps forward and in a soft, tender voice confesses his love. The object of his adoration is far away but in his soliloquy he behaves as if the woman were beside him, and was encouraging him to continue. Then all sorts of things happen. The telephone rings, for instance, and we are aware that he has had bad news and see his gay and youthful bearing sag, the light in his eyes dim, and his hair turn completely white. Suddenly he clutches his middle evidently a stone in the gallbladder or kidney trouble.

It is another man we now see. He does not even try to pretend any more: his cheeks are fallen in, and he no longer cares for anything or anybody, his father, his sister, his wife; the pain in his side throbs and it is increasingly evident that he will not survive it.

Nor does he. Naturally he would like to hide from the inquisitive eyes of the actors, for even an animal goes into hiding to die, but whether he likes it or not he will have to give up the ghost here, which takes rather a long time though, longer than one would think, for it seems one has to struggle for death as well; but who would have thought it took such a terrific time! Poor spectator, he is at his last gasp, but again and again he gathers new strength and thinks of things which he goes and tells the actors, and these things, not particularly witty or significant, have a moving effect simply through being said by a dying man.

At last, writing and struggling on the floor, with the death-rattle in his throat, he gasps out his life. The actors and actresses clap once or twice, get their things and say good-bye to one another later at the front door while they compare notes on whether the spectator's behaviour was sufficiently natural, particularly during the death agony.

If so they will go back to the theatre and give the other actors the spectator's address, telling them that they can see a rather amusing and interesting performance there.

ÁGNES NEMES NAGY

POEMS

STATUES

Bitter the sea's taste, bitter when
I tumbled down the gorge of stone
a pebble spinning down the spiral steps
that droned behind me like a conches' shell,
memory's drone between the walls
in a deserted house—
I clattered
shrapnel fragments rattling in a skull

Then out on the beach I rolled
among the statues

On a plinth
a tortoise-egg covered with skin
my skull was baking in the sun
my helmet a white bubble on the sand
and in soiled uniform I lay
my shoulder to the rock

—Whose slab is this?
Who hacks
this uncaring shape
with terrible passion from a hill of slate?

Sheet metal covers me, sheet metal
dented boxes
reflecting pieces of the light,
a wrecked airplane shines like this
but the survivors move inside it. . .
a little blood's there on my watchband,
I lie spreadeagled on the stone,
a splotch of life's refuse

What a stubborn thing to do
Stubborn
to throw yourself into the stone

Salt and sand and the stone slab
like a cave scooped in the sky
this relative eternity
this halflight of the minerals
—Who carved this
from a slate mountain,
who carved your living throat?

The water roars, roars, its bed is Earth,
its bitterness is in a dish of stone.

I CARRIED STATUES

To the ship I carried statues,
Vast and nameless were their faces.
To the ship I carried statues
Island-bound for destined places.
Straight-hewn nose and sculpted ear
Huge, set perpendicular,
But no other markings found.
To the ship I carried statues,
And so was drowned.

Translated by Daniel Hoffman

WITH BORSOS AT TIHANY

Interview by

BERTHA GASTER

Round the sweep of Lake Balaton, shallow silver blue in the autumn sun, to the foot of the Tihany peninsula; a swerve off the encircling road, a hundred yards or so up the wooded hillside, and we drew up before two gateposts surmounted by carved dogs, almost hidden in the surrounding trees.

Miklós Borsos, coming from the low-lying house to meet us, is the best known sculptor in Hungary today. His work has been described as "Pannonian", an adjective used in Hungary to convey the peculiarly Latin, almost Mediterranean warmth and serenity of the countryside around the lake, the ancient Pannonia of Roman times, which finds expression in the painting and sculpture of Balaton artists. It is no accident that he chose Tihany as his second home. He and his wife first built the house, where he lives and works all through the summer, as far back as 1943, and again rebuilt it after it had been reduced to ruins in the last months of the war. The unique garden, which is famous throughout Hungary, has been the work of many patient years. The atmosphere corresponds to something profound which runs through everything he produces—a humanism, a Latin civility. Borsos works in a number of media. He works in metals—reliefs and portrait medallions; for most of his life he has continued to pour out line drawings of astonishing delicacy and mobility—he abandoned painting when still in his twenties; but he is principally and above all a sculptor, and it is as such that he has won recognition in Hungary and abroad.

A man of some sixty years or so, of medium height, somewhat on the stocky side, he carries his years easily. He was loosely and comfortably dressed in blue shirt, blue jeans and blue espadrilles. The long iron-grey hair was cut square across the forehead, the reddish, bluntish friendly face with the drooping Hungarian moustache gave out a certain good-humoured strength.

He led us, talking, across the garden to the large half-shed, half-barn, where completed and uncompleted works were ranged effectively against the whitewashed walls and on tables, beside the hammers and chisels and tools of his trade.

"No, I never work in here," he explained. "All my indoor work is done in Budapest during the winter. Here I work outside all through the summer" pointing to the rough table and the chips of marble and stone scattered over the paving stones outside. "And anyway there's no electric light in the studio. The British cultural attaché once telephoned he was bringing some friends down to see my work that evening, and we had the bright idea of lighting it with dozens of candles. You cannot imagine how fantastically beautiful the marble and copper pieces were in the flickering candle-light."

There was considerable variety in the work displayed in the shed. Angular, deeply carved heads, rugged and pitted blocks of stone, granulated surface against smooth, carved and hammered to almost abstract shapes, round and swelling forms pared down to the last essential curve in smooth-sliding marble and basalt. We halted before a marble of two horses' heads, upreared in profile one against the other, with an echo of our own British Museum horse in their archaic lines. "Now there's an example of material taking over" he said. "It's always a fight between what I want and what the material wants. I wanted one head curving over the other. I wanted them round. But the marble wouldn't. It always went into relief. But I still want it," he said determinedly, "and I'll get it with another piece of marble. With the curves going *this* way," hands weaving in the air.

Almost abstract, I said. Would he himself call his work abstract? He denied it firmly. Even the most apparently abstract form carried a germ of representation within it. Everything he did was always from *something*. On one of the stands was a round stone carved in a lovely double curve within and without, and holding as in cupped hands a ball of stone. A pattern in curves? Or a ripe fruit opening? Or a womb fulfilled? "Corn germination," he said.

Later we went upstairs to settle ourselves in the long room running the length of the house, which had only recently been added to the building. It was a warm tranquil room with a great sense of space, the rafters overhead painted red, and old green-tiled stove in the middle, and great copper and bronze artifacts at the end of the room concentrating the light against the whitewashed walls.

An ornate leather and wooden armchair stood near them. "Those are the

Bethlen arms, you know," he said, pointing to the heraldic device on its back. "Prince of independent Transylvania in the time of the Turks. I come from Transylvania myself."

The Making of the Artist

Miklós Borsos was born at Nagyszeben in Transylvania—then part of Hungary, now Rumanian Sibiu—in 1906, one of the four children of a goldsmith and watchmaker. He had a happy childhood, and Nagyszeben had obviously played an important part in his development. It was a small town, he said, Gothic in style, and in his days it had a high cultural level from which he had benefited. As a child he had haunted the Bruckental picture gallery, where he had learnt to know Van Eyck, Memling and El Greco, and had spent many hours in the big historical museum. And drew, as a boy draws—"I remember my first picture was an illustration from the Gospels—'blessed are the meek'"—but with no intention of adopting painting as a career. "Certainly not. I was going to be a football international."

Then, when he was sixteen, in 1922, his father moved with the family to Győr in Transdanubia, a town, said Borsos, on the same cultural level as Nagyszeben, with a secondhand bookshop which he frequented. "I shan't forget it. I saw my first Picasso reproductions there."

"All in all, my education was patchy," he explained. "We spent a lot of our time in the 1914 war playing in the trenches. Came the Germans and shut the schools. Came the Rumanians and kept them shut. Lovely times," he said. "Never learnt a thing."

So at seventeen, when he dropped out of school, he was duly apprenticed to his father's trade of goldsmith. He had no passionate interest in it, but the thorough knowledge in metal techniques he acquired stood him in good stead in his later career, both in the creation of the medallions of famous figures which has been one of his activities for many years now, and as a professor at the Academy of Applied Arts, a post he held from 1948 to 1960. "And it also proved a lucky thing for me" he added, "because until the war it gave me a meagre livelihood and enough independence to do what I wanted." And the first thing he did, when his apprenticeship was out, was to go to Florence.

For it was during that period that he suddenly began to paint seriously and decided to make art his profession. He was religious—"I still am"—and at that time painted mainly Biblical subjects and studies from nature.

So off he went to Florence. That was in 1928. He was twenty-two.

The interesting thing is that he chose Florence, not Paris, the Mecca of all aspiring young Hungarian artists in those days. He didn't want the moderns; he wanted Donatello and Leonardo and Pisanello and Botticelli. And above all Masaccio.

He leant forward. "Masaccio was the great revelation for my generation. I went and lived opposite the Brancacci Chapel. Since Impressionism in painting and Rodin in sculpture had destroyed form, we had to go back to get basic form, and that Masaccio gave us. Henry Moore considered Masaccio his first master. Marini as well. That's what we all went to Florence for.

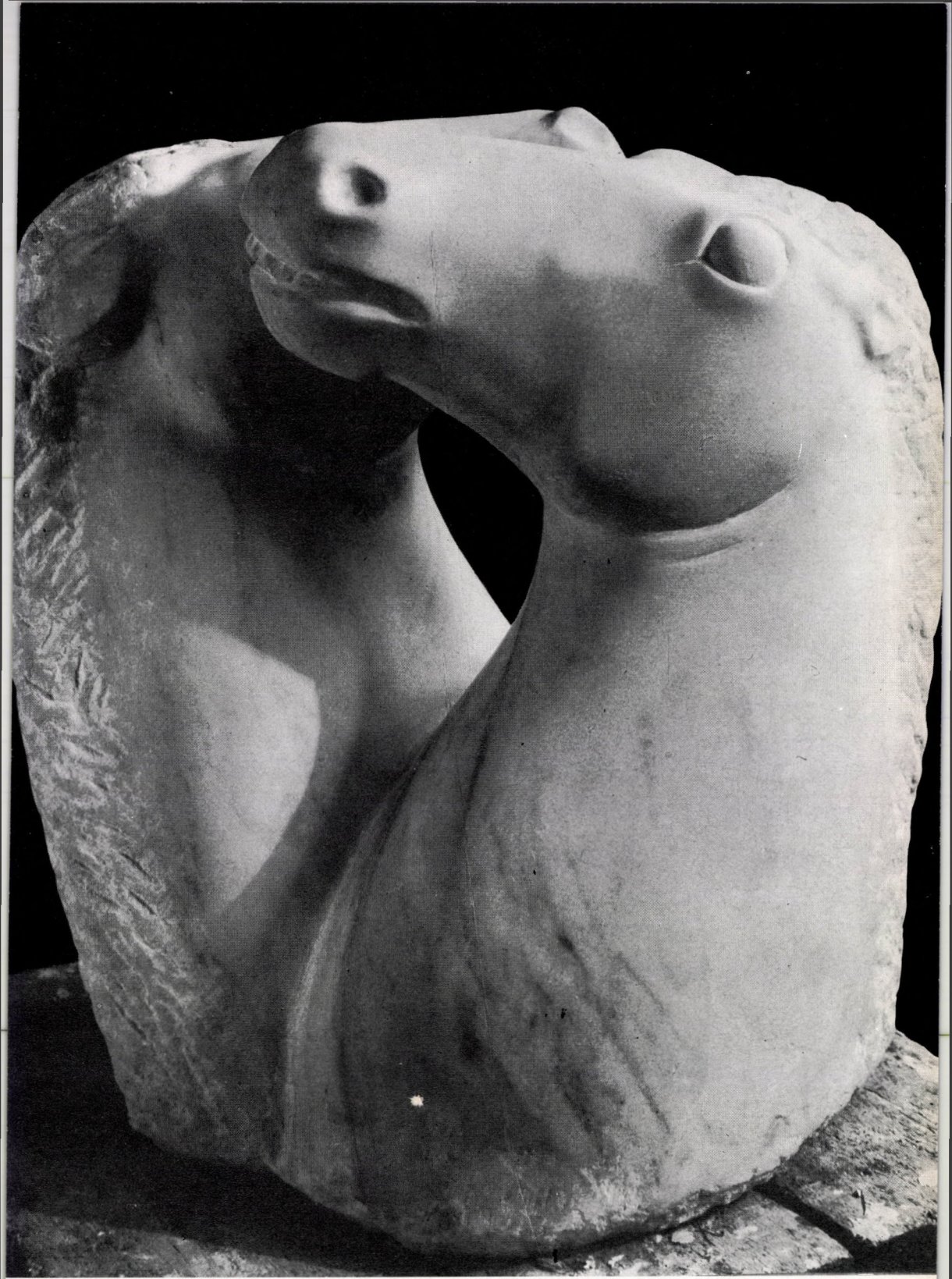
"And Michelangelo." He glanced up at the Michelangelo reproduction hanging on the wall, an enlarged detail of the outstretched hands in the Sistine Chapel fresco of the creation of man. "Sometimes in the morning I look at it and say—'Will I ever touch it?'". And fell silent. He has elsewhere referred to Michelangelo's works as "something I have known since my youth, works imbedded in the deepest layers of my personal experience, in the same way as some of Rembrandt's self-portraits."

"No, here again I was lucky, in not following the moderns but their masters. Oh of course I learnt a great deal from the moderns too, the essence of drawing, cleanness of form, to express oneself with a minimum of means, though I saw that in the old Masters as well. Even now, when I go abroad every year, after thirty years without a passport, I go back to the Old Masters, and would still choose them as my teachers again. Rembrandt—he's my test. You can't tell the name of the colours in Rembrandt, but you can't look at Brueghel's reds and greens after him."

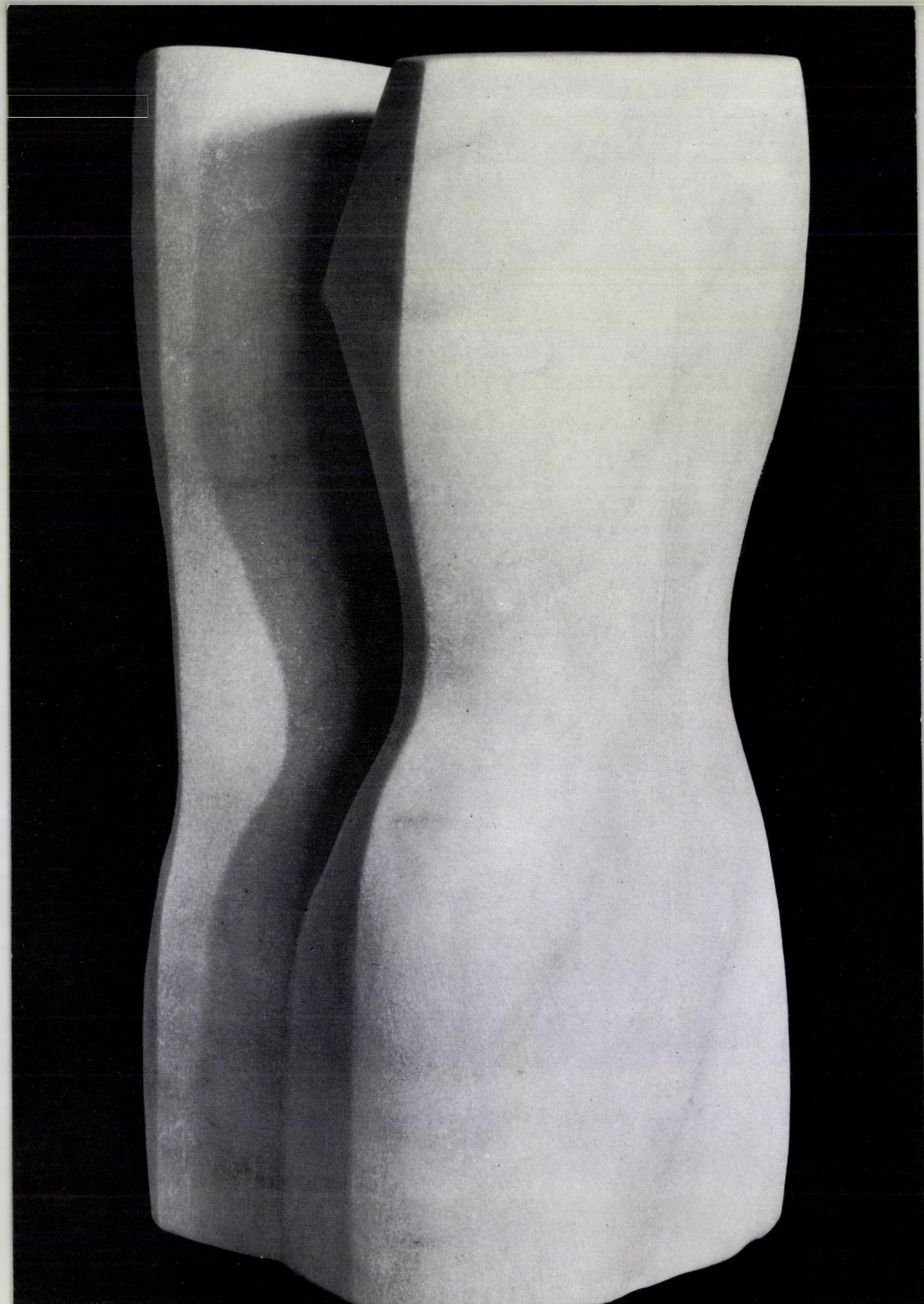
For six months he lived on his savings in Italy. And the next year he walked to Provence. Why Provence? "I was just curious, I wanted to see why they painted the soil red."

Even today, forty years on, one could see that youth rekindle in his eyes as he spoke of his three months tramping over the south of France, travelling with a circus, drawing—"I brought 500 drawings back with me"—walking, walking, walking. "Three years ago an old pupil invited me to go and stay with them there. I could show him the way to everywhere—the road to Vence, the road to Fréjus, I had walked them all."

For the next fifteen years he made a scanty living by industrial engraving, first in Budapest, then home again in Győr. It formed an unobtrusive background to his real life—first painting, then in 1932, drawing. And then, slowly, carving took possession of him. "I found myself picking up cobblestones and carving them". The interest was not new. He had made reliefs



Miklós Borsos: Golden Age. Marble 1967



Miklós Borsos: Moon. Marble 1968

Miklós Borsos: Canticum Canticorum.

Overleaf:

Miklós Borsos in his garden at Tihany

in his apprentice days, he had been fascinated by Donatello in Florence. "After all," he went on, "the Renaissance artists who influenced me most were both sculptors and painters, and my modern masters, Maillol and Rodin, began as painters; so did Moore and Marini. It makes for added richness in a sculptor."

Achievement

An exhibition in Győr in 1931, a one-man show in Budapest in 1932, where he exhibited statues, metal reliefs and gouaches, passed almost unperceived, but he began to be known in Budapest to the artists of his own generation. "Sometimes there was enough money to buy canvases or material, sometimes there wasn't. But it didn't matter. We were all poor together in those days—and we all turned Left together, even those of us not normally interested in politics. By the end of the thirties all good artists were Left, and against Nazism. It was... the human thing," he said in his halting English.

Success came to him in 1941 with his second exhibition in Budapest, where he showed over forty sculptures and reliefs in a variety of materials—granite, marble, porphyry, basalt, copper, lignum sanctum, spindlewood and mahogany, not to mention the warm red marble from the quarries in Hungary which had been used for the fifteenth century marble fountain of King Matthias's palace at Visegrád and the Bakócz chapel at Esztergom.

Other exhibitions have followed at regular intervals, in Budapest and in Tihany, and abroad in Linz, Rome, Venice, and Florence. His most recent exhibition at the former Károlyi Palace towards the end of 1968 gathered together a large selection of his work over the last years. Perhaps what was most fascinating about it were the four different types of exhibits, representing, very roughly, the four different media in which he has continued to work. Lining the walls were his drawings and illustrations, remarkable for the waving, fluttering, spider-fine lines in which the flux, the movement, the activity so rigorously banished from his monumental carving find full expression. The sea-girl looking up to the prow, in lines like a harmony of broken curves. The flowing lines of passion in the Tristan and Isolde, slantwise against the opposing belly of the sail. And in black contrast, three Chinese ink caresses of the brush to bring up the movement of three women, as trees walking, in the light and dark of the desert. There were the portrait medallions of famous figures—he has now made over a hundred of them. There were the four imaginative heads in rough, pitted red granite

of famous modern writers, scored, deeply undercut, extremely moving. It was, incidentally, fun to compare the photograph of young Radnóti hanging in another part of the gallery with Borsos's head of him, if only to learn what an artist puts in by leaving out.

And finally there were the calm, monumental forms of alabaster in every stage of transition from simplified representation to the near abstract. They are static, rounded and serene—the "Stargazer" woman's head lifted to the light, the 'Canticus Canticorum" which is no more than the angularity of a man's head leaning to the oval of a woman's, the other 'Canticus Canticorum' which is the pared down essence of two torsos meeting and uniting.

He was asked by someone in the room whether he felt Hungary as such had made any special contribution to his art.

"It's not exactly Hungary" he replied. Then paused. "It's being a Hungarian. Being a Hungarian defines our whole situation. It means that we have to *go* to the spring of things to see Western culture; it does not come to us. This is a burden, but it makes our situation easier. The Italians, for instance, cannot rid themselves of their Renaissance. Even in their most modern works you can see the Old Masters peering over their shoulder. Look at the work of Manzu. You can see he played bat and ball under Donatello. It was always the special lot of us Hungarians to turn to the West, and to go to it.

"You doubt me? You ask whether it wasn't just as true of the Balkans? No. Yugoslavia never had that Western influence, except along the Dalmatian coast. We had it. They didn't—the Renaissance never reached as far. Byzantium was over in the 12th century. That was where they ended. But Cimabue and Giotto made hands move—and that was it."

His eyes went again unconsciously to the Michelangelo on the wall. Hands again. I remembered other words of his I had read. On the Pieta in Rome "... Mary's left hand, perhaps the finest hand ever carved." Or Christ's in the Pietà in Florence. "In this hand all his works are embodied; crude, rough sculpturing, combined with polished powerful curves that, as always, suggest the gentlest touch."

"But the great thing about that 1941 exhibition," said Borsos, "was that after it I could go on and earn my living by my art alone. And it was then my wife and I—we married in 1933—bought and built our small house in Tihany."

In the course of our visit he had taken us over the garden, or rather gardens, built on the hillside, falling on different levels, and extraordinarily satisfying for the perfect positioning of everything in them, the placing of the wellhead slightly off centre, the trees chosen to balance and contrast, the vistas, the long line of poplars. "We planted those before the war. But the house and nearly everything else was ruined in the last three months when the war raged round here. We had to start practically all over again in 1945. And don't praise me for the garden. It is all my wife's work," and he smiled towards the blonde handsome woman whose features had so obviously served for many of his calm, serene women's heads.

Sitting in the warm simplicity of that long room, all the splendour gathered in the copper and bronze on the further wall, one felt again the quiet assurance, the same plenitude of experience that struck one on his first appearance. One could not resist asking that simple question—was he a happy man?

"Happy? Happy?" he answered slowly. "Never thought of it. One can't be happy knowing that one was born and going to die. But emotional happiness is not what interests a man; what matters is freedom, to work as one wants." He paused, to choose his words. "The most you can get in the way of happiness is to know that you are capable of shaping your own work; that you are not betraying your gifts. There are many who for a thousand and one reasons cannot achieve this, and in the eyes of these people one can see a tremendous unhappiness."

Yes, he went on, he had worked. He still worked hard. The best he could do. What gave him deep satisfaction was being able to do it on an international European standard—achieve work that was good by his standards and by others. That was when the satisfaction came. "This I can say now I am over sixty. Until then you have other expectations. . . It's all in a letter of Van Gogh's to his brother Théo." The important thing is to have your studio full of good pictures. Then you can sit and smoke your pipe in peace.'"

"The work must be done, and in the end it is not written on it whether it was done in conditions of socialist realism or not, or whether the painter was rich or poor. The work must speak for itself."

Not that he felt near the end he added, there were plenty of problems he had not yet solved, and now he could afford it financially, and was not driven by time, he could have a shot at them. He felt full of energy, full of plans, assured that he was still developing in his work.

Was there still anything he would still like to do?

Well, he said, smiling, all his life he'd had a sneaking desire to be a sailor. (In his later years he had in fact bought a small dinghy for sailing on the Balaton, and from it had sprung a whole series of studies, in line and wash, of the changing moods and colours of the great Hungarian lake.) "Oh, and play the violin really well," he added, casting a wistful glance at the eighteenth century violin hanging on the wall. "Not just so-so. Really well".

FROM OUR NEXT NUMBERS

I AM BORED ALL SUNDAY
Éva Csőregh

ACQUITTAL BUT NO HAPPY ENDING
Péter Hanák

FREEZING LIFE
Imre Törő

THERE *IS* A VERDICT
Ferenc Fehér

INSTANT LITERARY TOURISM
Paul Aston

A. C. MACARTNEY AND THE MAGYARS IN THE 9TH CENTURY
Antal Bartha

THE DECLINE OF A GREAT POWER
Neville Masterman

THE RHYTHM OF TIME

BY

LAJOS JÁNOSSY

It has recently become fashionable to talk about time "accelerating." Radio and television, newspapers and journals quite frequently deal with this subject. It is a problem which in fact is not new, but the general public is again showing interest in it.

A good deal of philosophical and popular writing, old and new, deals with all sorts of fantastic properties of time. Not long ago I read a very amusing novel whose hero left his home ten years after the World War. On his way through the forest he goes off the track to make a detour, and gets back to war-time. His state of mind when he realizes he has returned to the past is highly interesting psychologically.

The hero of Mark Twain's novel, *A Yankee in the Court of King Arthur*, returns to the sixth century, and in the *Új Zrínyiász* ("New Zrinyiad"), a novel by the Hungarian writer Kálmán Mikszáth, a figure from the seventeenth century steps into the present.

In these and other works where a number of similar devices are employed present and past are intermingled. No reader, of course, takes these stories seriously, for they are meant as no more than satirical descriptions of the writer's own period—at least as far as facts are concerned—or as suggesting any real possibility of returning to bygone centuries.

1

When I was working in Dublin, on one occasion the conversation turned to a study by Professor Lanczos—who by the way was of Hungarian origin—in which he proved that according to the theory of relativity one can return to the past by making a tour around the world under appropriate conditions. I remember that I said to Professor Schrödinger in reply, jokingly, that I would only believe in the possibility of returning to the past if the coat I was wearing would be hanging on the coat-rack when I came home.

These, of course, are just amusing stories, but there is a serious side to the question too. In his lectures in the seminar the same Professor Schrödinger more than once remarked, and quite rightly, that it is a deplorable peculiarity of the human language that gramatically correct sentences can be constructed which properly speaking have no sense at all.

As an example Professor Schrödinger mentioned that if we spoke of a "square circle," it was a term which was absolutely correct both grammatically and formally, but something nonsensical had been said and we had "just made a noise with our mouth", for a circle is not square, and a square is not circular. And, the term "accelerating time" is a similar misuse of grammatical possibilities.

2

Meditations on moving backwards in time, therefore, can indeed provide amusing themes for novelists, but are in fact only word play. At first glance it might seem that to talk about a change in the rhythm of time would make more sense than to talk about reversing the flight of time. And consequently, if we say "time goes faster" or "time becomes slower" something has been said that—some people think—really has a meaning.

Almost everyone has experienced the sensation that no more than a moment has passed while listening to an interesting play or reading a thriller, although actually it was an hour. On the other hand, during dull conferences—not to mention the time spent in a dentist's chair—instants seem to last for hours. These are, of course, subjective impressions, and although unavoidable, they only reflect a subjective sense of time. In his philosophical reflections Bergson incidentally declares that subjective time is the actual and real time.

A more general phenomenon is at issue when the stages of the history of the human race are considered. The development of mankind was extremely slow in prehistoric times or the Stone Age, and then the rhythm of development gathered speed. It is however clear that, following the considerable changes in social development, it is not time which is accelerating. The satellites of Jupiter orbited in uninterrupted rhythm during the Stone Age and even earlier, and will continue to do so in the future, irrespective of what happens to mankind. Ernst Bloch, the eminent philosopher, also affirms that the rhythm of historic times has and is quickening.

In my opinion this example embodies the whole essence of the question. The progress of time is a purely qualitative process: events take place one after the other. The rhythm of a chain of events may slow down or quicken, or more precisely, the comparison of two series of events may lead to the

conclusion that the course of one is slower or quicker *as compared to the other.* For instance: the rhythm of social development quickens as compared to the revolution of the Jupiter satellites or to the period of oscillation of an atom. This comparison, however, is meaningless as regards the "rhythm" of time.

3

It has become something of a custom in modern times to make a mystery of simple matters. Reference is often made to time in the sense of going faster or slower, and modern physics is frequently invoked to buttress incomprehensible arguments on the grounds that "modern physics has demonstrated . . ." Of course, neither modern nor traditional physics gives an answer to philosophical problems, but as a matter of fact certain physicists—and some of them are very important men—are inclined to dress up the concrete results they have obtained in the guise of a currently fashionable philosophy, and by resorting to this inadmissible method they deduce wrong philosophical views from correct physical observations.

Like every other kind of cognition, an understanding of physics can be attained through human action and thinking, and despite its characteristic features, physics does not differ fundamentally from any other form of scientific cognition. Whatever great ideas may emerge in physics, it will never be provable that as a result of extraordinary circumstances it managed to discover a square circle or that the rhythm of time could somehow become reversed or changed.

In the thirties it was very usual to talk of "time slowing down in a moving system." This kind of saying is pointless, and anyone who realizes that he simply cannot understand this kind of statement has nothing to be ashamed of. But there is quite another meaning underlying this saying. If a physical system is put in motion under certain conditions, its internal rhythm slackens. It is not time that decelerates; it is a question of a physical process whose slackening speed is established by comparing it to other processes. In certain circumstances this comparison is confronted with technical difficulties, and in order to eliminate them the statement was devised as a sort of explanation that it was not the rhythm of the processes but that of time which changed.

There are phenomena that unequivocally prove a decline in the spread of these processes. The deceleration of the internal movement of the μ mesons, particles observed in cosmic radiation, can be directly observed.

It can be proved by direct laboratory measurements that μ mesons, if and when captured, disintegrate in about two millionth of a second. Other

measurements again show that μ mesons are able to shoot through the atmosphere at very high speed, and even if they were proceeding at the velocity of light the distance they cover would take longer than two millionth of a second. This is interpreted to mean that the rhythm of the disintegration process in a swiftly moving μ meson slows down, and as a result it is able to cover a longer distance without the disintegration that would be observed from measurements carried out in a quiescent stage.

Similar experiments were carried out with atoms in high speed motion and their spectral analysis shows that the internal rhythm of swiftly moving atoms decelerates as in μ mesons.

4

The experiments—the result of which was foreshadowed by the relativity theory—raise the question of what were to happen if we were to enter a space vehicle and fly through space at top speed. One may assume that in a spaceship flying at very high speed the wrist-watches of the passengers would slow down, and perhaps not only the wrist-watches, but also the breathing, heart-beat and the reactions of the nervous system of the passengers, being subject to the same laws of Nature. If this indeed were so the physiology of the astronauts would develop less quickly than at the beginning of the flight, and they would therefore be growing older, from the purely physiological aspect, more slowly. Now if after a long flight in space the space vehicle again alights, the rhythm of the wrist-watches would certainly return to normal again, and the metabolism of the passengers would probably do the same. The time registered on the watches, of course, would be behind the right time on earth, and the people would have aged less.

It is perfectly clear that during our journey there was no deviation in time, but functioning slowed down. Since however, for the time being, no space vehicle has been produced at a speed which could be compared to the velocity of light, the problem is presented as a matter of conjecture. The fact, however, that physical phenomena take place at a slower rhythm during motion at high speed and return to their normal rhythm after the movement had been completed has been proved on the strength of experiments carried out with μ mesons and by the other tests mentioned. These experiments have also proved as a matter of fact that μ mesons after capture behave precisely as if no deceleration had taken place. If the mesons wanted "to make up for lost time" after decelerating, they ought to disintegrate extremely quickly—in a split instant of the disintegration time of two millionth of a second—which, however, does not happen.

It is therefore clear that experiments in physics merely show that physical processes slow down under certain circumstances; this decline in speed has quite obviously nothing to do with the rhythm of time.

5

The question of the rhythm of time also came up in connection with cosmological problems. Between 1920 and 1930 it was discovered that the spectra of atoms coming from distant stellar systems differ peculiarly from the atomic spectra observed on our earth.

It was observed that the spectral line of hydrogen in a light coming from a remote planetary system does not appear where terrestrial hydrogen lines are usually met with, but is shifted towards the red colour of the spectrum. This could also be interpreted to mean that hydrogen atoms oscillate slower in remote space than on earth. When however these phenomena are compared the fact that light emitted from a distant planetary system reaches us many hundred million years later has to be taken into account. Hence another version of the phenomenon might be that hydrogen atoms oscillated more slowly many million years ago and that their rhythm has gathered speed since then. This supposition is supported by the observation that the red shift increases *the more distant the stellar systems are* that is, the longer time the trajectory of the light takes to the earth. This analysis may lead to the conclusion that the movement of atoms and other particles might accelerate in time at cosmic speed.

There also another explanation for the above phenomenon. If it is assumed that distant planetary systems move away from the earth at high speed and that the speed increases as distances grow, then—as a result of the Doppler effect—light rays seem to oscillate at a slower rhythm, even if the number of oscillations of atoms in the light which celestial bodies emit is identical with the frequency of atoms on earth. This second variant is usually called the "expanding universe," a term which is questionable, since it is not the universe which is expanding but the planetary systems which are drifting apart for causes unknown. These astronomical observations and their interpretation have given rise to many romantic tales.

The essence of the matter is simply this: events taking place on a cosmic scale—e. g. the movement of the stellar systems—proceed at a changing, eventually accelerating rhythm compared to atomic motion. In the final analysis, however, conclusions can only be reached from the relation of the rhythm of the two kinds of progression to each other. It may sound fascinating, but in fact accelerating or decelerating time does not exist.

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS*

by

BRUNO STRAUB

A modern society, accustomed to advanced technology considers it self-evident that the rationalization of any branch of industry ensures higher returns. In the same way, it considers that the elimination of parallelism, duplication and waste in science, the organization of highly specialized manpower for joint work is the way to obtain the most from any given scientific effort.

If we believe that science is one of the most important driving forces of economic progress, which helps man to free himself from poverty, hunger and suffering, then it seems to follow that science should be organized on a world scale.

Most scientists are emotionally convinced that an increase in international cooperation is necessary, both in the interests of scientific progress and that of decreasing international political tension. Cooperation has many forms and different levels, and all of them, even formal contacts, make some contribution to these ends. However, joint research, whether within or outside a joint research institution, appears to be the most profitable form of cooperation, because it fulfils to the highest degree what we expect from cooperation: the avoidance of duplication, the exchange of information and the friendship of scientists of different nationalities. Some joint research institutions already exist, and there are several examples of international cooperation that have achieved a moderate measure of success. There have also been many discussions and plans which have led to nothing, or at least to no tangible results.

I shall try to list those factors which facilitate and those which inhibit international cooperation in joint research. A knowledge of these factors is necessary to avoid making impressive but unrealistic proposals, and to help establish the correct procedure to initiate advanced forms of international cooperation at points where the inhibition is the weakest. Only after achieving some success in this can we proceed to the next level.

* A paper presented to the Conference of the World Federation of Scientific Workers (Vienna, 1968)

Scientific priorities

In an age of government-supported research and development, the main impetus for such support derives from "results," in the sense of new technologies and new knowledge. All countries, except the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. are faced, to a greater or lesser degree, with having to decide in which fields they should pursue intensive research and in which fields they cannot afford to do so. In the first situation, there is naturally no wish to participate in an international research institute. In the second the problem arises, how one can keep up with international development in a given field. Even if advanced know-how is purchased (e.g. in the medical field) and taken over from abroad, specialists have to be trained in contact with scientists abroad to be capable of assimilating the new results. This then constitutes a first impetus for training people abroad and for the maintenance of contacts; and in certain cases participation in international joint research may be the best solution.

The second impetus, in my view, comes from the scientists themselves. Excluding any political motivation, a scientist may reach a point where the solution of his problem requires the constant help and co-operation of others, and such cooperation is likely to be mutually profitable. It is highly probable that talented people in a scientifically less developed country might find no opportunity for cooperation at home. In most cases, the first and second impetuses can coincide as far as the field of activity is concerned.

Economic factors

The strongest inhibitory factor to cooperation is economic. As indicated above, joint research and joint research institutions are of interest to a country only in fields in which it has been decided not to concentrate resources at home. Whereas it is relatively easy to make an estimate for research which is needed, it is not at all clear how much should be invested in a project which will probably be useful only at some time in the future, and the results of which will, in any case, have to be shared with others.

Then, there is a further factor, which inhibits small countries like Hungary. A rapid expansion of university training is taking place and, at the same time, much has to be done to keep up with the advance of technology. The problem therefore arises of how to have an adequate university science-teaching staff. If your best scientists in any given field join an international institute, their influence on young people at home is lost. There is an addi-

tional problem connected with the same situation: if you let a man join an international institute where he can use the best facilities available, how can you supply his needs when he returns and expects to continue his research at home? Or, alternatively, once it is agreed that some of your people might go and work abroad, are you prepared to let them stay in a joint research institute for an indefinite time? At the present, in a divided Europe, where nationalistic feelings are still strong, this remains a serious problem for many nations. Political and national separation are entangled with linguistic and cultural differences. Although one might reduce the number of languages needed by a scientist to two or three, most people are not prepared to live indefinitely within a foreign cultural environment.

Another powerful and paralyzing inhibitory factor lies in the more or less direct connexion of scientific activity with their industrial and military application.

The choice of location

Problems arise when choosing the location of a proposed scientific establishment. To establish an international institution in an advanced country means to give more to those who are already rich, and to aggravate existing problems of the scientific gap; to establish it in a less advanced country means a loss of efficiency in certain respects. The number—not the strength—of the factors inhibiting the creation of international research centres is greater than those promoting them. Apart from our internationalist feelings, it seems obvious that the future of scientific activity lies in cooperation and joint research on an international basis, and it is in this sense that we have to move forward.

I think what I wish to say can best be summarized in the form of proposals relating to my own field of interest.

The best procedure would be to start in a field such as the production of protein (and, in general, food) based on new principles and ideas; another such non-controversial field could be found in medical biological research (e.g. histocompatibility, molecular control of cell division, brain research, human genetics). In view of the difficulties enumerated it would be advisable to establish a chain of inter-linked institutes dealing with different problems, fields, or projects, situated in the countries participating in the programme. It would also be advisable to draw up a programme of basic research suitably combined with applied research and to set objectives capable of interesting governments responsible for their countries spending. Administration should

be in the hands of local people, whereas scientific leaders should be picked from the best available, irrespective of nationality. There should be a turnover of young scientists so that they spend not more than two or three years in the institute. Leading scientific personnel should be asked to stay for at least three to five years, with the possibility of one or two extensions, and they should receive reasonable guarantees regarding their future after returning home, as well as having the opportunity of keeping up regular contact with their native land.

FROM OUR NEXT NUMBERS

PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF SIR ALEXANDER KORDA
H. Montgomery Hyde

BOOKS IN THE STREET
Imre Szász

CHRONICLE OR TRAGEDY?
Dezső Mészöly

KEATS'S "PRINCE OF HUNGARY" IDENTIFIED
István Gál

THE "DISCOVERY" OF GEORGE STEINER
Péter Nagy

A PESSIMIST COLOURIST: ISTVÁN FARKAS
Éva Bajkai

ERZSÉBET GALGÓCZI

IT'S A MILLION MILES TO BUDAPEST

(Short story)

The correspondent of the local paper had persuaded me to go to a village meeting with him. Sitting there I soon became so utterly bored that I felt the blood in my veins had turned into vinegar. To leave the filthy, stale-smelling culture hall was impossible—it was freezing cold outside. I started looking around.

The audience was easy to take stock of. There were elderly men and middle-aged women sitting on the unpainted, rough benches with scarves around their heads, wrapped in overcoats like myself. I have grown to know these furrowed peasants' faces only too well—full of lines and wrinkles produced by work and worry that could not be smoothed away. Whenever I see these people weeding sugar-beet on all fours, or stacking hay I feel a heart-rending anguish and a mad helplessness. They were sitting in intent attention now, with their mouths open, as if they now were about to hear the word for which, who knows, they had been waiting for generations.

There were four men, presumably the leaders of the village, sitting upon the low stage, next to a table covered with cheap red flag-material. This kind of people represent an unmistakable transition between peasants and white-collar workers; they wear a white shirt and a tie, but boots like peasants. And a leather-coat like the farm bailiffs of old. Whenever I see a village leader in a leather-coat I can't help reflecting: he must have admired and envied, as a child, the estate managers riding along in their leather-coats. Their faces were almost as worn and neglected as the peasants' but their hips were wider and upholstered—they don't work every single ounce of fat off their hips like the peasants do.

One of them—really, I should have started out with him for it was him I noticed first—stuck out of the four as much as an Italian actor would do among his admirers. He was not yet forty, a dark, extremely handsome man. Not a single wrinkle on his plump, clean-shaven face, his slanting eyes glimmered alertly and tensely under the long eyelashes, like the eyes of a beast of prey scenting its victim. He seemed to wear the same outfit as the others but on a closer look one could see that his shirt was a fashionable cut, his tie fastidiously chosen, the cloth of his suit elegant and his boots well made.

"Who's that man?" I asked the correspondent next to me.

"The chief agronomist," he whispered back. "The name is Szalóki. I'll tell you about him later."

Szalóki's eyes were continually on the move as if he was looking for someone among the audience. They settled on an odd

face and jumped on in disappointment. No, these are not the right words: his eyes clung to an odd face and broke off in disappointment. Slightly separated from the audience a young girl was taking down the minutes of the metting sitting at a tiny typing-table, by the window. Just about twenty, pretty, rather well-dressed, but that in utterly provincial manner. Even so, of course, she was by far the best-looking female in a group where even the youngest peasant-woman was in her late forties. No sooner had Szalóki started to stare at the girl than I understood: he had been looking for a female. So far perhaps to occupy himself in the boring monotony of the meeting but perhaps with some further aims in his mind.

The typist soon realized she was being stared at. She lifted her head. When her searching eyes met the fiery glance of the chief agronomist she quickly returned to her papers. But the man's eyes did not leave her alone; the eyeing game lasted right till the end of the meeting. I, too, was relieved of boredom watching them. I was even sorry to leave in the end—I could no longer follow developments.

I have known my provincial colleague, Bandi Rácz, for fifteen years, but only superficially. I don't even know if he is married, if he has children, if he is divorced. From time to time, whenever I had some business in his town I dropped in on him in his editorial offices to find out about the latest events and hear the latest gossip. He was a short, thin young man of 35 with thinning hair and a colourless complexion. One must get a terrible amount of work done working for a provincial paper, still, he looked faded rather than exhausted or harassed. Perhaps because he promised a story about Szalóki I made a mental comparison between him and the handsome chief agronomist and he, of course, came off second best in the comparison not only as far as looks went but also as regards vitality.

We sent off the paper's car and entered a warm, well-lit espresso.

"Well, then, who's this Szalóki man?" I asked curiously.

"Have you come across the word 'universal party worker'?" he asked with a note of having discovered something in his voice.

"Not only the word but several such comrades," I answered. "15–20 years ago most party workers were 'universal'—they had to be experts in the particular area to which they were directed by the party. Real expertise came into fashion only in the last few years."

"Oh, yes, because party workers have since then acquired expertise in one area or another."

"I'd much rather you talked about Szalóki."

"I *am* talking about him for he never acquired any expertise in anything." He added with a bitter smile: "It was I who started Szalóki's career. Back in 1950."

He took a long pause, musing, so I asked him:

"Do you regret it now?"

He didn't answer. "Yes, in 1950," he said meditating. "I was fresh at the paper then, twenty years old, naively enthusiastic. I took everything at face value, as—what should I say?—as it was written in our own paper... Looking back on it most people say they knew something turned wrong at the time of the Rajk trial. Not me, though. In my home-village where my parents lived nobody cared much about the Rajk trial, and in town, when I was taken on, especially at first, I talked to no one but my colleagues who—even if they thought differently—talked the stuff they were expected to talk. It was then that the first collectivization campaign was launched. We were supposed to make publicity for the idea of collective farms by, among other things, publicizing the cooperatives already working. There were 7 or 8 such farms in the county, one was more miserable than the other. And then I came across Szalóki. He was hardly past 20—and he was the president of a 17-strong cooperative. It was a very good

cooperative, members received as much as 30–35 thousand forints for a year's work.

Szalóki came from a poor peasant family and the way things so often happen: from a *Lumpenproletariat* one. His sisters, during the war avoided closer contact with only those armies which didn't march through their village. There's a story about one of his elder sisters. A modest little N.C.O., named Boris, had courted her for a long time. He overwhelmed the girl and her family with presents. When his unit was about to retreat in the autumn Boris arranged it with his commander that he should spend the last night with his sweetheart. He turned up on the appointed evening with his complete kit and four packed rucksacks so that the next morning he could go straight to the railway station. Early in the morning, dressing in a hurry he noticed that the four rucksacks were missing. They had been stolen. From the very room where he had slept with his girl. The Szalóki girls—although there were quite a few of them—were dressing out of the contents of those sacks for years after.

As to Janó Szalóki, people said he used to deal in timber before he became president of the cooperative. And he had done it in an extremely original way. I have told you that the family had nothing and they didn't get anything in 1945 either since there had been no estate in the village to be distributed among the villagers. But there was plenty of wood on the hills and all over the country. Janó and his mates found out those people who were about to build houses for themselves or needed timber for some other reason. Janó and his mates were reluctant to make contracts for firewood since that had a very low price. They agreed on the quantity and price and then they picket out some suitable, large tree near the village, felled it during the night and the next morning the timber arrived in the third village. A peasant told me once he had gone there, to Gyarmat to buy timber. It was a beautiful, tall piece of oak, two people could hardly embrace it. Suddenly Janó appeared. He knew the fellow, he knew everyone in the neighbourhood, and all the people knew him too, anyway, Janó whispered to the peasant:

"Don't buy this one, Uncle Miska, we've sold this one."

If they were interrupted while felling the trees, or if the business was too urgent they went as far as picking up wooden bridges or stealing the ferry from the river Rába.

But I found out about all this many years later, little by little. Then, in 1950, I didn't even think of peeping back stage, so to speak, and nobody in the village dared say anything about him. In Szalóki I saw a gifted peasant youth heading a 35-thousand-a-year cooperative who was not only handsome but also straight in his behaviour. I wrote a long article about him. He was discovered at once, he was sent to a school at Zsámbék and was appointed the leader of a state-farm unit.

Also, as I found out later, at his own request, he was not sent back to the unit he had led—it had been sheer humbug, it fell to pieces in one or two years. He had known it would, or at least he must have done—he left it all in time, creating the impression that "as long as Szalóki was in charge of the unit everything was first class but as soon as this wonderful organizer left everything collapsed."

It was then that the expropriation of "kulak" lands and property began and Szalóki farmed there. And how did he do it? They had got 60 acres of well-kept vines, they had nothing to do but harvest it the first year, and 300 acres of hayfield. They had leased the hayfield to individual peasants to mow for a third of the crops, the two-thirds which had remained for them—well, they had sold that for good money, they didn't even bother with transport, they sold the standing crop. As far back as I can remember this county has always suffered from a lack of fodder and as soon as the legislation came out as to how much milk, pork, livestock and the rest the peasants had

to sell to the state at fixed prices no money was grudged to buy fodder. Szalóki's lot didn't have to pay rent to the state, their lands were worked by others—what they did was nothing but pocket the money like a new kind of landlord. Mind you, there was not a single peasant in that lot of Szalóki's, it included the woman deputy council president, a former instructor of the cadet corps, a publican, the man in charge of the stills and other such people—all ready to exploit the lands that had belonged to the "kulaks."

As I say, I found out about all this only two years later when Szalóki stirred the county's attention for a second time. He seduced the wife of his boss, who was director of the state-farm. I never knew the woman but I've been told she had been an actress before Vedres married her back in '38. People say that the woman was very pretty, she sang and played the guitar and she had a walk like a leopard's. As soon as Szalóki started the management of the unit he made friends with the director, they went shooting together in the Bakony forests, they went up to Budapest to see an opera and Szalóki was a frequent dinner-guest at Vedres', they played cards together. And behind the back of the husband he seduced the wife in the meantime who, by the way, was 15 years his senior. They showed up one dawn at the county party office with one single suitcase. Szalóki made no bones about what had happened and he asked for a job, any job, anywhere, so that he could make ends meet—and a room where they could be happy. The comrade in charge was moved to tears by this passionate pledge and also by the sight of the finely dressed lady with lacquered nails at whose side, at that time, Szalóki didn't look more than a horse-dealer smelling of rum and onions. Also, the behaviour of the comrade was influenced by the fact that Vedres was an old hand in the trade, who had gone around in a coach while he had been carting manure from the cattle shed—had it been up to him gentlemen of the Vedres kind would all be breaking stones, anyway he took Szalóki and the woman to another state farm in his own car where they got a room with an earthen floor next to the cow shed. The furniture was supplied from the workmen's quarters—rusty iron-beds and blankets full of fleas, and they had their meals together with the workmen where tin spoons worth a penny were chained to the tables lest the seasonal workers stole them. Like manuscripts to the shelves of ancient monasteries but then those manuscripts were worth villages at that time... Add to all this the flies, the mud and the enormous distance of 30 kilometres to the next small town—without even television in those years. It's quite easy to guess which of the two got fed up with this "happiness" first: in three months the woman ran back to her husband. But director Vedres refused to take her. He was not a particularly vain man but he just couldn't stand the idea of looking ridiculous twice: when the woman is taken away and again when she is sent back by mail, as it were, like an emptied purse—and all this in front of the whole county, on front of the whole country even, for he was known to everyone in the game. He wasn't particularly vain, as I say, but as soon as his wife went he picked a young, well-shaped Gypsy girl from among the seasonal workers who was illiterate but who played the zither, sang, danced delightfully and walked like a leopard.

At any rate, he turned down the wife and the woman took poison a few days afterwards.

The police conducted an investigation into the matter but Szalóki stood blameless: he didn't kill the woman after all, he had only seduced her which is a criminal act only if the person seduced is under 14.

The death of the pretty actress-lady must have upset Szalóki—although I'm a bit reluctant to use such an extreme phrase about him—I'd rather say he took alarm for when I next heard about him he was married. He married a very beautiful, very naive

peasant girl of 18 in the village where he worked as president of the village council.

I couldn't tell you how exactly he got there but it isn't important now. By being "promoted" from his native village he became a member of the establishment: his work, his brains and his energy were from this point onwards at the disposal of the "higher organ." All he had to do was obey and execute... He could have, of course, refused to "obey" and "execute" but then we could've hardly met him today as a chief agronomist. Nothing is more alien to Szalóki's character, however, than the questioning of anything which had been thought out by somebody else, or if not thought out, stated by somebody else. Like a disciplined soldier he went where he was sent, he did what he was commissioned to do. It did happen—later, of course—that he asked to be sent to some post but this doesn't make much of a difference. He remained within a circle and he undertook everything without scruples within that circle.

In the autumn of 1952 a stalwart peasant of about forty came to see me in my office. He was crumpling his brow with his cap and he related in a clumsy style the injustice that had been done to him. The previous winter Szalóki, the president of the village council had organized a cooperative in his village. The cooperative had regrouped some lands near the villages for a start. His land—I've since forgotten the man's name—had been part of the land that had been regrouped. As a compensation he got a strip 10 kilometres from the village—swampy, sour land it was, where nothing but peewits and mole crickets could thrive, the maize sown into it was thrown out by groundwater for three consecutive years. The man was not going to accept the land, he went to see the council president and he resigned of the land gratis, he offered it to the state absolutely free. (Several hundred thousand acres of land deserted by the peasants were offered to the state in this manner at that time.) The man joined the building industry and started to work as an unskilled worker. Eight peaceful months had gone by when he got a summons from the district attorney. He had no idea why the law was interested in him. It turned out that Szalóki had reported him as a saboteur for failure to till his 12 acres and failure to yield the compulsory amount of crops to the state organs.

"Did the president accept the land when you offered it to him?" I asked the former peasant.

"That he did. Yes."

"Did you put that down in writing?"

His eyes winced, he wiped his forehead with his cap. "No, that we didn't. People at the court have asked the same." He looked at me in utter despair, he understood not even I could help him without written evidence. "I offered it and he took it, that's all."

I thought I couldn't help him but nevertheless I rang up an acquaintance of mine working at the district attorney's office.

"Is there any hope for this man?" I asked him. "Or will he be condemned?"

"He will be, I'm afraid. He can't prove he had resigned of his land officially."

"But... but the county abounds in deserted lands. Where would we get if we condemned someone for every 12 acres?"

"Not all council presidents start a case against those who have deserted their lands."

"And what if the village can't yield the compulsory amount to the state?"

"Not a single village is going to yield the compulsory amount this year."

"Well, then, what on earth did Szalóki start a case for?"

"We're no psychologists, Comrade Rácz, our business is Law. Find out for yourself if it takes away your sleep. Facts won't change if we learn what the motives of the council president were."

According to the official standpoint (and we had to publicize it in our papers, or at least we were not allowed to publicize any other standpoint) there was no bread because the "kulaks" were all saboteurs, they didn't

sow, and even if they did, they hid the crops or fed their livestock on it, then they killed the livestock and hid the meat too—anyway, we couldn't write the truth that the peasants were not interested in producing more for everything was taken away from them whether they produced much or little.

The man was sentenced to six months' imprisonment. Hopeless as I thought the case to be I nevertheless went to see the village before the trial. I found out nothing from Szalóki. He was sullen and stiff repeating over and over that the peasant was a saboteur which is a criminal act. I talked to many people in the village, the leader of the new farm unit among them, and the possible motive started to take shape in front of my eyes. When Szalóki accepted the land offered to him he had no idea on which part of the neighbourhood the land was—he was glad to accept it anyway, he thought the farm unit would till so much more land that year. The unit, however, was unable to till its own land, there was a drought that year to put the lid on everything—there were such enormous shortages in the compulsory yield that the council president had to do everything he could to at least protect himself from the blame that was to be expected. I should add that the "higher organs" never accepted a drought as the reason for a shortage. It was then that one of the desperate villagers told me: "We had a very good year last year. On Constitution Day a comrade made a speech saying that the good harvest was due to our liberation from the Germans by the Soviet Union, to the correct policy of our Party and the success of the five-year plan. Not a word was spoken about the peasants' work or the good weather. Should the same comrade come again we'd hold him by the neck and ask him: 'Tell us, comrade, why did the five-year plan prescribe such a bad harvest this year?' "

Szalóki didn't denounce my man only. The whole county didn't have so many "saboteurs," "enemies," "kulaks" or "kulaks' agents" as Szalóki's village.

I made notes of the people's complaints and I handed in the record to the responsible department of the party committee without any accompanying remarks. My guess proved right: there was not even an investigation into the matter. But it did have an effect, although officially not admitted: in the 1954 elections Szalóki was appointed candidate for the council presidency in another village by the higher organs.

Then I lost sight of him for a few years. I attended a party school, I got married and my wife tried hard to get to Budapest for, she insisted, one can never get anywhere outside Budapest, also, I had plenty of personal problems but that isn't relevant here. In the autumn of 1957, in the interval of a county conference I met Szalóki in the refreshment-room. He greeted me with exuberant joy, calling me "Comrade Rácz" in each sentence, shaking my hands warmly. I didn't know what to think of it all since the last time we met he was on the point of kicking me out of his office and I too, in my turn, came to heartily hate him in the meantime.

"You saved my life," he pressed my hands, almost moved to tears.

I was astonished.

"What's that?"

"If you hadn't replaced me in '54 I would have been done away with in '56."

I suddenly became horribly sorry that I had recorded the complaints of the villagers. There's a moral for you: one mustn't always interfere with the natural course of events.

Szalóki had a soft palm and well-groomed nails. As it was, there was almost nothing left in him of his old horse-dealer appearance. He had clean, almost elegant clothes on, his face was a little on the plump side, only as if his old features had been smoothed with sandpaper; all in all, his old clumsiness was almost completely gone, his movements had become smoother and more flexible. Each woman one has an affair with improves on one's appearance, one's manners a little bit: the first one made him shave every day, the

second got him to stop spitting on the floor and keeping his hands in his pockets, the third took him to the theatre, the fourth taught him how to behave with waiters, drivers and cloakroom attendants, the fifth made him read the papers, the sixth got him to meet people who were useful to know, the seventh... Over the years Szalóki had been taught everything what one—given more fortunate circumstances—learns in the family or in secondary school: eating with a knife and fork, dressing, behaving. For he had had many women and been involved in many scandals by then, the reason why we didn't know about them being that he carried on with his tyrannic dealings far away from our eyes, in small, remote villages.

There, in the refreshment-room I couldn't escape drinking a few cognacs to his lucky survival. I remarked that he must have had no difficulties in '56 then.

"Indeed, I was careful," he said and I just couldn't tell if there was satisfaction or cynicism in his voice. "I had learned a lesson: if I fulfil the compulsory deliveries to 200 per cent the peasants begin to hate me and all I get is the sack from my bosses. So what for, then? I was taking it cool, to stir up no trouble. Who on earth knew which line was going to stay the right one in those years, anyway. Who on earth knew which line it was the best to please? A party decree came out one month, and the next month—its opposite... I always toed the zig-zags with a slight delay."

"So, there was nothing in '56, was there?"

"Nothing. There was only an old peasant who threatened me his son would come home from Budapest to do me in. The funny thing was that his son was in the ÁVH, the security service. He would have been the last person to do me in."

Szalóki added he had been transferred to M. district centre to work as political instructor of the machine station—he must have expected me to express my congratulations—he shook my hands and we parted.

A few months later when I had some business in the neighbourhood I went to Szalóki's former village to find the old peasant in question. People at the village council immediately knew who the person was and they directed me to his place. Already then I suspected that the case must be a complicated one if everyone knew about it.

Old Gede's place was a nice big house with a nice iron-bar fence. A rich farmer's house, one would've thought, with horses kept on oats, huge-uddered cows, machinery carefully looked after. But no sooner had I shoved my way in through the gate than I felt quite in a different world: the size of the courtyard was what I expected—like a football field, but it was neglected quite beyond words. The boards of the sties were disintegrating, tiles were missing from the roof of the shed, the wooden fence had lost its balance, the remnants of the haystack and the dunghill were blown about by the wind and scratched about by the hens. It was a barren, heart-rending sight. And all this at a time when compulsory deliveries were abolished and the cooperatives were not yet reorganized, when it was worthwhile again taking up farming, when peasants were buying land like hot cakes... The times when millions of acres of land were left fallow were gone.

Old Gede looked like a student's image of an ancient Hungarian chieftain: hawk nose, a thick dangling moustache, his carriage bold upright. But his complexion was pale and there was suspicion lurking in the corner of his eyes. His wife was cooking, and he was making a bag out of raffia in the kitchen.

When he realized I meant no harm his suspicion disappeared.

"I used to have 30 acres of land, yes," he said sourly, without the least trace of self-pity. "And now I make bags for 20 forints," he pointed at the half-finished stuff, "the cooperative sells them for 200 forints each. But then they've got the director, his deputy, his cousin, his brother-in-law and the whole

lot to pay. I can make two bags a day, this just about keeps the pot boiling. I've never been on the kulak-list, I've never been harassed. But, you know, Comrade, the whole thing began only because my wife is a great one of tidiness." He said this with a kind sort of sarcasm and he smiled when he looked at his wife. "Everything has a place in this house. The trouble being that everything has more than one place here. When the compulsory came, that is, it was prescribed how much we had to give from about sixty crops, whenever we delivered something the wife put the receipt in a safe place, so safe that we never found it again." His wife wanted to put in a word or two but he waved at her in a calming manner. "All right, there's no trouble. I'm not saying that the council president wanted to squeeze us more than it was fixed by the law, it was probably because their administration was so very rotten they themselves couldn't find anything and that's why they kept summoning us to 'account'. It happened that we had been looking for the receipts for three days before going to account, we found all sorts of things, my elementary-school certificate for example, but the receipts were gone. So there were years when I fulfilled my obligations two or three times. It wasn't as simple, of course, as I'm telling you, it happened that we had quarrelled with the wife for weeks, she was taken ill once and taken to hospital. One November evening I was home alone, one of my sons worked in Sztálinváros, he earned our tax money, the other was still with us but he was astray somewhere when a state car pulled up in the yard with big floodlights and the rest. I went out on the porch to meet them asking what they wanted but they pressed their way inside. There were three men and one woman in leather-coats. All of them young. They stopped in this very kitchen and one of them, probably the leader, spoke up: 'It's all right, Daddy, you just produce ten thousand and we wont bother you again, everything'll be settled.' Well, I don't know what came over me," old Gede lost his breath just remembering the scene, he went on after a long pause. "Something must've broken in me by then. I said, and it sounded as somebody else's voice, not mine: 'But I've only seven thousand.' They whispered into each other's ears and the leader said: 'All right, that'll do.' I went into the room and got the money out of the straw mattress, brought it out. They pocketed it, got in the car and left. I didn't want to believe that it had happened at all then, it was like a bad dream. But it must have happened for the money was gone and there were traces of the car in the yard the next morning. I rushed to the council house and complained to the president, Szalóki, about what had happened the night before. I thought Szalóki would snatch the telephone at once to inform the county police but this didn't happen. He burst into tremendous laughter. 'What a piece of old bull... you are,' he laughed into my face. 'You let yourself be taken in,' and he laughed on. I almost told him: 'You do the same to me, only you don't come to my yard by car, I bring the money on my cart myself...' But I thought it was better not to speak. I left him in his office, still laughing. It was only a year later I told him: 'Should my son come back home he'll do you in.' "

"Was your son in the ÁVH?" I asked old Gede.

"Not that, but he was in the army... He did come home, though, but only to change into civilian clothes and he rushed off towards the border. 'I've had enough of this country,' he said... When order was restored Szalóki came back to the village council and he summoned me. He said there was a decision I was a counter-revolutionary element and I couldn't leave the village without his permission. Well, my land was outside the village, so if I wanted to go out to work I needed his permission. Well, I thought to myself, I'll prove I can hold out longer than the lot of you. I'll get permission each morning. You'll get fed up

before I will... But something else happened. The next morning I went to the council in this outfit, the president bawls at me: 'What sort of outfit is that? How dare you enter the council in dirty boots? What do you think this place is, a stable or something?' I took a gulp, came home and put on my Sunday best. 'There you are,' the president said, calmly this time. 'You can dress up properly if you want to. I give you permission, you can got out to the Balog strip.' But it was noon by then. I learned my lesson, or at least I thought I did, for the next day I went to collect the permission in my Sunday best. The president shouted at me: 'Where are you going? Are you going to plough? In this outfit? What do you take us for? Fools? You must be thinking about leaving the country like your son. Come back in working clothes.' By the time I arrived home and changed my clothes it was noon again. And this is how it went on for months. I was thinking I'd take the horse traces and hand myself on the lime-tree opposite the council house. But then I heard Lajos Sztanek was about to buy land. I went to see him. He bought seven acres of mine. In a month's time I sold the land, the horses, the gear, everything. Since then I've been making these bags..."

I interrupted the narrative of the journalist.

"It's a horrible story. Have you ever written it up?"

Bandi Rácz low-spiritedly stared in front of himself.

"No."

"But why not?"

"Shall I be frank or shall I tell a lie?"

"Tell me the truth."

"I was afraid. I was also, well, I was also, how did the revision committee put it... I was also misled during the counter-revolution. I didn't do anything, but neither did I do the opposite. I was glad I wasn't found guilty of anything and I wasn't fired... Look," he bent his faded, harassed face a little closer, "I'm no good at anything but writing. Not even that above the average. There's only this paper in the county. Where do I go if I'm fired? What do I do? I can do unskilled work in the brick factory..."

"But," I objected, "there are nineteen counties in this country. And a capital..."

"For you, yes!" he cut in. "There are nineteen counties and a capital for you! But for me..." I wanted to speak but he raised his hand. "Let's leave that. When I was 24 I decided to do better things than András Rácz. Please, don't... If you're interested in the story of our comrade Szalóki I'll go on. If not I'll see you to your hotel."

"I am." I agreed and I was interested in him now, as a journalist. He mused for a while where we left off and continued:

The district centre in question, the most rotten conglomerate mankind has ever produced, soon raised Szalóki to the status of a local Don Juan. I don't know how many of the adventures attributed to him were true and how much of it was sheer myth but even if all the men hated him, every one of them, he could have got away with it had he not seduced the wife of the district party secretary. I know the woman myself: she was a fragile, timid little woman who blushed easily; the mother of two children, she made the impression of a virgin. She worked in the library, this is where Szalóki discovered her—I can imagine quite easily that for her sake Szalóki took to reading—anyway, he went to the library regularly to court her. Nothing could possibly have happened between them, they always met in front of 30 or 40 people—and the whole town was talking about their affair. The husband got to know what was going on only later when Szalóki no longer frequented the library, presumably because by then the woman was willing to meet him in private. No one thought the woman capable of adultery, everyone who knew Szalóki watched grudgingly how this oily-eyed, well-saped fellow—who by then used scent

too, like the officers of old—was bound to fail in the end, for once.

It seems that he did not fail after all for a few weeks later he was dismissed from his job as a result of disciplinary action. There were such intangible charges as "deviation from the correct political line" and the like. You know how it is: if they want to find faults with your work they can always find some flaws in your work which only need to be widened according to the purpose in mind.

Szalóki, however, was not going to go under too easily. He handed in some very damning evidence against the district party secretary at the responsible places, so the whole matter had to be investigated.

Ferenc Habán, the party secretary, was a small, round man and usually passionate, stubborn and violent for his type. He started as a workman of the brick factory and joined the establishment around 1948. He made a legendary remark on hearing the resignation of Rákosi in 1956: "I disapprove of Comrade Rákosi's behaviour. This is opportunism." At a spectacular trial of the people's tribunal in '56 he was sentenced to death but the execution didn't take place since it was then that the Soviet tanks entered the town.

Habán did the post-56 purge himself. He appointed a young man of 25 as his chief attorney who was only a third-year student of law but who seemed perfectly reliable. His two deputies were two other very young jurists and they began the liquidation of counter-revolutionaries.

They picked up the kulaks, the former cadet corps instructors, soldiers who had deserted, the presidents of the Revolutionary Committees, everyone who had played some part in the events and they brought them all to court.

But the three young men took up the habit of going to restaurants with music in the evenings and they sized up the couples. Whenever they discovered a pretty woman whom they happened to fancy they went up to her table and said: "It's the attorney. Please, produce your documents!" They wrote down the particulars of the man and left. A jeep came for the man that very night. The woman who had sat with him and who was either his wife or his lover rushed desperately to the attorney's office the next morning to find out where her husband—or lover—was, what the charges were against him, what was to be expected and the like. The chief attorney, who, as I say, was only a third-year student of law, told the woman her husband had taken part in the counter-revolution and it's not very likely the sentence would be less than five years. As soon as the woman completely collapsed they started to comfort her saying there was something to be done after all—for her to go to bed with them, for example, in which case they would arrange for her husband to be released that very day... I won't go into the details of the scene for I wasn't there and besides I'm unable to understand what a man can enjoy in something which he doesn't get of the woman's free will but by force—anyway, I suppose, you can imagine that everything was thrown in from threats to compliments and cognac to convince the women that five years of her husband's life were worth it. But they couldn't convince every woman like that! There was one whose husband returned from Yugoslavia after November 4th—in this case there was really no way to prove that the husband had had any part whatsoever in the events—well, this woman was the first to complain at Habán's office. Also, as a later investigation showed, there had been others complaining too, who had previously bought out their husbands from jail. Habán, however, ordered no investigation whatever. He didn't believe the complaints were true, mind you, it *was* difficult to believe them for the young chaps were handsome and full of cash—they couldn't possibly have been driven to act like that through sexual frustration—and, the party secretary must have thought these comrades were doing a good

job of purging the district from revisionists after all... It was only later that because of a bribe of a tremendous amount they were dismissed, but they got away with the "buying-out" business, each of them got a job as legal adviser at a factory.

Szalóki stirred it all up six months after the transfer of the lawyers to establish a parallel with his own case. He knew about it from one of his mistresses. He got his mistresses not through abusing his official power and still his punishment was the same as theirs.

The investigation—which was carried out most confidentially, so not the whole of the county knew about it, only half of it—lasted several weeks and its only visible result was that Szalóki got back his job at the Machine Station Board. The district party secretary also remained in his post. From which Szalóki could conclude that even if he can still rely on his clever powers he couldn't expect too much in town.

It was then that cooperatives were reorganized and a government decree enabled party workers to take up jobs as presidents of new, inexperienced cooperatives. The decree provided tremendous allowances for the applicants: their former salary to go with the complete pay of a cooperative leader and an allowance for living apart from their families. There were some presidents who earned more in one month than a peasant working under them in an entire year. We can safely say today that the campaign proved to be wrong, partly because it attracted adventurers, people of loose morals and people out for an extremely well-paid job, partly because some of the applicants—who were undoubtedly honest and ready to sacrifice themselves for the good cause—were just no good at agricultural management. One could hear such extreme remarks in those times: Industry and the army have poured it all over the cooperatives. Anyway, to retreat without loss of face came in very handy for Szalóki. He applied for a job—to become president of a cooperative.

A year later I came across him by pure chance for small as a county is even a provincial correspondent like me cannot manage to pay regular visits to all its 200 villages. I visited the most effective and famous cooperative of the county this time. On finishing the interview with the Kossuth Prize winning president, I was asked by him if I would like to accompany him to the neighbouring village whose cooperative the county wanted to annex to his—"pin it on to his neck," as he put it. The former president had been relieved with immediate notice and he had to let the county know by the next day if he accepted a second presidency, as a second job, of course. He didn't want to buy a pig in a poke, he thought it wise to look around first to see if he could achieve anything at all with the cooperative.

Tengerdi—the president whose name you must have heard—was a new car-owner and he relished driving along the first-class road connecting the two villages. But he relished even more introducing me into what the village was noted for. The village Gy. was called a village "of county rights" for it was the native place of the county council's president whose mother still lived there. Up till 1957 the village "of county rights" was the poorest, most backward place in the district since it's inhabited by indifferent, unambitious folk extremely malicious to each other, people who "wouldn't get up and grab a bucket when the neighbour's house was on fire." This is why the village burned down several times in his—Tengerdi's—childhood and it was flooded by the Marcal each spring, for their ancestors had been too lazy to build the village outside the flood area and the villagers have never since had enough community spirit to raise a dam along the small river. Gy. was the only village which had no electricity, no road and no transport after the liberation because the villagers didn't feel they needed them and also because they were afraid they would have to contribute a penny or a shovelful of ground. Nature,

however, had been generous with them: they have enough land, enough forests and a huge hayfield in the flood area. But they have always got the ambitious peasants of the neighbouring villages to do the work for a half or a third of the gains.

After '56 when a villager of theirs became the county council's president the situation radically changed. Electricity was introduced, a motor-road was built, the one we're taking now, they got regular coach transport and a dam made of rubble-stone. They also got a school and a house of culture, a wide-screened cinema, an espresso, a swimming pool, a sports ground with hot showers. It was then the village was labelled as having "county rights."

All well and good, but the people of Gy. began to feel they had eternal privileges and when the reorganization of cooperatives was launched all over the country they took it for granted they could stay out of the whole business. The great son of their village, however, was determined to organize the cooperative. The villagers started sending delegations to him—his nearest relatives, his closest, childhood friends, the girls he used to dance with, his mother—all in vain, organize the cooperative they must. The peasants joined it but they went on a passive, stubborn strike. The president who has just been relieved was the thirteenth at the place.

We arrived in the village. We found the cooperative's office in a remote, tight little room of the council house. There was room in it for no more than two chairs, a table and a stove; where they kept the documents, if they kept any at all, was a mistery. The smoke was so thick in that little hole of a room one could almost lean on it. A thin, exhausted-looking man rose behind the table with a burning cigarette in his hand. He hadn't shave for several days, the neck of his shirt was greasy with wear. I hardly believed my eyes: he was the clean-cuffed, perfume-smelling, clean-shaven Szalóki...

With no sign of surprize he gave us an indifferent greeting, with his depression unchanged. He met me too as if we had seen each other the day before.

There being only two chairs in the room I sat on the table.

"Are *you* going to take over after me?" he inquired indifferently from Tengerdi.

"Not necessarily," Tengerdi answered. "Only if I'll take it."

"Wait a second," Szalóki dashed off and we heard his shouts from outside: Uncle Pista! Uncle Pista!

On returning he sat down and lit another cigarette. The stubs filled the ashtray like killed worms, they were lying all about the floor and the filthy surface of the table.

"Come on, tell us how it all happened," Tengerdi resumed talking.

Szalóki waved and didn't answer.

"I have heard some of it," the Kossuth Prize winning president went on urging Szalóki to talk, "but still it's quite different to hear it from someone who's been through it himself." One could hear irony in his voice. Obviously, he disliked and despised this man. Only I didn't know for how long he had had these feelings.

Szalóki paid no attention. He stared in front of himself and went on smoking his cigarette.

"What the hell did I have to take this job for," he said in a muffled tone.

Tengerdi answered with grudge hardly concealed:

"You thought you were a full-size president in '52, didn't you? The peasant's not going to give up the three sacks of wheat which have remained for him and his children for the winter? All right, let the police get it from him. And he should be glad to get away without being sent to the internment camp, shouldn't he?"

Szalóki didn't seem to be bothered. He stared and repeated in a muffled tone:

"What the hell did I have to take this job for?"

Tengerdi gave a sarcastic laugh:

"The wife kept nagging you, didn't she, that you should buy a car, everyone has one,

Varga was president at the Mezőörs co-operative for only one year and..."

Szalóki looked up:

"My wife? She would be glad to have a kitchen which doesn't walk..." He would have gone on but Uncle Pista arrived with a large brief-case producting bottles of beer from it and putting them on the table.

"Shall I bring glasses too?"

"Damn it," Szalóki said and he wrenched the caps off on the door-bolt and offered us the bottles. The bottle was dewy with cold, it must have come right out of the frig. In other villages—I recollected my bitter thirsts—one couldn't even get warm beer. A village "of county rights."

Tengerdi took a gulp and said reproachfully:

"Why do you drink in the office? It's just not right to drink in front of the people."

Szalóki waved: he couldn't care less.

"But it does matter to me. Let's go to your flat if you don't mind."

"I have no flat," Szalóki said.

"What do you mean you have no flat? Where do you live then?"

"In the bull pen."

The other president opened a wide, astonished eye.

"Where?"

Szalóki must have sensed the laughter that was going to burst out. He abandoned his apathy and explained angrily:

"Ever since we've had artificial insemination we have had no bulls. The stable has been transformed for me. No one gave me a flat and I couldn't sleep under the bridge of the Marcal."

"Well, you do have a flat then."

"But you can't sit there."

"Why?"

"Because there's nothing but an iron-bed in it. And a wash-basin. On the floor. And a nail. In the door. And a knapsack. On the nail.

I was just about feeling sorry for the poor bloke but Tengerdi burst out laughing.

"So, this is the residence you receive the lasses in." He laughed bawling, then he wiped his eyes, took another gulp of beer and said seriously:

"So, this is how you wanted to do some good for yourself in this village, isn't it? Well, nearly everybody used to be a kulak round here. Do you know how you should have started off? You should have built a palace opposite the church from the coop's money for your official quarters. Bought a Pobeda on the coop's money for an official car. Picked on the prettiest 18-year-old girl who can at least tell a sowing-machine from a typewriter and taken her for a secretary. You would've had authority, believe me."

"I always do that," said Szalóki wrily.

"Why didn't you do that this time?"

"Cause I've been a fool," was the angry answer. "We have an official flat in town at last, a room and a kitchen, the wife begged me not to move again. A car!... She can't look at anything with wheels by now...!"

"I'm not going to bore you with the rest of the conversation. I've mentioned that ever since the founding of the cooperative the peasants have been on a passive but obstinate strike. Szalóki couldn't handle them either. They had that splendid hay-field in the floor area. Szalóki had it mown with the machines of the machine station but the peasants would've had to collect it. But nobody went out to work. It was a jam, all the tighter since the river was on the rise and a flood over the mown, first-class hay was impending. Szalóki was angry and desperate. He asked for police from the district. The police drove out everyone to the flood area, old women even. The hay was saved—but there was a delegation sent to the great son of the village the next day: We don't want this president.

I felt sure Szalóki would never stand on his feet again. And I was very pleased. I had found out about his past before '56—his bosses must have known it too. And the 40 policemen—well, I thought, the establishment can never take him back again. At

the beginning of our conversation you said party workers in the old days had to be experts of the particular area they were sent to. Well, this is true of the stone age of socialism. Since them most party workers have become experts in one or more fields. Szalóki never learned and was no expert at anything. Or to put it in a better way: he never worked at the same place for a long enough time for his expertise or the lack of it to be revealed, or I'd rather say: he never *was* at the same place for long enough. Over his ten-year-long career only one capacity of his has been revealed, namely, his expertise on women, from the hips down.

Let me say again, I was satisfied: the scum *will* go under after all. I wrote about bright topics for months afterwards although those were not exactly idyllic days. Are there idyllic days at all in history? In history, but never in the present.

I happened to go to district centre S. once —there are five districts in the county and Szalóki became notorious in another one— when I heard someone mention Szalóki's name. It's no exaggeration to say that it sounded like a mortar shot in my ears.

Later, when I heard how exactly he got there I relaxed. For people who were in the swing of events at that time it was open secret that a lot of power was going to be taken away from the councils: their authority was going to be pressed back to the sphere which they—causing God knows how much damage—had left: administration. Now, council workers who were gifted and ambitious started to look for other, more creative jobs so that they didn't find themselves fired without another place to go. Szalóki was taken on in the place of one such sharp man. Just you wait—I laughed to myself—what sort of face you will pull when you got out to a coop president ordering him to make contracts for a hundred more pigs for the district's plan is so much short and he will laugh at your face and say: Go on, produce it on the pavements! Or in St. Stephen's Park. . . !

But my laughter was premature. Szalóki had no powers on his hands except one: to get power.

I don't know if you've noticed or not but when we reorganized the coops we let each village elect the president for themselves. We even created a slogan to go with the movement: "The village knows best what its candidate is like." What we did afterwards was kicking the popularly elected presidents out of power one after the other. We didn't have to patch up an ideology while doing it for it had long been ready: "Should he be our man he would have long started to bring politics in." I know many honest, able peasants whom—after a few years of presidency—I met in the Railway Factory "moving materials."

Their number increased by one at that time.

I have a few "reliable" cooperatives where I always like to go back for I always find some "positive" material there. These are not outstanding farms, they have no spectacular results—neither do they have spectacular failures, mind you—they carry on with a kind of solid, reliable farming, they do all jobs in time and the people earn reasonably well.

János Kulcsár was the president of a cooperative like this. A peasant of fifty, he finished technical school after he had been elected. He was a sensible man full of common sense, and not quite without imagination. In the beginning, for example, when they were building a cow shed for a hundred cows, the builders had no crane to hoist up the reinforced-concrete seams on to the roof. It should have meant a delay of at least two months until the builders could get the crane there. What did Kulcsár do? He went to the Railway Factory to borrow one on a lorry for a few days but the factory just couldn't dispense with it. The president then went to the Russian military headquarters and although he didn't speak a word of Russian he made his end understood with sign language. He got the crane for a week. Com-

pletely free, of course, he only had to feed the chap who handled the crane. In three days the seams were hoisted up but Kulcsár didn't send the crane back—he got it for a week after all—but lent it to the cooperative of the next village—for good money.

Anyway, the thin, tall man had some ingenuity but he just couldn't upon anything really new since he hadn't enough freedom of thought and education for that. (Also, nothing like that was expected of a president in those days.) Indeed, he had a fault too, if one can call it that: he never dared to oppose power, or the exponents of power, not even in the most trivial matters.

As soon as Szalóki became the instructor of the village—the same village where we were today—it suddenly turned out that the old, experienced president does everything the wrong way. At least, Szalóki kept finding faults with what he was doing. It looked as if he had wanted to "liquidate" Kulcsár—I would bet anything *now* that he did want to liquidate Kulcsár, but, of course, I can't prove it.

I'll tell you a few examples. The cooperative's plans had counted on a mechanized harvest but the summer had been so wet that the combines just couldn't go on the fields, all of them got stuck in the mud, they couldn't even tow them off with Belorus tractors. The peasants were willing to do the harvest for a tenth of the crops—pleading that the same amount had been their wage before the war. Szalóki represented the "district" at the meeting in question and he insisted they couldn't get more than one-twelfth. Nobody took the offer. The quarrel went on for the whole summer between Szalóki and the preasants and Szalóki gave in in the end. "In the end" literally, for it was September 2nd by then, the harvest should have been finished by that time. They reaped about a hundred quarters from an acre that year.

And who was told off for it? The president.

Or take another instance. Szalóki got a mechanic for the cooperative one autumn. They were reluctant to take him because he was said to be bad. Szalóki got it through that he should be taken on. The mechanic was no good at his job, he was hardly available in the village with the pretext of "having to rush about for parts" but he always got the wrong parts for the machinery—in a few months all their tractors broke down and they were terribly in arears with the autumn work the next year.

Who was told off for it? The president.

One last instance, the one that got the better of Kulcsár and made him throw in his resignation.

Their technician, a very clever, ingenious lad of 20, an excellent organizer, Kulcsár's right hand, was called up by the army. At the final accounts of the coop there was a 900-forint deficit in the books. Mind you, 900 forints. Szalóki pounced down upon the figure and with the help of the district party committee he got a three-man brigade together to find where the deficit came from in the book-keeping. They kept on making impudent and humiliating remarks accusing the president—terribly upset as he was—of theft. "It may very well be that there's a 900-forint deficit," Kulcsár thought and he spoke to me about it later, "but we have a stock of 20 million forints and I am responsible for it all!" The investigation lasting an entire week did have a result: by mistake the coop gave the technician six quarters of wheat twice. He was already in the army when the second six quarters arrived and his mother didn't send the wheat back thinking it was her son's due.

Szalóki got very low learning about the result of the investigation and he told the president on parting:

"You've got away with it this time. But it won't be quite so easy next time."

A self-respecting man all his life, and with theft regarded in his village as the worst of sins, Kulcsár handed in his resignation. I think he made a silly mistake, he should have sued Szalóki for slander. But,

as I've already mentioned, a man like him can never deny his original peasant character and oppose even the meanest authorities.

Szalóki arrived at the next meeting of the coop with a new candidate. You may remember him, it was the same thin, effeminate chap who read the report today. He wears a fur-coat and this is such a feminine piece of clothing that thinking of him I can't help calling him a pimp. If ever I'll have some time I'll find out who he is—his name is Kovács—and where he made friends with Szalóki for I swear to you they must be the best of pals. When he was imposed upon the village the peasants wouldn't take him, they insisted on their former president, Kulcsár, there had to be three meetings until he was elected—anyway, as soon as he did become president he appointed Szalóki his chief agronomist.

As to Kulcsár, he joined the Railway Factory as an unskilled worker.

The journalist stopped talking, both of us lit up again.

"Have you written up this story?" I asked him.

"No."

"Why not?"

"I can't prove it."

"How about writing up the case itself, the way you told it to me. Without any remarks."

"At our paper one can write somebody up if he's already been replaced," was the low-spirited answer. "But what's the idea then? Who cares to kick at a corpse?"

"Szalóki, of course, hasn't been replaced yet," I remarked.

"No, he hasn't. And who knows..."

"Go on..."

"Well, who on earth knows who's behind him."

"Oh, yes, who's behind him..." and I was just about to add: "have you ever realized that it's you who's behind him, who's keeping him in his post?"—but looking at his faded, bloodless face I had no mind to make fun of him. He is defenceless because he is a coward. Come to think of it he is a man to be pitied. And suddenly I had the feeling that my colleague, Bandi Rácz, not only hated Szalóki but he envied him too. For his resourcefulness, for his lack of inhibitions and for his capacity to act. For his capacity and daring to go to the tenth or fifteenth village as a man of 40 and start from scratch over and over again. He—my journalist friend—wanted to get to the capital only once—even then at the inspiration of his wife—with no success. He probably never tried again. I just wanted to ask him why when he went on:

"There is something else that's part of Szalóki's story. Would you like to hear it?"

"Yes, of course."

I came out to this village last summer to see Szalóki. It was lunchtime so I was directed to his flat. He lived in a nice, two-room peasant house which the cooperative had bought him for official quarters. I have never seen a house furnished with such riff-raff pieces of furniture in my life. No sooner had the wife caught my glance than she burst out crying and began to pour out her complaints to me.

Szalóki wasn't at home, his wife was a woman of about 35. Her figure was still well-shaped, only her face was wrinkled and worn. I must have dropped in right after a family quarrel for she and the two children were having lunch at the table and one could see that the fourth place had been left abruptly with knife and fork thrown down. I didn't want to disturb but the woman was hard bent on getting me to stay so I stayed since, after all, I was interested in the situation. She showed me into the room and she joined me as soon as the meal was finished. It was here she burst out crying when she noticed I found the furniture very strange indeed.

"I come from Z. We used to be a noble family, the village is named after our family name. We had been living there for centuries. And people in our village still look

down on anyone whose grandfather at least wasn't born there. They call him a vagabond. And vagabonds are unreliable and suspicious, they may be looked for by the police all over the country even... My husband was a council president, still, they didn't accept him..."

"Perhaps that's just why," I risked an objection.

"They don't accept teachers or day-labourers either. A woman lives in our street. She lived there when I was born but even today no one's on familiar terms with her, no one calls her by her Christian name, no one enters her house... And do you know how many places I have lived in since I got married? Seven, Comrade, seven! There were years when we moved twice... Oh, I've got God's curse on me!" She wiped her face with the bottom of her apron and went on. "When I got married I got a beautiful room and kitchen-furniture from my mother. There was a complete bedroom-suite made of cherry wood, with lively colours which was the greatest fashion at that time. It had twelve pieces... When we left Z. our official residence was so small that the dressing table just wouldn't go in. There was room only in front of the window but who puts a mirror in front of the window? Believe me, Comrade, I was crying when we had to make up our minds whether to sell it or store it in the shed. I must have had a presentiment that this would be the lot of the other pieces too... The lot of our lives... In one of the official quarters we had—good God, how I hate this word!—there was too much furniture, we had to sell some of it, there wasn't enough furniture in the other flat, we had to buy some but, of course, we never got quite the same kind as the rest. So, this is what's come out of it all," and she opened her arms.

"But," I said vaguely, "why don't you buy a new lot?"

"What from?" the woman asked in indignation. "My husband has never earned enough to put something aside."

"In Gy.," I said, "in the village 'of county rights' he was earning pretty well as far as I know."

"He drank that all up," the woman waved. "He didn't like it there, drink was an escape for him." She added somewhat shily: "He couldn't live without me."

I became dumb. I thought I had no more business here when the woman started to speak as if in reverie:

"Do you know, Comrade, what I'd really like? A house of my own. It could be the tiniest house in the world, it could be made of mud but it must be ours and we should never leave that house again. So that when I put a row of raspberry canes in the garden I could be sure that I would pick the raspberries next year."

"Well, this dream of yours seems to be quite possible, Madam," I said comforting her.

"Not for me, I'm afraid," she sighed. "My husband has such restless blood... When I get very low I always tell him: I wonder who your ancestors were. Vagabond Gypsies?"

While taking leave I asked her where I could find Szalóki at that moment. The woman named a lane—I had no idea where it was. Szalóki's elder son was reading a book at the far side of the yard, his mother beckoned him and asked him to take me there. The boy put the book under his arm and started out beside me.

He was a thin boy of about 14 with unusually long eyelashes over a pair of sad, earnest eyes. His face showed no trace of any character yet but his eyes were touchingly beautiful.

"What are you reading?" I struck up the conversation with him.

He showed me the cover of the book: it was *Joseph and His Brothers.*

"Do you understand what you read?" I asked in surprise.

"Why shouldn't I? It's very beautiful."

"Which form do you go to at school?"

"I'll start my first year this autumn."

"Your first year in secondary school?"

"No, in technical school."

"What trade?"

"Building."

"What do you want to be? An architect?"

"No, an unskilled worker."

I thought I heard him wrong. "What?"

"An unskilled worker," he repeated calmly.

I took an interest in the boy.

"Are you doing well at school?"

"I'm among the best."

"Well, it beats me," I said, bewildered.

"Look, I've been thinking about it lots of times. Wherever I go after my school-leaving exams I can earn the best money as an unskilled worker in the building industry."

"And why do you want to earn so much right at the start?"

"I want to build a house for Mother. At first a tiny little one, just big enough for us all, and then I can make it larger, little by little, I can add a room or two and a verandah, a bathroom, a shed, anything we might need. And Mother can plant flowers all over the yard so she'll have friends and the women will come to see us and tell us how they preserve cucumbers for the winter."

This encounter with Szalóki's wife and son—the journalist went on—soothed me in a way. It revealed in frightening depth a way of living that couldn't be kept up and it also served as a guarantee that this way of living was not to be continued.

Bandi Rácz lit up one of his countless cigarettes and he asked for my opinion. My first reaction was to tell him that this kind of living could disappear much sooner if he, too, had the courage to fight against it. What I did tell him, however, was I sighed in envy—and not without conviction either:

"I envy you. You know the whole county inside out."

Bandi Rácz turned sullen. He quickly settled the bill and on our way to the hotel he came to a sudden halt by a milestone. The black letters on the white stone said: Budapest 60 miles.

"Where I spoilt my life," he said in agitation, "was that I failed to get a job in Budapest. I have been hating everyone who's made it. It's not only living somewhere else—it's everything. It's life. Do you know what the country offers? I was heading for home after a deadly serious conference which had ended up with everybody getting tight drunk—each social event ends up by everyone getting tight drunk in the countryside—I was rather tipsy myself and very, very blue, when I noticed this very milestone and it said: Budapest one million miles... Now, can you understand this? one million kilometres... Now, can you understand this?"

"I think I can," I said vaguely.

"Nothing like this going on in Budapest, is there?"

"Nothing like what?"

"Szalóki and all the rest."

"No, nothing like that, nothing," I hastened to comfort him.

GOD'S CREATURES

(Short story)

by

ISTVÁN SZABÓ

A good swishing downpour swept across the country in the morning but headed off north as soon as it had come. Around ten o'clock the orb of the sun reappeared, shining-bright in the sky and the town, violet clouds failed to subdue it again: they pulled up short as they neared it and politely doubled around the blazing disc like well-trained hounds as they scudded by. It looked like glorious weather again.

The yards of the houses came to life after the shower; while the rain water was still running down the streets the men were already deciding what to do to save the rest of the morning. They looked to the south-west, from where the rain had come, but there the sky was as placid a blue as if it had never seen a cloud. A light, fresh breeze rose from the direction of Lake Balaton and drove the rain-washed, rain-cooled air, the smell of drenched vegetation and the exhalations from the earth before it. Csanaki was out in his back garden too, with his five-year-old son. He was considering, as he lifted his face to the caresses of the southerly wind. Behind him a large belated drop of water fell every now and then from the eaves on to the bricked path with an exquisite splash. He thought the rain had done a lot of good, but what should he do till dinner-time? The boy stood silent beside him.

Csanaki had intended to put in a bit of hoeing in the vineyard, but that was out of the question until the muddy soil had dried out again. Pondering, he stepped over a few puddles. The boy, still wordless, walked beside him as closely as possible, then stopped as well and did not move. Mrs. Csanaki's head appeared in the kitchen door. She glanced up to the sky, then said to her husband:

"What are you planning to do?"

"I'll see what there is," answered Csanaki, thinking of small jobs around the house.

"Aren't you going out to the vineyard?"

"Now? You can't touch it now."

"I was only asking because of dinner."

The little boy stood hard by his father, waiting to see where he went.

"I know," Csanaki said to his wife, half turning towards the kitchen door, "I might take out that blasted dead pear behind the house."

"You know best," she said.

Csanaki started off to fetch his tools. The boy, without a word, immediately followed his father. Mrs. Csanaki popped her head out of the kitchen door again.

"Jancsi," she called, "don't get yourself dirty in the muck now, will you?"

The boy looked back, his steps faltering. But nonetheless he followed on at his father's heels.

"Come back here," his mother called, "you'd better stay with me here in the kitchen."

Jancsi shifted his legs timidly but would not turn back.

"Gábor, speak to him, please! I won't let him get himself filthy."

The man stopped and looked at his son, while Jancsi's look shot from father to mother and back; but it was not the same look. His body leant to his father.

"I'll keep an eye on him," Csanaki said.

"How can you keep an eye on him when you're working? Send him back. He's always hanging round you."

"Let him. He doesn't disturb me."

He turned to the boy.

"Want to go back?"

"No," said the boy.

Csanaki glanced quietly at his wife.

"You see. Why should I send him back?"

"He's always pottering about you," she said. "He doesn't want to be in the kitchen any more."

"He's bored, I suppose," he said.

"Bored? Why, I'm company for him, aren't I?"

"It's not that," Csanaki said, "but you can see he's always at my heels. Don't blame me."

Then he added:

"Do you want me send him back right now?"

"No, but. . . you're always talking nonsense to him. That's why he hangs about you all the time."

"If he asks me something I have to answer, don't I?"

"Yes, but not nonsense."

Csanaki gave a slight smile.

"Well, what would you tell him?"

"I'd certainly stop him asking all those questions."

"I suppose so," the man said, dismissing it with a gesture.

He turned to the boy, patiently and silently waiting.

"Go back to the kitchen."

"No," the boy said in a gentle voice.

"Go on back. Your mother'll be cross. Look at all the mud there is."

Jancsi said nothing, but neither did he move to go back. He stood beside his father.

Csanaki glanced at his wife. She jerked her head angrily.

"Oh, go then, why should I care! At least I'll be left in peace to cook the dinner."

Csanaki and his son started off to fetch the tools.

The pear tree stood dark and distressful at the end of the house, its bare branches scrawling in the air as though bent on inscribing the forlorn fate of the tree on the sky. It had been late with its green the year before, it had borne hardly any fruit, and this year it lacked the strength even to come into leaf. Its companions had all turned green around it in the spring, the pear alone remained with boughs and branches black, as though the winter had lasted longer for it.

Father and son stopped three steps away from the tree. They put down the tools. Csanaki had let the boy carry something for him. Jancsi excitedly handed the spade to his father: he had been dragging it with both hands all the way.

Csanaki did not start work at once. He glanced up at the pear tree.

"Poor creature," he said, "your end's come."

Jancsi was able to give his whole mind to what his father said, his eyes were glued to his face, and it was clear he was turning over twice in his mind every word he heard. He was all ears, but silent.

"It was a good bearer, though," his father continued, "and its pears were delicious. You've had some of them, haven't you?"

"Why are we cutting it down?" the child asked.

"It's dead. It doesn't bear fruit any more."

"Why not?"

"Its time's run out."

He measured out the distance with his eye, then began to dig the ground two steps from the tree. The spade slid easily into the wet soil.

"It was a good little bit of rain," Csanaki muttered.

"Wouldn't it ever have had leaves again?" Jancsi pointed up to the tree.

"No. It's finished."

"What if we watered it?"

"Wouldn't make any difference."

"It ought to be left alone."

Csanaki proceeded in a circle round the tree. His spade turned up large sods of turf. He stopped for a second.

"No point leaving it alone. It'll never come to anything now."

He pointed to the other trees.

"See how green they are? There's nothing wrong with them."

"Was this one ill?" Jancsi asked.

"Well, it wasn't exactly that... It's just grew old and died. It can't live for ever."

He bent down and started to dig.

"It's the same with trees as with men. They grow old and die."

The boy did not pursue his question; with a thoughtful face he watched his father as he bent over the spade. He was digesting the meaning of the words he had heard.

Csanaki having dug out one complete circle around the tree started on a second. The tip of the spade occasionally touched the roots.

"We'll need the axe soon."

Jancsi bent down to pick it up and hand it to his father.

"Not yet; I'll tell you when," Csanaki said.

"Father," said the boy.

He looked up from his digging, but went on working.

"Why did mother say you talk nonsense?"

Csanaki straightened himself. He looked at the boy. Jancsi had strong brown eyes and had a trick of fixing them steadily on people. Csanaki threw the spade aside and asked for the axe. The snaking roots of the tree began to show themselves in the hollowed earth.

The chips started to fly round Jancsi's head.

"Watch out for your eyes," his father warned him. "Get further back."

"Mother never tells me anything," the boy said.

"Because you always pester her with such questions."

The axe flashed in the air, coming down hard on the roots, rising only to fall once more. This went on for a few minutes. Csanaki's forehead was damp with sweat, his face flushed. He stood up in the pit to take a few minutes' rest. Jancsi began again.

"Mother says 'I don't know' to anything I ask."

"Because you pester her with your questions. The funny questions you think up."

Csanaki continued to hew away. The heavy blows sent delicate shivers through the tree top.

"Father," the boy said.

"What?"

"What are trees made of?"

Csanaki glanced at the child again. Jancsi's face was set in its familiar but strangely stubborn expression. His father was now bringing down the axe at shorter intervals. The chips flew white in all directions.

"Are trees made of roots like these?" Jancsi asked.

His father straightened his back and got his breath again.

"No, not at all," he said, reluctantly, "they come from seeds."

"Like wheat and rye?"

"Something like."

"Small trees become large ones?"

"Yes. Give me the spade again for a moment."

The boy handed it to him, silently watching his father trying to prise a thick, half-hidden root out of the earth.

"If I can cut this out we may be able to fell the tree," his father said, reaching for the axe.

The boy waited for a while, then he said:

"What are people made of?"

Csanaki was momentarily engaged in trying to get a well-aimed blow at the half-hidden root. Unable to find suitable foothold he kept moving back and forwards in the hole.

"There's just this single root holding it."

"Father."

Csanaki appeared to pay no attention.

"What?"

"What are people made of?"

The man circled round the root of the tree with a worried look. He swore to himself under his breath for failing to find a good approach. Then with a brief glance at the boy he said, ill-humouredly:

"Men were created by God."

"Yes, but of what?" the boy insisted.

Csanaki struck at the root, but the axe rebounded.

"Of what, father?"

"Of clay," his father said and manoeuvred for another angle in the hole. All his attention was taken up by the recalcitrant root.

"Clay?" the boy repeated, unbelievingly.

"That's right," said Csanaki and his axe fell with ferocity. "The first man was moulded out of clay by God. Clay is like this."

And he dug his boot into the upturned reddish brown soil. Then, swinging the axe with energy, he struck at the root several times in succession; at last he had found the right position. The axe slashed down, glinting angrily, and the root of the tree began to crackle.

"Careful now!" he said. "Go back, it may fall any moment now."

The child backed away absent-mindedly. His face was absorbed in thought.

The tree lurched, but seemed for a minute or two to clutch at its balance. But then it slowly began to tilt, toppling with gathering speed until finally with tremendous impact and a heavy thud it crashed down, its branches cracking and breaking, their mutilated remains piercing the earth, and the lopped trunk rebounding before it came to rest. Csanaki had jumped out of the pit long before. Standing to one side he looked at the prostrate pear tree lying like a fallen soldier. He had forgotten the boy. Relaxing he surveyed the result of his work.

Jancsi spoke from the far side of the tree.

"Yes, but how, father?"

His father started.

"What?"

"How did God create..."

"How? Well, he took a handful of clay and shaped it. When he had finished he blew on it. It was only after that that man began to move."

The child fell into a silence; he watched his father chopping off the twigs and branches of the tree one after the other. But his gaze was fixed less on the quick-working axe than to the features of his father's face.

"How do you know that, father?"

Csanaki knit his brows.

"I learnt it at school, that's how."

"Did Mother learn about it too?"

"Of course she did."

"But Mother said she didn't know."

"What?"

"What people are made of."

"Why do you pester her with such things?" said Csanaki.

Jancsi squatted on the edge of the pit and began to finger the reddish clay.

"Could I make people too, father?"

"No. Only God could."

"But supposing I blew on this. . ."

"Not even then," said Csanaki, hacking away. "You're not God."

The boy thought.

"Is God like us?"

"No, he's much stronger."

"Why aren't I like God?"

"You were born a man."

"Can't I ever be like him?"

"No."

"But I want to make people too," the child said, his fingers poking the muddy earth.

"Well, try," his father muttered, intent on the axe, jammed in a thicker branch.

"But would they be able to walk?"

"May be," his father said. "Try."

The troublesome branch kept his eyes from the child.

In a short while he had finished with the top of the tree and began to drag the lopped branches to the cutting block, where on some quieter day he would chop them into firewood. This time the boy did not help him; he did not touch a single twig, and he failed to follows in his footsteps as on other occasions; he continued to squat on the edge of the pit, kneading the muddy clay. He forgot his father, completely absorbed in what he was doing.

It was only some time later Csanaki's eye lit on the boy; in carrying the branches his gaze strayed carelessly in his direction. He threw down his burden at once.

"What are you doing there?" he said quickly.

The boy looked up. He did not speak.

"If you mess yourself up your mother'll give you a good spanking."

"No, I'm being careful," he said.

"You'd better stop it."

Annoyed, he picked up the armful of branches and started for the stack he had made. "I don't want any trouble over you again," he said, passing the boy on his way back. "D'you hear?"

"I won't get mud on myself," Jancsi said, and showed his clothes. He held his arms a good distance from his body. His eyes were earnest and responsible. Csanaki could not find it in himself to scold him any further.

A little while later Mrs. Csanaki appeared at the far corner of the house.

"Come on in, people, dinner's ready," she said.

Csanaki cast a quick glance at the boy.

"Didn't you hear?" he said sternly.

By then Jancsi was on his feet and trying to hide his mud-covered hands behind him. His mother had not seen anything suspicious and had already gone back into the kitchen.

"Now wash your hands somewhere and then let's go in to dinner," his father said to him quietly.

At table she suggested to her husband that they go out to the vineyar to do some hoeing in the afternoon.

"The weather's turned rather good for it," Csanaki said.

"Do you want the boy to come with us?"

"Of course."

"I'd rather he went over to the Lázárs," the woman said. "What can he do with himself while he's with us?"

She turned to the child.

"Jancsi, do you want to go over to the Lázárs?"

"No."

"Why not?" his mother said. "The other children'll be there and you can play at anything you like. Take the ball and the hoop."

"I want to play by myself at home."

No sooner had he said this than he slid down from the chair and slipped out.

"And what about this?" his mother called after him. The boy had eaten only half of his sweet noodles.

"I've had enough," Jancsi spoke from the door.

"Jancsi!" But by then the boy was out of the yard as well.

"I'd like to know what's got into that boy," Mrs. Csanaki said. "He won't do as I tell him."

"Why don't you sometimes talk to him?" Csanaki said.

"Well, not nonsense, that's a fact."

"If he's always hanging round me," her husband said, "one must tell him something, mustn't one? Do you want me send him away?"

"You spoil him", the woman said. She stood up and stacked the plates. "It would be better if you didn't tell him anything."

"Like his mother?" asked Csanaki. He pulled a cigarette from his trousers pocket and listlessly put it in his mouth. Even the match lit sullenly. "At least he isn't bored when he's with me."

"Much good may it do you, eh?"

She would have dismissed him with a gesture but she saw in time that her husband's eyes were beginning to smoulder and the hand with the cigarette had stopped in mid-air; she asked hurriedly:

"So what shall we do? Shall we take him up the hill or shall we send him over to the Lázárs?"

Now it was Csanaki who gestured dismissively.

"As you like."

"I don't want to leave him behind all alone."

"Have you finished?" the man asked. "We'd better hurry, time's getting on."

"All right, let me just see where he's got to."

"He'll be right behind the house."

The woman made for the door.

"Anna," the man called after her, "I don't want you to be rough with him."

"Me?" She looked surprised.

"I'm just telling you."

Mrs Csanaki tried to catch her husband's eye but he would not look at her; at that she turned round and went out of the house. Csanaki could see her go past the window. Then he too began to get ready. But he had barely put on his coat before the woman came back; she could not have got farther than the end of the house.

"What's up?" Csanaki asked her.

"I've just remembered I've got to make the sandwiches. You're not busy at the moment, go and find that boy."

The man said nothing and went out of the kitchen door, cigarette between his lips. The woman wrapped a few slices of bread in a blue cloth. She called after her husband.

"But look alive, the two of you!"

Csanaki did not have to consider long where to look for the boy. He went behind the house where they had dug out the withered pear tree in the morning. Jancsi was squatting at the edge of the hole, bending over his occupation. He had even forgotten to get into the shade, so absorbed was he in his play. The sun was beating down on him.

Csanaki called the boy by his name, but Jancsi was far too busy for the sound to penetrate his ear.

At this he began to walk slowly, almost reluctantly towards the boy. The boy did not even notice the shadow of his father suddenly falling across him. Csanaki stood above him for a while, smiling at the busy work of the little muddy hands. The boy had discovered a really good game for himself: he was modelling small figures out of the clay, blowing on them from time to time. Already some eight or ten figures were drying beside him in the sun. And one was just emerging from the child's fingers.

"Well, don't they want to move?"

Jancsi started out of his absorption. He raised a vague f[illegible]s father.

"One of them moved just now," he said, and his finge[illegible]nt back to work with increasing deftness.

"Did it really?" Csanaki asked. "Which one? That big one over there?"

"No," said the boy, and pointed to one of the little figures that had a rather better shape. "This one."

"Well, I never," said his father.

He added:

"But it doesn't seem to move now, does it?"

"It got up and then lay down again," the boy said.

"And the others?"

"They don't."

"You should blow on them harder," his father suggested.

Jancsi raised a damp and thoughtful face.

"How did God blow on the first man?"

"Hard and long," Csanaki said, standing over the child. "But call it a day now, will you? We're going out."

"I'll blow on them hard and long, too," the boy said and brought a figure up to his mouth. "Like this."

And one could hear that he was blowing on the figure with all the breath in his body. Then he looked searchingly at his father, with the unmoving mannikin on his palm.

"That isn't quite like it," his father said.

The boy's face seemed exhausted.

"Why?"

"God's breath is different. But get up now, and let's get a move on."

"Can nobody make a man?"

Csanaki shook his head "No".

"But I want to," the child said.

"Get up now," his father told him. "We're going out to the vineyard. Or would you rather go to the Lázárs?"

"No."

"We're late, Gábor," Mrs Csanaki shouted from the other end of the house. The man made a calming gesture.

"What're you up to there?" the woman demanded.

"Now get up quick," Csanaki said to the boy.

"They'll get up, won't they, daddy?" Jancsi asked, and fixed his stubborn eyes on his father. Csanaki found it difficult to face the look from those innocent eyes.

"Perhaps," he said, "but I can't see they're moving now."

"One has already got up, only it lay down again," the boy said hurriedly, a nted to show which one it was. "The others will get up too later on."

And he searched his father's face mistrustfully. Csanaki looked with great seriousness at the ugly little clay figures drying in the sun.

"Maybe," ha said, "but come on now, let's go to the Lázárs. Leave them here."

"No. I'd like to see when they get up."

Csanaki smiled, helplessly annoyed.

"All right, but these will only get up if you leave them here."

"Only then?"

"Yes," his father said, "God left the first man alone too."

"Really?" Jancsi asked, full of hope.

"Of course. He kneaded him nice and properly, blew on him and then went away somewhere."

"Leaving the man behind?"

Csanaki nodded. . .

The boy's damp and muddied face was now all amazed attention. He looked long into his father's eyes.

"And could he get up?" he asked.

"He could," his father said hoarsely.

The woman now started to them suspiciously.

"What on earth are you doing here?" she asked as she approached.

Once there she stood looking at the child squatting on the ground, and at the figures. Her mouth thinned. The first surprise in her face gave place to anger. Jancsi lowered his eyes and glanced fearfully right and left. He sat there as if the ground had been snatched from under him. He did not know where to hide his dirty hands. Csanaki looked at her husband.

"What's the boy doing?" she asked. She poked the figures with her foot. "What are these?"

"Jancsi," said his father quietly. "Get up."

The boy stood up.

The woman watched them for à while, her eyes narrowing, her face sharpening and growing angular. Csanaki and his son were silent, neither of them looking up.

"Come on, let's go," he said to Jancsi. And he jerked his head. But the boy was unable to move: he stood there among his figures, cowed and muddy. Mrs Csanaki did not move either. But it was clear that she did not mean to move. She looked at her husband.

"What's this the boy's doing?"

"He was playing," the man said gruffly. "Have you packed the sandwiches?"

"I have," she said. Her voice had a birch in it.

"Let's go then."

"What are you doing here?"

"Nothing," Csanaki said.

"Damn the crazy heads of the pair of you!" Mrs Csanaki hissed. "So that's what you're getting together about?"

"Why, what's wrong with it?" he asked.

"Nothing," she said. She grabbed the child's arm and tried to drag him away from his little figures.

"Come on. Leave this nonsense now."

But Jancsi planted his feet firmly on the ground and refused to move.

"It isn't nonsense," he said.

"I'll thrash you if you go on being obstinate. Do you expect me to bother about you the whole afternoon? Now, come to the Lázárs."

She tugged at the boy's arm.

"Where's your ball and hoop?"

"No," the boy said.

And at that moment he noticed that in the struggle he had trodden on the figures and destroyed them. For a second he raised his horrified brown eyes at his mother.

"Mother!" he screamed, his eyes fixed on the mangled figures. "Oh, mother!" He began to stamp.

His mother, her mouth pressed into a line, watched him for a while throwing himself about in his temper, but never let go of his arm. Her eyes flashed at her husband.

"You see? This is what you've done! You idiot! You'd better leave this child alone. Jancsi!"

The boy panted.

"Mother! How can they get up and move now?"

"What's that you're saying?" the woman asked.

Jancsi looked at the figures.

"They're all smashed. How can they get up now?"

"Gábor, what's the child saying?" she turned towards her husband, letting the boy's arm go.

"Nothing," he said, waving her off. "He was playing."

"Now I have to make new ones," the boy said. Quietly, hatefully his mother persisted.

"What do you need them for?"

"I need them," the boy said. "Father said I should try."

His father was looking at him, speechless and angry. Jancsi turned towards his mother:

"Say they will move, mother."

"These? Who told you that?"

"Father did. He said I should blow on them and they'd move."

He looked at his father.

"Didn't you, father?"

Mrs. Csanaki turned to her husband.

"Did you really tell him that, Gábor?"

"Yes. But what else could I have said?" he said hurriedly. "He asks all sorts of silly things. I have to say something!... One has one's work to do, and then to look after the boy as well... Why don't *you* look after him?"

"Yes, why not?" she asked. "Just you wait and I'll look after him."

She pulled the boy, who had calmed down a little in the meanwhile, over to her side. And began to thrash his behind with all her strength.

"I'll beat this out of you, this nonsense, I'll beat it out of you. Just wait... Can't you find yourself something else to play with, you little wretch!"

The palms of her hands went on slap, slapping at the boy. Jancsi kicked and bit and yelled and struggled to free himself at any cost, but there were no tears in his eyes.

"How people are made!" she panted. "What they're made of!"

Csanaki looked on for a while, pale; every time the boy gave a painful scream he winced. At last he could stand it no longer. he caught at the woman's arm.

"Stop," he said, "leave him alone."

The woman's arm stopped flailing.

"I'll beat it out of him," she said, angered by her own beating. She looked as though she had been mishandled too. But she went on thrashing the boy and said to her husband through it:

"I want a few words with you too."

"Stop it," he said sternly. And got the boy out of her hands.

Mrs. Csanaki stood there as if drunk, with a quiet frenzy in her look. They boy only began to cry now that the beating was over.

He stood above the trampled figures, the tears pouring from his eyes.

"Is that why you had to beat him?" the man asked.

"That's why," she said, panting.

"He didn't do anything wrong."

Mrs. Csanaki shook her head from side to side repeatedly, as if coming from a deadly brawl.

"No, I won't let him play anything like that," she said.

The boy was now crying frantically.

"It's because of you he's got this beating," she said.

The man shrugged, thinking. He poked at the broken figures with his boot.

"There wasn't any harm in it. He was playing quietly."

"That's not play."

"You shouldn't have beaten him for it."

"It's because of you he got this beating," she said. "You ought to know better. You're just the same, the pair of you."

"He was happy playing like this," he said.

"I don't care, I'll thrash him again if I catch him at it."

"You're a strange woman. What harm was he doing?"

The boy's crying had now stopped. His eyes cast down, he listened to his parents, and he stood miserably in front of them as if drenched through. Though the sun was shining brillantly on all three of them.

"You see," she said to Csanaki, and pointed to the boy, "that's the way such things end. If he'd played with his ball this wouldn't have happened to him."

She tried to take the boy's hand. Jancsi winced away.

"No, I won't touch you. Promise you won't play anything like this again."

The boy was silent.

"Now be a good boy and do as I tell you and don't play at such nonsense again."

"It isn't nonsense," he said. "Tell her, father, it isn't nonsense!"

The boy's brown eyes shone hopefully on his father, waiting for him to speak. Csanaki looked away, uneasy, and said:

"All right, all right, but now leave off. We have to go to the vineyard."

"I'll just make another two like these and they'll get up when we come back, won't they?"

The woman turned pale again.

"You," she said to the boy, "you're looking for trouble, are you?"

She started for Jancsi. Catching him by his clothes she twisted him round to face his father.

"Now ask your father if those wretched things will get up or not?"

The boy was dumb with fright.

"Go on," she shouted at him. Jancsi repeated the question to his father but very faintly and awkwardly.

"Father, will these... get up?"

Csanaki's face twitched.

"Gábor," the woman warned him.

"Jancsi," Csanaki said hoarsely, "do as your mother tells you."

"Don't say that, answer the boy."

"Jancsi, leave these things here now... They won't get up, you only made them to play with, you see."

The woman impelled the boy on.

"Even if I leave them here?"

Jancsi spoke it after her, stammering.

"No, not even then, it was just play, you see," Csanaki said, "but you wouldn't stop."

Mrs Csanaki: "Father, you'll never talk nonsense to me again?"

The man drew himself up.

"Anna!"

But she paid no attention to him. She pressed the boy's arm encouragingly. Jancsi was silent: he searched his father's face.

"Go on, ask your father," his mother urged him.

Csanaki faced his wife. He was pale, only his brown eyes glowed.

"Now stop," he said hoarsely. "All right, it was just play... but it wasn't nonsense."

"How long are we going to muck about here? Jancsi, give your father one of those thingamabobs and tell him to breath on it. Go on!"

The boy, frightened, bent down and picked up a relatively intact figure. He held it out towards his father.

"If he breathes on it and it doesn't move, then it's nonsense. What's not true is nonsense."

Jancsi waited for his father to reach for it, but he didn't. As he didn't move, Jancsi dropped the figure.

"Now you see," his mother told him.

The boy's head drooped slowly like a rye stalk. For a few seconds he was motionless, then his body began to tremble all over. His face, which was always pale, turned red. His legs suddenly began to caper madly; he trampled on the figures in a frenzy, his fists stiff to his sides, and all the while he kept his crazed, desperate brown eyes fixed on his father. On he went, tossing convulsively, harshly screaming.

His parents reached after him at the same moment. His father got hold of him first, but twice Jancsi thrust his hand away and then, crying, made for the orchard and the dirt road beyond. Csanaki called after him helplessly, looking at the hand the boy pushed away.

"Jancsi! Come back! Jancsi!"

The boy did not turn. He ran and ran, until his sobs could no longer be heard.

Helpless and alarmed Csanaki turned to his wife.

"You see?" she said sarcastically. He was surprised to see how quiet, almost cheerful, she was. He could not speak for a while.

"Why did you do that?"

"Just because," she said, "I wanted to break him of his liking for nonsense."

Csanaki looked hard at her stubborn, sharp-featured face. He thought for a moment.

"Was it really that?" he asked.

And suddenly he slapped the woman hard across the face.

"It isnt nonsense, and you'd better remember it."

"Gábor!" his wife shrieked. She held her hands to her cheeks as if unwilling to believe she had been hit.

"You don't know anything, damn you," Csanaki said. "Why did you have to come and meddle in this?"

He started for the dirt road across the orchard to look for the boy. He walked slowly and although he stooped a little the low branches almost brushed his hat off.

The woman still stood where she had been slapped. Undecided what to do she felt the one side of her face, which was redder than the other. Her eyes strayed to the remnants of the clay figures. Half-timidly she kicked one of the figures with the toe of her shoe, and it rolled over and quivered on its back for a while as though it had life in it. Mrs Csanaki backed away, frightened, and looked with hatred at the small mutilated homunculus, which had neither arms or legs. It had only a head and a fat belly and the tender marks of the child's fingers on its body.

Then she looked after her husband, now lost to sight in the deep gully which was the cart-way and which had also swallowed up the fleeing boy. Mrs Csanaki, now that she was left by herself, could not decide whether to go alone to the vineyard or wait until her husband returned with the boy. She did not like this second idea. Better to go on her own and let those two come after her through the orchard. Up there in the vineyard they could join her, and for the present there wasnt' much point in waiting for them at the back of the house, goodness knows for how long.

GYULA ILLYÉS

GRASS SNAKE AND FISH

Among pebbles, at the pond's edge,
in limpid shallows whose water
flows as transparent as the atmosphere,
suddenly visible

in that world made for other lungs,
living purity, where
the stone wavers in the drift
of the reflection, a branch in air;

into that shut Eden, slides the snake,
guided by the oldest law:
a fish palpitates hanging from its fangs
howling what no one can translate.

CONSOLATION

Your sorrow overflowed you; I let the stream
running across the pebbles
bathe my hands; and that
was how I heard you.

Clear, the water glided
between my fingers, time
without colour fled
almost alive, between my fingers.

I listened to time
caressing my palms and
murmuring out its flight:
it was your flowing sorrow I handled.

I was sad... and yet
already beneath the bruising
of spent time, my hands
foretold appeasement.

Free versions by Charles Tomlinson

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Ferenc Bónis

SURVEYS

IVÁN BOLDIZSÁR

A NEW RENAISSANCE?

(Who is an optimist?) Immediately after my recent piece* on the communications revolution first appeared in the literary weekly *Élet és Irodalom* a number of people began to look at me somewhat oddly. "The dawn of a new renaissance? Good Lord! Are you such an optimist?" Then they started to tell me the current Budapest joke. "What's the difference between an optimist and a pessimist?" I know. A pessimist is better informed. "Then what on earth do you mean by a new renaissance."

I mean that there is the time for a constructive improvement on that Budapest joke. "An optimist is a man who is even better informed." This also applies to the international situation, though I was not thinking of politics when I wrote about the communications revolution. Renaissance, of course, is not a political word. But we Hungarians, living in this rather draughty spot in the middle of Europe, have developed a habit of translating everything, good or bad, into politics. It's a reflex action, like blinking.

All of us are swept up on to the merry-go-round of the communications revolution—all of us—even if we ignore it or pretend it is not there—and it led me to think of a renaissance in literature and the arts. But wait a moment, concentrate for the time being not on the term renaissance but on the other two simpler words: literature and the arts. One of the reasons why the communications revolution is revolutionary is that it confounds the frontiers between literature and the arts, or, to be more precise, it fuses their respective territories into a greater dominion. Like so many other revolutions, this one also establishes an empire, the United States of the Arts. The former frontiers are washed away, the marches merge into a greater, more powerful unit.

(The new synthesis). I cannot promise the reader that I am going to produce convincing reasons on the spot for daring to believe in a new renaissance. Changes in literature or in the arts that are imminent or already under way must first be dealt with under their separate heads, and only then can we begin to discuss a new synthesis of the two. The mere mention of the idea means taking off into deep waters. The synthesis is the work of man; man brought it about in the first renaissance and in all the subsequent rebirths that were not given that beautiful name. Man: always, then and now, it has meant a creative man, Leonardo, Michelangelo or in his own way perhaps our King Matthias. Incidentally, isn't it interesting that we call them by their Christian names even after the passage of five hundred years? How many say da Vinci, Buonarroti or Hunyadi? The first great Renaissance remains a family affair to every thinking man up to the present day.

* See The NHQ No. 34. "Advanced Unescolese."

The second renaissance is also being produced by man not only by creative man but also by recipient men, those who receive what is given to them by the creators. The whole point is that a double synthesis is involved. On the one hand the transformation of the *septem artes* into *ars una*. The other synthesis is between the creators—writers or artists—and the public. Take the transformation of the arts in the first place. The "seven arts"—long of course more than seven or less than seven, but the magic of seven continues to exercise its age-long spell—will be turned into *one* with the reduction in quantity producing a qualitative surplus. But also in that way that the various arts, and now I include literature, do not die out, but *revive* within the narrow limits of each producing something new that has not even got a name.

(The new renaissance man.) And now let us turn to the second, to the synthesis between those who create and their public, and in the first place, to the creators. Here we have plenty of rethinking to do. The new synthesis requires a new kind of creator; the new renaissance produces a new man. And—this is important—the writer, writer-artist and artist-writer—and I am not joking when I add painter-sculptor and sculptor-painter, writer-director and director-writer—of the electronic age thinks and works in several media simultaneously. Writers still object to the idea, and I myself, as a writer, came goose pimples all over at the variety of the new kinds of works of art and their intermixture; but after all, we have no objection to *films d'auteur*, films directed by their authors, or written by their directors. And speaking for myself I am overwhelmed with pleasure by the painting-sculptures and sculpture-paintings of Marisol.

In thinking aloud about the relationship between the novel, the theatre, the film, radio and television, I must stress that at the same time I am constantly considering the reader, the audience, the recipient in the role of a public making new demands. For the renaissance of those who create can only be separated from the formation of a new public as part of an analysis, but not in fact. And it is the existence of the new public which makes the quintessence of the new renaissance: the new synthesis between the creators and the public.

For the new renaissance man means not only a new kind of artist but also a new kind of public. In its time the first renaissance addressed itself to an élite few; in the age of mass communications the new renaissance addresses itself to the many. When recalling a great historical moment one feels like calling with Lenin to Everybody, Everybody! Electronic means of expression, principally television, have begun to create such a new audience, one that is interested in everything, before the new renaissance has yet seen the light. We frequently use strong language—and often justified—over homes where the radio is on from morning till midnight and they only switch it off when they turn to the TV set. True enough, floods of music, series of talks soaking into the ears and undifferentiated pictures passing without selection before the eyes have a harmful effect, mainly because they tire and flatten the mind and lead to indifference, but all this is negligible compared to the benefit. What was once the non-public, or even the anti-public, is nowadays willy-nilly informed of things they ignored, and absorbs what it used to reject: art, literature and science. In Huxley's *Brave New World* knowledge was fed into the sleeping brain; his fantasy appears to have come true. In this not always brave but certainly new world of ours the advance troops of the communications revolution murmur on, projecting knowledge and an interest in what is beautiful, real and true into brains that have already awoken but are not quite conscious, however much cheap, shoddy and false material is mixed in with them. There is nobody today who only reads, or who only loves music, or who only listens to beat

music, or only to Bach, Beethoven or Bartók. People who have seen nothing of museums or galleries no longer exist, the museums and galleries have invaded their homes. There is nobody today who is only interested in the cinema, because the theatre bores him, for there is a stage in his own room, and a man can watch a play and eat his supper if he wants to. Next time he will give it his full attention, not with half an eye on the screen and one and a half on his food.

(The new "renaissance" public.) This is how new things come into being, and this includes a new public interested in everything. The reason why I dared to speak of the dawn of a new renaissance was that it was of this public that I was thinking in the first place. It is a new phenomenon in the progress of mankind—and it is precisely on this account that it is no exaggeration to speak about a communications revolution. The new public preceded the new arts and the new artists and the new writers. Mass media are of course not only for the dissemination of information but also tools of creation, artistic creation, literary and... I cannot think of the third adjective, and how could I since no such adjective exists as yet. The name of the new art in which the new renaissance men will create works for the new renaissance public not only with pen, paint brush, chisel, film camera, film editor's scissors, microphone, stage décor, costume, voice, movement and body but with all and every one of them—has still to be found.

It does not exist because this generation of universal artists has not yet been born. Or... wait a minute. Perhaps they are already alive but they are not yet doing creative work. Perhaps they are looking at the earth as seen from the moon, or at the Trans-Siberian railway, or at a Shakespeare play on television, taking all for granted, although they cannot as yet read. Perhaps they are this moment analysing the latest film of their favourite director as part of their school homework. Parents and teachers think that the desire of many schoolboys to become film directors, to work in TV or to play the guitar, is merely a passing fad. But it is not a consequence of revolt, or the nonconformism of teenagers, though of course there is some element of that in it as well, approached from the simpler, that is, negative side. The truth is that young people's normal wish for self-expression here appears in the form appropriate to our age.

(The birth of new art forms.) The new generation, working with new means, is beginning to emerge in the making of films. Every young director is intent on making a film that he writes himself. There is a certain disdain of script writers in it, a boyish, sometimes even a childish self-confidence, but at the heart of it all we find once more the search for a new art-form—if we are not afraid to look for it. Most Hungarian films directed by the author are no more than feelers, attempts to find the way. I don't want to deviate into a discussion of the films of András Kovács and Jean-Luc Godard here; let me only remark what is already well known, that the generation which can no longer be described as young has also combined several art forms very successfully. The new art form will come to maturity when, after film directors have learnt to think in terms of text, dialogue and situations, writers will even if only metaphorically, think in terms of panning or close-ups. At the end of the 1950s that grand old man of world literature, François Mauriac, wrote that in the second half of his career as a novelist he thought in terms of *camera travelling* when writing a novel, perhaps under the influence of his son Claude, who makes films and is also a film critic. Robe-Grillet and Pasolini are writers, both direct films—another aspect of the new search.

It is possible, it is desirable, it is even likely that the latest generation of writers, novelists, story writers and dramatists now serving their apprenticeship, who are straining against the old limitations, casting their eyes on far-off peaks and ignoring the abyss between, will make use of electronic

means of expression as the native idiom of their art. I am not here anticipating the death of the novel. On the contrary, I am rather anticipating its renaissance, an expansion of the idea of the novel. There will be novels written on paper and printed; novels written on celluloid and filmed; novels recorded on magnetoscope and projected on to a small screen; novels spoken into the microphone and broadcast by sound; they will not be inferior, bastard brothers of the traditional novel, but on an equal footing, *different* but equally valuable works of art.

Fresh art forms will be created by new creators about to step on to the stage or rather into the studios, or even more, into a new dimension between the studio and the desk. But however impressive these new creative possibilities appear, they alone would not justify one in referring to a new renaissance. Here I put the emphasis on the adjective: this is not only a second renaissance, but one, that is different. (By the way, it is really the third, bearing in mind the Enlightenment).

For, as I have said, the originality of this renaissance also lies in the other end of the process, the receiving end. Film, radio and television have produced a vast new capacity and new demand for art and literature quite unknown before in history. This is a better reason for optimism, for the optimism of those who are even better informed. But still, this is only the beginning of the second aspect of the transformation. The next stage of its development will be that the public, with their new demands, will take a more active part in literature and the arts than ever before, not perhaps as authors, but as participants.

(Speaking personally.) While I write I am constantly aware of opposition on the part of the "profession" and of the public, even though there are no electronic feelers around. Writers and artists, though chiefly writers, regard the communications revolution as a side issue, a piece of chicanery or simply nonsense, and references to a new renaissance in this connection are part of cloud-cuckoo land as far as they are concerned. For most writers television serves much the same purpose as the cinema; to enable them to make money relatively quickly and fairly superficially and get down to something serious afterwards, real work; writing a novel a short story, a play, a poem or an essay.

I have no right to doubt there is something in this attitude since it is confirmed by my own experience. Both as a private person and a writer I also think that way, or rather, have thought that way for a long time. When I wrote my first screenplay I considered it to be "all my own work". But I soon came to realize I was wrong. Long before the shooting of the film I had changed the end in accordance with the director's wishes; then I changed the beginning and then I changed the middle. You have to understand that I eventually agreed with each of the changes; I appreciated that they would improve the film. But by that time all my proud paternal feelings were gone. It was the same to me whether I added something or left something else out. A film is made by the director, but I still maintain that even the greatest genius of a director cannot get along without a script writer, especially if he includes dialogue.

The new renaissance, however, will demand new authors for these new art forms. For we must not forget that we are only at the very beginning of the initial stage. Television, the most important and revolutionary means of mass communications, has only approached something like an artistic standard within the past ten years, and the telecommunications satellites are less than five years old. As yet they have no independent life of their own, they only transmit the programmes of stations on earth. The latest session of the General Conference of Unesco decided to set up the first communication satellite; it will have its own independent transmitter on board, and will broadcast programmes in several languages simultaneously, perhaps in all the languages spoken by the 125 Member-States

of Unesco. (These are the new foreshadowings of moon-beam romanticism in poetry.)

If writers and other creative artists are to be induced to conquer their *horror televisionis*, or in a broader sense, their aversion to all non-literate art forms, those responsible for such non-literate art forms, including artists, and above all film directors, must be induced to conquer the counter-conceit they display towards writers. In film studios and television conference rooms everywhere the writer is treated with respect, but at one and the same time regarded with an indulgent smile as someone left over from the Stone Age; he is a necessary server in the temple, but not of course an initiate, because he does not know how to administer or receive the new sacraments.

Audience opposition is another problem to be solved. People don't want to act as guinea pigs for artists. They are afraid of things being forced down their throats, they suspect they are going to be educated, instructed and brainwashed. If asked, many millions of viewers would unanimously protest at the idea of participation. Leave us alone, comfortably at home in front of our sets, is the unspoken core of this reluctance. But the audience, however unwillingly, has already been dragged on to the electronic Pegasus. And I think that this is what will make the new renaissance really new.

(Eye-witness turned into participant.) Due to mass communications a new, second and more collective dimension of reality has emerged. And as a result the consciousness of the reader, listener and viewer has changed. The habit of newspaper reading has become more widespread and it has turned man into an *observer* of his times; radio has made him an *ear-witness*, and television has made all of us *eye-witnesses*.

Thus we have actually taken the first step towards *participation* in an artistic sense. Hundreds of millions of viewers sitting with their eyes glued to the TV screen participate in world events more than man has ever done before. By this I mean not only a viewer imagines, or can imagine, that he is part of the mass scenes of a rally, demonstration or revolt; not only that people tend to remember an exciting football match that held them spellbound while watching it on television as if they had been there, on the spot; not only that a year later we are not even sure whether we saw a film at the cinema or in our arm chair at home, that is, whether we were physically present among the audience or only participated at one remove. There is something more, something different, and I want to catch that "more", at the moment of its birth.

So I turn to Sartre for help, though he is by no means a comfortable ally. He has written a great deal about the importance of the *regard*—the look—in the life of an individual and of society. In this connection he uses the word in a passive sense, that is, instead of my looking at others and the world, he means the look received. The way people look at me influences my attitude, career and relations not only with that other man looking at me, but also with others and with society at large. The look I receive may confirm me in the path I have chosen, or deter me.

I had to make use of Sartre to explain what the writers in the French *Cahiers du Cinéma* mean: all the other people and the whole outside world look as I look on them. This includes objects and, in Henry James's phrase, the "watching spaces," as well as scenes. Through this the viewer actually becomes a participant, with what he sees on the screen, in the cinema or on TV set looking at him as well. Or it can be put the other way round: the events watched become part of the viewer's life. *Regard* or the look received is missing from events that one reads or hears about, and the event seen provides this much more for man in our times.

(The first part of the decisive step.) So only one more step has to be taken by the audience to transfer the consciousness of the eye-witness and the consciousness of the parti-

cipant to a share in the creative act itself which is taking place on the cinema, but principally on the small TV screen, I do not claim that this step has been taken, but that the muscles are already tensed in that direction. Though the audience has not yet moved, Hungarian television has already started to take this step without being at all aware how revolutionary a move it is. I am thinking of the pop song festival, a programme which is not apparently revolutionary at all. Over the past four years the whole of Hungary has had pop song festival fever every summer. The country's best-known pop singers, orchestras and composers, and those on their way up, compete in a television festival. In addition to the jury, viewers also have the right to vote, and thus have a direct say in the final decision. During the summer weeks of the contest in constitutes the principal topic for conversation all over the country; even people who dislike beat music find themselves lured into arguing about the festival.

There are several quiz programmes on Hungarian television in which the viewers physically take part as jury, competitors or supporters. One of the literary quizes borrowed its name from a poem by Attila József: "Do you want to be a partner in the game?" In this competitors or "partners" recruited from the ranks of the audience solve problems drawn from literature and the history of literature, with an opportunity for the viewers themselves to telephone in their contributions. "Family semicircle" is designed as a Sunday evening family party made up of the competitors, on the screen, but the viewers can also join in, either by telephone or personally, in solving the riddles and puzzles and answering the questions which are put.

The most successful programme is "Black-White, Yes-No." We all know it as the name of a children's game, but over the past few months it has practically lost its original meaning, and is now a new TV game for adults. It is a competition in local knowledge, in which two teams from the 22 districts of Budapest are successively competing against each other, with the later eliminating rounds for the winners of the first round still to take place. Questions are asked about local knowledge, the history of the district, literary, historical, artistic, musical and theatrical events associated with streets and houses and so forth. The first prize will be a crèche to be built by Hungarian television in the district of the winning team. The importance of the prize, however, has dimmed before the fever of the competition. Before each round of the contest the whole population of the two districts concerned is engaged in studying its past and present. Schools prepare for it for weeks, because during the actual television contest, any viewer can telephone in an answer to his team. Separate local competitions are held to choose the people who will make up the fifty or sixty-member team, which includes university professors, writers, artists, headmasters, students. librarians, doctors and sportsmen.

How far does this essential element of the new renaissance go? Before the round involving District 6, in which one of my sons is the deputy headmaster of a grammar school, they made sure I had a telephone number to give the team a ring if by chance I knew the answer to a difficult literary question. This "giving a ring" is one of the essential elements of participation. Fortunately, there was no need for my assistance, the team knew the answer to a lot of questions that would have beaten me. Or again. A research worker from the Radiation Biological Research Institute rang me one morning asking me whether I knew the year and month in which Joliot-Curie had visited Budapest. They turned to me because they knew that I had been in touch with him. It turned out that the reason for the call was that the Institute was named after Joliot-Curie, and they were expecting questions about him at the contest.

The evening the Black-White competition

is held the inhabitants of the metropolitan district concerned keep in touch with the contesting teams by telephone and the walkie-talkies so many of the youngsters have nowadays. A full half of the entire population of Budapest are simultaneously eye-witnesses, tele-actors and participants.

(North Pole and Equator.) Don't misunderstand me. This is only an example. It is only the beginning of the road, far from the end that nobody yet sees. It is only a guess that a new public will emerge which will not take part in the arts as a captive audience but of its free will. The relationship of these people, their dependants and those who look at them to works of art is already in a state of flux. They are no longer only observers, or witnesses, but participants. They are not yet being creative themselves, but neither are they any longer merely an audience. They are not only situated around the receptive North pole, but have also moved closer to the Equator of creative activity.

If we were all wanting to be artists, we might have to speak of the dawn of a new dilettantism instead of the birth of a new renaissance. Such a threat undoubtedly lurks round the corner every evening. But it is the public character of television that produces the antidote, in increasing the demand for ancient and modern masterpieces. The danger is as small as a pottery dwarf in the garden compared to the rocket launching tower.

The participating audiences have no desire to become artists. They want to be associated with the arts as they are associated with politics, social events, economic development and of course sports through television. This desire, increasing day by day the irresistible progress of science and technology, will establish or is perhaps already giving birth to the second renaissance. Perhaps it will happen first of all in societies in which the notions of people and public come increasingly to be identified as one. In which the new renaissance and the new humanism form as inseparable a pair as in the first Renaissance. And to use Schiller's words, socialism is "*in eurem Bunde der Dritte,*" the third in your group. The logic of history makes it so. How wonderful it would be, for this reason, those responsible for Hungarian films, Hungarian television and Hungarian literature, the "riders of the electronic Pegasus," would recognize this to the full and determine to take the second half of the decisive step. In the closing third of the fifteenth century King Matthias did not wait for Vienna or the Sorbonne of Paris to give the signal to start the Hungarian renaissance.

ISTVÁN SŐTÉR

NEW BELGIAN POETRY

In the last fifty years Belgian poetry written in the French language has quietly drawn level with the poetry of France itself. The independent development of the Walloon language began with the end of the First World War. The Walloon poets themselves, rightly, look on their work as an integral part of French poetry. But the nationality of poetry, it appears, does not only depend on the language in which it is written, but also on the human, social and historical consciousness it expresses. The French poets of Belgium have the same cultural and educational background as their French counterparts, but their different experiences and conditions of life make their work different. Perhaps the reason why Belgian lyric verse has in fact contributed something new to French literature is that on the one hand it has deliberately eschewed regionalism and local colour, and on the other made no attempt to follow French fashions; it is neither isolated from French verse, nor absorbed in it. It may be kin, but is not of the same kind. French lyric poetry is essential to its existence, but Belgian poetry itself has been able to produce something from which French poetry can learn.

It is undeniable that ever since Verhaeren added his voice to Jean Richepin's symbolism it has been possible to distinguish between French and Belgian verse. Belgian verse seizes hold of an ambition and completes an intent which appeared in France in association with others. Mallarmé is naturally the starting point for the Belgians as well, and when they wish to advance beyond him, it is to Apollinaire they turn. They like to say that they generally do not establish schools or join groups, become the followers of individual poets, or issue poetic manifestos. They do, it is true, write different kinds of poetry, but certain attitudes appear to predominate, due more to their nature than to any deliberate choice. Some concentrate more on ethical and philosophical content, others on an inner lyric world of their own creating, others on a hallucinatory, visionary universe, and others again, though somewhat inferentially, express concern with contemporary problems.

Western readers are usually surprised by the tangible and direct quality of Hungarian lyric poetry. The Hungarian reader, on the other hand, frequently has to acclimatize himself to the specific closed poetic worlds of the Western poets in order to understand them, and to accustom himself to each of them before he can fully understand their meaning. A part of Belgian poetry is esoteric in its nature. This secret, closed world translates objects and events into a mystery. There is a certain humility and at the same time a certain arrogance in this attitude. Esoteric poetry is full of apparently inexplicable implications which owe their beauty precisely to the mystery surrounding them, as if the hint, the allusion, redeemed them from triviality; these allusions are of course perfectly intelligible, but veiled. And it is clear that the experience and impressions which go to the creation of this kind of poetry need to be expressed in this particular manner.

For many contemporary Belgian poets poetry represents a relaxation and a compensation, an autonomous world in which they are more free and more at home than in their mundane existence. It is not exactly a refuge, nor an ivory tower, but this poetic world of theirs is still to some extent a half-world between the two. Nevertheless they are attracted to verse and poetic attitudes very different from their own, displaying understanding and sympathy for somewhat alien values and different historical and moral criteria. This is probably why modern Hungarian poetry finds devoted in-

terpreters among the leading Belgian poets (Goffin, Sodenkamp, Flouquet, Radzitzky, Bosschère, Gascht, Della Faille, Haulot). It may also explain the friendliness so attractive to a stranger who spends some time with them and listens to their conversations and their plans.

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Something of the impatient thirst for life shown by the Flamand poets can be seen in the insatiable passion of Robert Goffin for all the varying aspects of life. Walloon and Flemish culture today are hostile and alienated from each other, but the remains of earlier interaction can nevertheless be seen through the estrangement of today. The appetite which once found satisfaction in the glow of pomp and plenty is today sharpened by a taste for the exotic and the gratifications of modern entertainment. The choice of luxury changes in the course of history; the gusto for it does not. Going out to look for adventure is not the same as a readiness to absorb the unexpected and surprising. But movement is an inner law and compulsion in Goffin's poetry, which depends on no given climate, but follows the round of modern travellers. The continual change he loves provides him with inspiration, and so travel becomes the spiritual basis of his poetry. His life and his work are demonstratively colourful and eventful. His legal cases—he was originally a lawyer—were sensations. He publicized the most outstanding artists of American jazz in prose and poetry, he wrote books on the lives of spiders and the development of modern verse forms, he fought fascism with his pen, he was a friend of Harry Baur and Louis Armstrong. His ties with Maeterlinck were just as close as with Cocteau, Cendrars, Eluard or Chagall. All the eventful variety in his life nonetheless resolves itself into a single pattern. The shape of his poetry resembles that endless snakelike undulation that sometimes echoes from his favourite instruments, the saxophone or the Gypsy violin, in the forms of variations on a theme or cadence. Whether Goffin makes use of Claudel's loose and irregular, but rhyming lines, or the discipline of Mallarmé to strengthen his own, the same undulation dominates his verse. For instruments also have their personality, and the musician will on occasion adjust himself to their service.

Goffin may be typical of one aspect of modern Belgian poetry, but there are others. The tone adopted by Marcel Thiry is much more restrained, more firmly rooted in tradition. Even in his most modern moments he retains something of a classical purity and clarity. He is indeed at his best when purely objective, for the more personal factor in his poems tends to slip into Impressionism and dull the strength of his poetry. The philosophical nature of his thinking expresses itself, however, with power and passion in writing on contemporary problems such as social exploitation or the horrors of war.

In the years following the First World War, Belgian poetry was far more concrete and direct than in the period after 1945. What it gained later in philosophy it lost in sensibility. The oldest generation still maintained links with Verhaeren, and amongst them Franz Hellens was influenced by Gorky. Hellens, the Nestor of Belgian poetry, adheres to the old, well-tried forms, but they have lost nothing of their force. There is a passion of conviction in them, and it is not by chance that the finest credo of faith addressed to the working class was made by this poet. The everyday things of this earth turn to poetry in his hands, and his tangible sensuous and materialist poetry holds its own even beside the visionary flights of recent Belgian verse.

Hellens's straightforward simplicity exemplifies an older poetic taste. But, though Belgian verse is inclined to the same complexity as contemporary French poetry, there is a primitive simplicity in the work of Maurice Carême, expressed in a type of gentle idyllic poetry, which is a charac-

teristic offshoot of Catholic verse in Belgium. (The Catholic movement, indeed, forms a separate group within Belgian literature both in its approach and its attitude.) "A primitive and direct piety, a happy sensation of love taking its joy among the simple facts of life," was how critics described his poetry. Albert Ayguesparse's poems and novels tell us most about the objectives, conflicts and struggles of the progressive Catholic movement. The great crisis for them was the Spanish Civil War. His book of verse *La rosée sur les Mains* voices the disillusionment of a large part of the intellectual Left in the thirties, before the Second World War. The young poet had believed in the Revolution and the triumph of social justice. He then turned to other poetic values, the value of love. He sought redemption in eternal love, in the eternal themes of poetry, though even so his former faith in the Revolution occasionally broke through. After the war he tried to find some way back to his earlier intellectual companionship, and struggle and revolt again became one of the main springs of his poetry.

There were others like him in that first generation; Pierre Nothomb, for instance, in whose poems a certain epic note and elevated style, rare in modern poetry, can be found. The struggles and difficulties through which the men of that generation found their way to inner peace and balance produced a poetry which gives something to the man of today that he really needs and which he can get only from poetry. Edmond Vandercammen attains the same effect in expressing thoughts with the same warmth and intimacy as feeling, and the fusion of the two achieves a harmony in fortunate accord with the traditional form of his verse, producing an almost archaic effect when compared to the tormented mood of most modern poets, a manner which some part of Belgian poetry has retained to this day, as for instance Nothomb and Pierre Louis Flouquet.

The story and the symbol have been eliminated in the most recent verse, but the first generation still knows how to deal with them. This can be seen in Norge's work. A crude and grotesque world appears in his poetry, expressed in an infinitely melodious and subtle form. The contrast is as astounding as it is fascinating, and is perhaps some evidence of Rimbaud's influence on the development of modern Belgian poetry. Simplicity of expression is what most recent poets demand, strongly influenced in all probability by men such as Robert Vivier, whose work is very deliberately concise and condensed. Perhaps the spirit of classical poetry seeks a new, contemporary form in this kind of economy of expression. The search has grown more intense in the last ten years. The classical method, however, is not the only way to simplicity and a direct approach. There is a traditional kind of populism also in Belgian verse. What is meant by traditional populism is not so much a connection with popular folk poetry as a kind of mental vernacular appealing to the thoughts and emotions of ordinary people. Constance Burniaux's verse dealing with everyday affairs is a good example.

With poets like Pierre Bourgeois and Armand Bernier the ferment of the age has assumed a metaphysical guise, and turns to the visionary consolations of nature and human brotherhood. Forms have become simplified. Eduard's skill with words, his concision and simplification affect an ever growing number of poets, and have produced splendid emotional and philosophical epigrammatic poems by Geo Librecht in which the tragedy of life, and the philosophical consciousness of it, are expressed with unique dramatic power.

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A foreigner can hardly hope to comprehend all the characteristic features of nearly fifty years of development in Belgian poetry. Nevertheless the shape of certain periods can be perceived with some indications of the role played by the different generations in

these periods. The first period, the generation born at the turn of the century, lasted from the end of the First World War until the beginning of the Second. The second extends to our own days. The legacy of symbolism was still alive in the first period, but largely extinct in the second. Surrealism became an influence in the second half of the thirties. There is also a more tangible, more concrete and direct quality in the poetry written before this rather vague dividing line; in the more recent period a poetry using all the devices of free association, broken and free sequences of images, of a visionary and esoteric character, became dominant. The first period was typified by the kind of poetry produced by Hellens, Thiry and Carême, and the second by Goffin's later poems and the work of Radzitzky, Chavée and Della Faille. The three generations which go to make up these two periods are, however, not clearly separated from one another, for the style of most of the older generation also changed in the latter part of the thirties and fell in line with the new trends. This is true of Aygesparse, Nothomb, Norge and others, but Goffin's poetry had already begun to display characteristics of the new era in the early twenties.

The Belgian Surrealist movement got under way with Achille Chavée, whose work appeared between 1930 and 1940; since that time his poems have remained faithful to the "clarification of the experienced moment." Pierre Della Faille's different, emblematic surrealism, on the other hand, only came into prominence in the fifties, and then mostly in the form of prose poems, favoured because it allowed him to depart radically from all the traditions of verse and to assault the reader with a bewildering complex battery of images and thoughts. Roland Busselen, who, however, cannot and does not wish to resist the temptations of seeing things rationally, is also one of the surrealists, but in his case surrealism appears no more than a modest cloak to protect him from the excesses of lyric emotion.

The poet who displays the happiest combination of all the characteristics of the new period is Carlos de Radzitzky. The innovations are harmoniously blended, there is a certain quality of rich inventiveness allied to lightness of touch in his creative fancy; it is at home not only in an inner world of his imagination, but also in the farthest reaches of the universe.

There are those, of course, who swim against the current. One of them is Arthur Haulot. His poems are sharp and clear and immediately comprehensible; there is a conscious and strict discipline in his poetry separating him not only from the surrealist visionaries, but also from the symbolists of the earlier generation. His philosophy of life is bitter and sad, but expressed with restraint; the elegance of his style depends on simplicity, not studied contrivance.

Roger Bodart's poetry stems more from elemental desires and experiences than that of most of his contemporaries. He is crude and desperate, revolting against the imprisonment of civilization. He looks for man—lost in the civilized way of life—among the Negroes of the Congo and Chicago. With him poetry once again becomes a mission—a search for something more important than itself. André Gascht is a poet writing in traditional forms, but today they appear bolder than the broken and disrupted style prevalent in contemporary verse. Perhaps he is the only man in contemporary Belgian poetry who makes use of the possibility of direct communication inherent in lyric verse, his poems are always concrete and filled with the power of living speech. "I do not believe that a poem can rival the moment it describes," he wrote, and in subordinating poetry to reality, he returns to the sources of genuine lyric poetry. This type of direct poetry provides a place for the psychology of passion, and this rejection of all esoteric attitudes may foreshadow the emergence of a new style of poetry finally breaking with surrealism.

The very real possibility of such a devel-

opment is also shown by Charles Bertin, one of the most original and most individual members of the new generation. Even his compatriots recognize the new classicism in his works; his poetic creed consciously makes a clean break with Surrealism, with the arbitrary fantasies and all the chimera of dreams in poetry. He insists on the inexorable integration of the free-flowing imagination with discipline, and regards dignity, necessity, a high seriousness and a long patience as the cardinal virtues of poetry. Jean Tordeur is another who may be expected to contribute to the development of this trend. No adherent of Classicism, he is romantic-symbolical in a dry and bitter manner, but strangely musical, and consequently linked to the tormented moderns.

Although bound to Surrealism by stronger ties than his companions, Marcel Hennart is also exploring paths that might bring poetry closer to the common reader, using the objects of everyday life, the world of nature and the difficulties of human existence as his themes. Guy de Bosschère is another poet of surrealism which produces a poetry bursting from the unexpected and the unconscious, but accompanied by a perception of the new kind of humanism emerging in our times. The new generation thus grasps the possibilities of a direct approach even within Surrealism, more particularly when it accepts commitment to the contemporary world. The legacy of Francis Jammes, however, in the Catholic movement takes on a new timeliness in the verse of Jules Gille. Surrealism has, of course, not yet exhausted its role, and the prose poems of *Fernand Verhesen* discover new possibilities of inner warmth for surrealist writing, not so much in its crude and elemental form as in a gentler and more melodious version.

The women poets—Louis Bubraut, Andrée Sodenkamp, Yvonne Sterk, Lucienne Desnoues, Anne-Marie Kegels, Jeanine Moulin and Liliane Wouters—play a manifestly important role in present-day Belgian poetry. A sensitive absorption in mood, a tenderness, are things which men create with formal struggle, but which come naturally to most women poets. They are essential attributes of the work of Andrée Sodenkamp and Anne-Marie Kegels. There is a musically evocative quality in the poetry of Lucienne Desnoues which is highly individual; Jeanine Moulin's impressionism covers a lack of tranquillity and a tragic tendency too often at variance with the delicacy of the form, and Lilian Wouters is the most passionate of them and also most dramatic in form.

Among the youngest poets the surrealism of Michel Stavaux is much modified in comparison to earlier poets: it is more concrete, more sensuous and more evocative than that of his predecessors. And the visions of Charles Moisse display a courageous sense of ideological responsibility. A feeling for reality for the material world and the impelling force of questions clearly put have already made something very promising of the work of David Scheinert which brillantly fuses the achievements of both earlier periods. Scheinert has a very clear vision of his own times, probably he has been able to invoke the image of his homeland more beautifully than all other Belgian poets because he writes of this "teaming crossroads" with a profound and deeply felt love.

Scheinert's poetry suggests possibilities which may become particularly meaningful at a later stage in the development of Belgian lyric poetry in French. He may well retain both traditions, and the two traditions can be very happily complemented in the work of poets striving for synthesis. French-language Belgian poetry had a more "open" period in the years around the First World War, but it also has one that was more "closed" beginning with the mid-thirties. Both approaches have their connections in world literature. Every era produces new situations in which art must once again find its own place. We all feel that a new age has begun. Present-day Belgian poetry is equally aware of this and it is most instructive to see it seeking its place.

ISTVÁN EÖRSI

THE POETIC "I"

1

I have been given the friendly advice that I should not discuss poetry in terms of theory. Theory in any case cannot explain the spell of individual poems; a thousand pages of theory cannot communicate the wonder and pleasure given by every line of true poetry. According to this objection there is no room for the substance of the subject examined alone. The most exact categories can be made to embrace the most deadly doggerel and the wisest and most elaborate system is of no assistance to the reader or listener facing the authentic poetic experience.

This is all quite true: but theory has never proposed to offer a surrogate for experience. The only purpose of theory is to assign poetry a place as one among all the other human activities and social products. To do this the theorist needs the poetic experience, since his approach to his subject is not simply through comprehending the words or content of a poem, but through his own experience. The man for whom theory is a substitute for experience is not a theorist, but a cripple blissfully unaware of his limp. By the same token theory itself cannot *per se* provide the experience inspired by its subject, any more than it is possible to infer from the Law of Free Fall what Newton felt when the fateful apple hit him on the head.

2

I am quite aware that the analogy with the apple is not entirely appropriate. After all the same law determines the free fall of an apple and an atom bomb, although in terms of experience it is no way unimportant which of the two drops on one's head. Scientific laws have no regard for mankind. On the other hand the effect of poetry is part of its essential nature, and it is therefore not desirable to try and define the poems of, say, Goethe and Koerner by the same law. This is incontrovertible, but not even this provides grounds for the currently fashionable denials of knowledge which for some mysterious reason are usually proclaimed with shouts of triumph. The laws of poetry, which exist, can in fact be applied to both Goethe's and Koerner's poems, only who wants to apply them to Köerner? Educated mankind, literary critics included, would never dream of doing it. Since the Koerners disappear one after the other from the world of poetry into strictly bibliographical immortality with a frightening regularity and in even more frightening numbers, the conclusion is inescapable that subjective factors only play a limited part in art, as in all other fields, and it is worth while working out the general laws governing poetry, since, in a historical perspective, they will in fact only be applicable to the greatest. In other words: in poetry there is no apple and no atom bomb—there are only poems.

3

But what is a poem? Naturally it reflects reality, as all other creations of art. It does this with the help of language, as does every literary work of art. Very well, but what are its specific criteria? My increasing lack of confidence, in definitions makes me dodge the straight answer, and resort to an example.

A novelist or playwright describes or represents a woman. We see her characteristics in admirable relief: her stupidity, vanity, ruthless selfishness, her commonplace attractions. The writer, however, and those of his characters whom we willingly

credit, repeatedly assure us that the lady in question is a splendid creature. What happens now? The reality that has been created annuls without further ado the false statements they make. We continue to regard the woman as awful and we think the writer is a fool. The contradiction between the two may destroy the credibility of the work and its final artistic effect, but it cannot alter the reality the writer has conjured up.

A poet writes exquisite love poems to a woman. On the evidence of the poems his Egeria is more than beautiful, and she is brilliant, kind and modest into the bargain. Then, as bad luck has it, we meet her in the flesh. We do not want to believe our eyes; she is disgustingly ugly, she is stupid and vicious, and she throws the ashtray at our poet. We go home and re-read the poems in an ecstasy of malicious laughter. Then we read them again. And then, to our wonder, we find that the poems have conquered us: they have obliterated our knowledge, our judgement of their subject and remain beautiful. The elements from the real world in a poem have been given their credibility not through themselves but by the passion with which the poet has taken them into his possession.

4

In novels and the plays every object and person is shown to us by the creator. But there he is absorbed into the objective world, and he becomes *persona non grata* if he fails to dissolve, to obliterate himself in it. The process can take place in a number of ways. The novelist and the dramatist—as narrator—can indeed comment on the events and persons, as Arthur Miller in *A View from the Bridge;* more than that, he can write essays between the chapters of the novel or introductions to the plays as Fielding or Shaw did, producing a fruitful and exciting tension between the subjectivity of the author and the reality represented in novel or play. The writer, however, must keep measure in all things, he must do nothing to impair the reality of the objective world. In lyric poetry, on the other hand, it is the outer world that must be dissolved in the poet's subjectivity, and anything, any piece of grit incapable of dissolution will be recognized as extraneous and disturbing. That is why it is well that the poet should possess a strong and original personality, have stored in himself lots of acid and alkali, and acquired a considerable number of bridge-building skills and bridge-building materials for, like Buddha, he is called upon to cross seventy-seven bridges at the same time.

5

I would not for the world assert that the starting-point of the bridge and its graceful arches are all that count. It is vitally important where the bridge goes. Or, more exactly: the objective nature of the poetic subject-matter is characteristic of the poet and influences the nature, value and aesthetic use of the relationship he establishes with it. For from the poet's point of view what is decisive is not the objective nature of the subject-matter but the relationship which can be developed with it.

One of the greatest figures of Hungarian poetry, Attila József, was aware of this precise point when he tried to explain his descriptive poems about the slums to the critic, Gábor Halász: "A frequently recurring feeling that I have is one of desolation, and the landscape of abandoned lots which in our age makes its own desolate state intelligible through the notion of capitalism, merely comes in handy for my destructive-creative urge, for I as a poet am only interested in putting my own feeling of desolation into form. This being so, unfortunately, I cannot find my place as a poet on the Left. They—and to some extent you too—take for content what I am putting on paper as form, with an increasingly depressed consciousness in my unbefriended loneliness."

This quotation, however, also shows that the objective nature of the subject-matter influences and to a certain extent determines the character of the relationship that can be established with it. The Marxist Attila József of proletarian origin reveals his spontaneous sense of belonging, by his choice of subject-matter. His landscapes of working-class suburbs can no more be replaced by City scenes than the names of historical personages in the odes be replaced by others at will. But if the actual nature of the subject-matter is of such importance in lyric poetry as well, then how can our first example hold good: how can an abominable woman inspire an exquisitely beautiful poem? The answer is not difficult to find. Historical personages or systems of ideas occupy a definite place in the collective consciousness of mankind; history has already described their features, their virtues and frailties; the poet cannot form any relationship with them which is basically very different from that which humanity—in terms of history—has already established. The Inquisition, or Fascism, or some modern dictator may evoke genuinely enthusiastic emotions from the poet, but in vain. The poet's own personality must undergo such a distortion to achieve it, that, from a historical distance mankind is unable to repeat the experience of the relationship which the poet has expressed in the work. With landscapes the situation is different: their objective features cannot be changed either: a suburb, for instance, must be seen as a suburb, but with the infinite variety of landscapes an infinity of relationships are possible, and the profound characteristics of the poet will be revealed in the kind of landscape he turns to and now he deals with. (Compassionately, sympathetically, with aversion, absorbed in the objects he contemplates, seeking romantic symbols in it, etc.) The poet's beloved as subject-matter allows even greater freedom: he can work freely on her, falsify her if desired, since she arouses no principles of loyalty, she does not divide classes and nations in her person. The reader finds no difficulty in identifying with the poet's emotions, if he wishes he can transfer them to another, without offence to the poem. But it is far less likely that anyone would say after having read a poem: "This is a very nice poem about Mussolini; it's a pity that its subject is not Gramsci."

6

It seems then that the more personal the poetic subject-matter the less if affects the character and qualities of a work. The question is a little more complex than that, however. If a poet writes a passionate poem to a cow instead of a woman, no matter how deeply felt the unnatural passion may be it will never gain authenticity as an aesthetic experience. The cow occupies as definite a place in the scale of human values as the celebrated personages of history, and the poet cannot snap his fingers at the fact. Of course this does not mean that a cow cannot be the subject of lyric poetry: one could write a religious poem about a cow in, let's say, India, where it is an object of religious reverence. In such a case, however, the relationship between poet and cow has met the sympathetic approval of the community. There is therefore no subject that cannot be used from a poetic point of view; what cannot be used are the relationships which are felt to be essentially abnormal by humanity. Poetry always expresses normal relationships, usually in an exaggerated and passionate form, and carried to their final extremes. The poet in his private capacity may be mad—as Claire; he can only turn his madness to aesthetic account if through it he can develop a typical—that is, an artistically relevant—relationship with the wider circles and ultimate truths of reality.

7

The personal "I" and the poetic "I" differ in a number of other points at least as much as a fictional hero conceived on the

grand scale differs from its human model. That is only to be expected, seeing that poetry evokes objects of the real world not for their own sake, but for the relationship which the poet establishes with them. In the course of writing he must exclude from this relationship everything that touches *only* on the personal "I" or anything that is commonplace and uninteresting. It is a consequence of this "destructive–creative urge" that the poetic subjectivity itself, the personal experiences of the poet must appear sensuously elevated to the level of the typical.

The artist in the process of creation in other fields also "suspends" the purely private traits of his everyday ego, since the whole of his personality has to be salvaged and crystallized within the limits of a certain form of expression, and unless he jettisons the merely accidental, the inessential experiences he cannot do it. But in the plastic arts or in drama and epic poetry the creative personality, rising above the accidents and irrelevances of ordinary existence, is present only as an ordering and organizing principle, as an emotional and intellectual environment surrounding and permeating the reality which is portrayed, and as such has no need to discover its individual face, to project its concrete moral features. In poetry, on the other hand, everything turns on the breadth and the depth and the sensuous intensity through which this poetic self is projected, a poetic self which the poet directly moulds out of his own fallible and personal self, with unconscious and with conscious effort. This is true even of major poets whose goal is impersonality. T. S. Eliot's impersonality is unmistakable and individual, it is an Eliotesque impersonality, with a personal face.

But the poetic "I" is of course not simply the outcome of the poet's arbitrary creative impulse, not even of his capacity to create types: for a moment or two it may show—under autosuggestive influence—considerable deviations from his usual self, but if it continues to differ in essentials from his private everyday self, then a false attitude pervades his poems. The great lyric poet moulds his poetic "I" in every important poem somewhat like the glyptic sculptor: paring down and removing superfluous material.

8

The poet therefore creates out of himself a type (or a poetic "I") which is universal even in its most individual or eccentric characteristics. There is no room for a wide range of types in lyric poetry; the mean and mediocre characters indispensable to realistic fiction and drama obligingly fade away; in lyric poetry only great personalities are assured a place. Paradoxically it is these overwhelmingly individual personalities, these volcanoes of subjectivity, who create the most objective poetry, because they are in contact with the widest and the deepest strata of reality. Attila József—as we have seen—identified himself with the working-class suburbs, Goethe, among other things, with the natural philosophy of his age. The poetry of men with less outstanding personalities is usually more subjective in character. This is because the relationships they build up, which may be equally profound and authentic, cover a narrower slice of reality, closer and more specifically characteristic of their own selves than with a total, global field of experience.

9

A great many modern theories of poetry come to nothing because in their attack on tedious academic pseudo-objectivity they dismiss this other—true—objectivity at the same time. The surrealists, for instance, were fully assured that anything they dug out of their private mines was of equal interest and public value. They came in for shrewd criticism from Dylan Thomas, who rightly attacked them for renouncing the filter of the intellect, the ability to select the elements

most suitable for the creation of a good poem or a good image from the amorphous welter of subconscious ideas. Dylan Thomas's criticism was a first-hand recognition that the tyranny of uninhibited, accidental associations atrophies the core of the poetic personality, that obstinate attitude and content which magically translates man-writing-verse into a lyric poet.

10

The surrealists and the futurists have however unquestionably exerted a fruitful influence on the development of world poetry in one respect. More than any others, they exploited the possibilities in poetry of abandoning the whole process of continuity. The unfolding action, the characters, even the descriptions of a play demand this sense, this experience, of continuity, of succession. From time immemorial, however, lyric poetry has broken the external world into splinters of similes, images, ideas and associations; certain poets of long ago, Villon, for example, were astonishingly daring and resourceful in this skill. The modern world, however, demands more.

Man, who has been in flight, in continual apprehension of unexpected calamity since the beginning of the century, now dodges among the many phenomena of the world: man, cornered into resistance, into rebellion and struggle strikes out more suddenly and evades more deftly. The audibly quickening rhythm of life requires readier reactions, the urbanization and mechanization of life forces a faster tempo. True; but one thing was forgotten in all the theories (fortunately not always in practice) which is that in poetry the continuity of the subjective *relationship* to the world must replace the continuity of the objective world. If this condition is met the apparently most arbitrary string of associations has the effect of a law. Of the major innovators in poetic form perhaps Mayakovski saw this most clearly. His sweeping futurist poem "Cloud in Trousers" is a complete compendium of poetic revolt, bristling with splintered experiences, fragments of life smashed almost beyond recognition. That the poem solidifies into a single gigantic block is precisely due to the fact that the poet's vision and the poet's attitude were not fragmented, in a fragmented world.

11

The difference between literary language and poetic language in the stricter sense can also be understood from the difference between these two kinds of continuity. All categories of literature are alike in making use of the cognitive nature of the concept while rejecting the abstract quality which separates it from living and breathing man, using and heightening the lively sensuousness of everyday language while rejecting its chaotic and accidental aspect. Now in objective literary forms the evocative force of language is attached directly to the continuity of the characters and the action. Its physical impact is further increased in drama by the fact that the action takes place before our eyes, within earshot, amidst living people. The evocative powers of poetic language, on the other hand, in the subjective literary form—poetry—arises from the continuity of the subjective relationship to the world, and is realized through the rhythmically composed order of expressive poetic images, similes, epigrammatic or philosophical locutions. The world of objects only comes to life in so far as it kindles these emotions and thoughts and makes them flesh. Every simile, image, sensuously conceived thought or idea is only justified as it contributes to a wider, deeper, more physically sensible representation of the relationship between the poet and the world.

The language of poetry remains abstract and speculative if there is not enough of the material world in it to incarnate this relationship. If on the other hand it uses too much, the poem tends to disintegrate, to fall apart

into its constituent elements. The individual images and similes fail to do their work, they are not given their individual part to play in the whole intellectual process of metabolism of the poet and the world, they steal the show as independent elements, and the price of their dazzling fireworks which the poet will have to pay is the unity of the poem. Allen Ginsberg's every line is the work of a genius—and can be omitted.

12

The relationship between the artist and the world is characterized by a partiality. The creative artist lifts even his indifference to an impassioned level, since only so can he communicate his partiality to others. This operation will, of course, only bear fruit on the condition that he does not violate but intensifies both the objective essence of the subject-matter and the truth of his relationship to it. The artist must always bring this essence and this truth into some sort of a connection with man. This connection with man, however, can only be established subjectively; the poet will always be partisan; the emotions are never neutral. The sense of personal commitment is most striking in poetry, since it is precisely here that the subjective relationship—the poet's partisanship—is most to the fore.

The variety of—invariably committed—passions the poet feels solidify into committed poetry if, remaining on the poetic-sensual level, they expand and multiply one another to some definite social-political-moral end. Of course political parties are not necessary for poetry to be committed in this sense: Shelley was such a committed poet. He incidentally also shows that this sense of personal commitment can only assert itself in poetry and come into full play when it is sovereign and independent. It is not the poet's individualism which insists that the right of personal commitment must be paramount, but the realization that only a personal and original unmistakably relationship between a great personality and the world can exert a profound and, more important, an enduring influence. Faceless "truths" are as insipid and uninteresting in poetry as that commonplace "sincerity," the fearful weapon of the amateur, which embarrasses or amuses their casual readers. Where the supremacy of personal commitment is threatened, it degenerates into demagogy, poetry is dethroned, the first steps have been taken towards the federal reign of terros of hacks and amateurs toeing the line of Byzantine dogma.

13

Poetic authenticity, then, is the fruit of sovereign independence. We only give out credence to the unfettered man who serves the deeper needs of his age out of his own free will. But this authenticity in lyric poetry must spring from the truth of the moment. The novelist and the playwright will preserve the moment only by absorbing it into the flow and process, the continuity of the segment of life they have chosen to represent. The lyric poet, on the other hand, condenses even the flow and process itself into the moment. The universal validity of poetry is assured by the harmony and discord of all the moments adding up and growing into a poem. One of the commonest errors which a poet can commit is a failure to trust the truth of his own moments; he fears to surrender himself to it, censors it, is anxious to "correct" it with truths salvaged from other but incompatible moments; and what we finally get is a blurred image of the moment. The camera was jolted during exposure.

14

But how does authenticity assort with poetic exaggeration? When does it conflict with it? This is an essential question—since poetic exaggeration is indispensable if the moment of a single man is to become a part of the human heritage.

The first and most obvious class of exaggerations that discredit themselves are those prosaic utterances which are in flagrant contradiction with common experience. If, for example, one were to write that "True causes are never defeated," the reader promptly recalls a number of true causes which were in fact defeated. The truth of the experienced moment must not contradict common, historical truth.

Less easy to expose, though the sensitive reader is rarely led astray, is the kind of exaggeration when the poet indulges in false gestures, in heroic attitudes he has never really experienced or managed to assimilate into poetic vision. What he says can in itself be true; his poetic attitude is false. In the first category the contrary is true; anyone can write palpable untruths with genuine self-identification. If, for instance, a poet is horrified by the knowledge that sixty per cent of mankind are starving and some forty million people die of starvation every year, and adds that once a day during his meal he thinks of his starving fellow men and the thought arrests his knife—then, much as we may agree with his genuine horror, convinced as we may be that his figures are unfortunately right, yet the particular exaggeration of the knife stopping dead in his hand "once a day" makes it impossible to accept it as a poetic experience. Since as he sits and eats he remembers the forty million going without food, how is it he does not die of starvation himself? How can he take a bite of food with such visions behind his eyes?

Into the second category of exaggerations which discredit themselves, therefore, fall those poetic utterances which poison the moment's truth through the way the poet sees things. Our mind and our moral sense cannot be stirred by what the poem says if at the same time our imagination is unable to reconcile the subject-matter with the manner in which the poet approaches and handles it.

The ineffective exaggerations given here as examples are modest, they do not transcend our imaginations. Yet even the most daring and improbable exaggerations and hyperboles are authentic and convincing if they bring the truth of the moment, the poet's original, sovereign and true relationship to his subject, to life. If, for example, a poet feels that he has given birth to his poem with the same agony and pain as a mother her child, who has grown a beard and teeth and reaches to her temples, no one takes it literally. For one thing he obviously cannot feel like a mother. For another the world has never heard of an infant with a beard and teeth, grown to its mother's temples. But a poem with these extravagantly tortured images, this urgency for the relief of birth, may suggest that the poet, in the heightened intensity of the moment, truly conceived his labours to be the same as a woman's. The exaggeration here does not offend our reliable observation of reality, because it is only the expression of a way of looking at things; and it is for the purpose of evoking the transfigured truth—more profound than our direct, first-hand experience—of the artist's psychosis in the throes of creation, and the authenticity of this deeper truth is assured by the evocative power and emotional richness of the poem's imagery.

Poetic exaggeration, therefore, if it is to function, cannot alter social-historical facts and cannot distort or blur, nor be used to provide a substitute for the aesthetic commitment the poet has failed to feel. Its function is to heighten, vividly present and make memorable the real phenomena and the interrelationship existing between the lyric poet and the world.

15

All the ills that poetic authenticity is heir to are caused by the failure of relationship between the poet and his subject-matter. Into this category falls the whole business of imitation, where there can be no question of relationship, since the poet approaches his subject, itself often the invention of someone sele, in the name and with the eyes of

another poet. It also includes mannerism, which arises from the inflexible and unadaptable character of a poet's vision. The mannered poet approaches all his subjects with the same ingrained gestures; he will not allow the nature of his subjects to influence him. He is consequently at the mercy of chance: commanding the requisite talent, he may produce great works of art, but only when the subject-matter happens to be in harmony with his own rigid approach.

And here too we find the various conflicts that arise between the poet's outlook and his ideology. A revealing example is the more primitive poetry of the socialist movement, in which the socialist goals are decked out in the fancy dress of religious ideas, symbols and paraphernalia. The class struggle is "sacred," the proletariat is "the Holy Church of Faith," and socialism is "Eden." Such a conflict may be produced by any ideology which has stiffened into dogma and which is determined to force observable truths to fit its own Procrustean bed; only the truths commit suicide, rather than compromise their own integrity.

16

The first condition of truly modern poetry is that the relationship of the poet and reality should be contemporary. Everybody takes the formal aspects of this requirement for granted: it is quite clear that it is impossible to write great poems today with the means at Wordsworth's disposal. That is all very well, but questions of form depend upon the poetic world outlook—it is in his world view that the poet's rational and emotional being, his conscious views and his subconscious prepossessions, the concepts he has hammered out and the mode of vision arising spontaneously within him, are all welded together. If any one of these elements is old or outworn, the balance of the poem is upset, and at best an impressive colossus may be produced, but a great work never.

Take, for instance, the fashionable attitude against civilization. The attitude is based on the seamier sides of modern urban life. That is all very well, but urbanization is none the less a tremendous liberating force, which has finally ended the narrowness of men's lives, the apparent immobility of their institutions and mode of life. In the past two hundred years poetry has reacted by becoming urbanized. Even excellent anti-urban poetry, like that of the young Rilke, in which the men driven into the treadmill of town existence, could recognize their own image, was thoroughly urban poetry, and could not have been otherwise. The accelerating rhythm of life, which has revolutionized the spontaneous vision, can only be fully embraced by the poet who is habituated to the urban world. This conflict, however, will flaw his poetry unless he succeeds in expressing his antipathies on some universal level of protest.

17

Modern poetry is urban poetry even when speaking of the countryside, but it cannot abandon the means common to all poetry, the means which the poetry of the people first raised to perfection. I am not merely thinking of external forms, the imagery and metaphors amassed and preserved, but in the first place of that sublime method of creation and construction which is in all folk poetry. Let me mention only a single structural motif, perhaps the most important: the decisive importance of simple devices. The most tortuous and conflict-ridden turmoils of the intellect and the emotions, riding at the highest point of tension, must crystallize into those epigrammatic definitions or uncompromisingly simple images which cut through the fog with the sharpness of light. This kind of simplicity is of course cunningly, intriguingly complicated, individualized and intellectualized—the simplicity of the tightrope dancer, performing high in the air, who has learnt his art down on the edge of the pavement.

GÁBOR VÁLYI

A STUDENT SON IN LENINGRAD

I have travelled fairly extensively in my life but this has been the first time I have embarked on a conducted tour. And I have written quite a few travel-reports in my time, but never one intended for the general public. But my trip to Leningrad has been so very different from all the others that I feel I just have to write about it, much as I hate writing the reports on my official trips. But this is one I don't have to write at all: the sole purpose of my trip was to go and see my son in Leningrad, who is in his first year at the University there.

It is slightly over two hours' flight from Budapest to Moscow. Announcement in Moscow: Fog; flights to Leningrad cancelled. We have to go by train, The Red Arrow, a special night train with sleepers. It makes no difference to us, in fact we have an extra two hours for a walk round Red Square, watching the lights in a drizzle, admiring the Cathedral of St. Basil, a fabulous many-coloured, flood-lit church built by Ivan the Terrible some 400 years ago; stopping a minute under the Tower of the Redeemer, restored by an Englishman, one Christopher Halloway, in 1625. And we are back in the bus, on our way to the station.

The thirty of us are duly arranged in three carriages. Our courier, a young lady brought up on the best Hungarian standards of morality, is determined to defend our virtue to the last, and works energetically to shepherd all her women into one coach and all her men into the other two. Not a squeak from our Hungarians, including among them some honeymoon pairs and several married couples—they think that's the way things are over here. Which is how I come to share my compartment for four with one of the Hungarian husbands—a two-day married man—and two extremely pretty Russian girls. The newly-wed wife is—we hope—enjoying herself with the gay young Russian artillery officers with whom she is sharing for the entire eight hours of the journey. A good time is had by all, and I am sure that the story Boccaccio would have promptly woven around the situation would have been as delectably gay as totally unfounded.

It is still dark when we arrive. My son is waiting on the platform. I see he has lost weight, and he wears his fur cap pulled deep over his forehead with a proper Russian air. I take the spare seat next to the driver of the bus taking us from the station. We talk, and I keep an eye on the driver in the meanwhile, for the way people drive their cars, their attitude in traffic, often tells volumes about local habits and temperaments. It is cold, the roads are frozen and slippery. It is early, with relatively little traffic, but nonetheless he drives with great responsibility and care; he is in no hurry, he has an eye out for everything, and his movements are not jerky but well calculated. I noticed the same assured calm in other drivers in the following days. They did their job without the slightest trace of flurry. I have a suspicion that that is how they won the War.

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We put up in an old hotel, the Astoria. Lovely old furniture. I am told that it was in this hotel that Yessenin committed suicide. I feel it goes with the atmosphere, like the white-haired old lady in charge of the lift. She is invariably kind and smiling. Her face reminds me of my mother. She never fails to say a kind word or two on our way down: "It's cold outside, you'd better button up your coat." Or, on the way up: "It's nicer inside, isn't it? I'm sure you'll sleep like a log!"

My son and I are strolling along the Nevsky Prospect when an elderly lady stops him and warns him that he'd better wear a pair of ear-muffs and that those leather gloves are no good in this sort of freezing weather. And she likes it cold herself. And doesn't time fly? And it's almost thirty years since she laughed to see the fascists drop dead like flies when the Russian winter set in. And it does get bitterly cold sometimes, that she will say, but the Russian winter is the Russian's friend, it always helps them. A little later another lady rebukes us for not observing the rule that those going *up* the road keep to the right, and those going *down* to the left. Two and a half paces later my son observes that he's been up and down the streets of Leningrad now for half a year, and *he'd* never noticed it. Probably the young no longer pay much attention to it.

Evening, the same day: an enormous, middle-aged bear of a man in fur coat and fur cap straggling along Herzen Street accompanied, or rather driven on by a small, pencil-thin woman giving him what is obviously a hell of a dressing down. We walk past them. The man is bent on one more glass of beer. She won't hear of it. The bear grumbles bitterly but gives way. They go home together. One of the boys with us tells us of the time he was out for a morning walk in Leningrad with a Russian friend. Feeling cold they went into a restaurant and ordered a couple of glasses of champagne. The waitress, kindly, politely, but very firmly, reproved them: "Champagne? At this time of day? Oh, no, tea is much better for you." Their protests were of no avail. There was no champagne for them. Only tea, a nice hot glass of tea, complete with a slice of lemon.

Vegetables and fruit are on sale on stalls along the street. In front of the university hostel I offer to buy apples and a few oranges for my son. He takes a quick look at the stall and shakes his head. "We'd have to wait too long," he says. "Why?" I say astonished: "there's no queue, only four women." "That's right," he says. "That'll take about half an hour, and it's just not worth it in this cold." I simply don't believe him, I take my place in the tiny queue. The assistant, a ruddy-cheeked, buxom woman of about fifty, in a pair of heavy boots, a heavy fur coat and a scarf, has just finished weighing a woman a kilo of apples. She takes the money and they go on talking. Yes, her boy is in the army, says the shopper. He's fine, he's coming home for Christmas. They go on to agree that winter has come rather earlier this year but then, it's considerably drier than other years, isn't it? A man joins the queue behind me. I fume impatiently. The two women in front of me waiting their turn chat patiently together, the things children get up to, the price of vegetables, cold, isn't it? The man behind me is getting irritated, but he dare not utter a word. I glance at my watch: two minutes service, five minutes gossip, one minute service, four minutes gossip. Some twenty minutes later it is my turn at last.

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In the Hermitage Gallery. I let our courier and our group go on ahead, and stay to look at the collection of French paintings in my own time, moving on as I please.

The lakeside with red flowers by Monet is in a hall looking out from the Winter Palace. I am in luck's way, for over the front of the palace, above the bronze horses and chariots, the sun shines out from behind a bank of clouds. The sun is a rare sight in the winter in these parts, and it brings out the brilliance of Monet's reds and greens and blues so gloriously that I can hardly bear to leave them and pass on.

In the middle of one of the neighbouring rooms is Rodin's small marble: The Poet and the Muse. The Muse is a snow-white nude, her hands clasped behind her head,

and the Poet reclines and stretches up his neck to reach her. His lips crave for her breasts. He is obviously a bad poet and it seems certain that the kiss is never going to come off. And then I remember what Henry Moore said and I find myself agreeing with him again in front of Rodin's marble: "Stone is hard and solid, one must not distort its quality by stimulating soft flesh in its medium."

A couple of fifteen-year-old boys stare absorbedly at Degas's nude combing her red hair. I am touched by the awed glances they throw at the picture. I was about their age when, quite accidentally, I entered the room of my best friend's sister one hot summer afternoon. Extremely pretty, with long red hair, she was lying naked fast asleep on a sofa, I never had the courage to tell her that I had, so to speak, stolen on her sleep. A few years later she was murdered in a German concentration camp.

The collection also contains a few paintings by Henri Rousseau and some small pieces of sculpture by Maillol. My national pride rouses at the sight of them. Why, our Csontváry is clearly a better painter than Rousseau, and as for Maillol, he can't hold a candle to our Medgyessy! I pull myself up on the spot, and I remember what my daughter tells her sons when they quarrel about whose toys are nicer and which of them have more of something. "That's stupid, envying each other. That's the way grown-ups who are stupid sometimes quarrel—and that's how wars happen!" There is indeed no point in such national comparisons, if not the recognition that we should do more to make Hungarian art better known abroad. Why shouldn't the Hermitage, for instance, display twenty to thirty outstanding Hungarian works in its permanent exhibition and the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts, in its turn, could also make its own collection more complete by showing Russian and Soviet works.

As soon as I reach the Gauguins the sun comes out again and glows on Gauguin's landscapes. A few months ago I spent some time near the Equator. I can perfectly understand why Gauguin left Europe, how he came to fall in love with the South Sea landscape, and what the Pastorales Tahitiennes must have meant for him.

In front of the board giving a short account of the contents of the room stands a typical Leningrad beauty, a teenage girl in mini-skirt, making industrious notes and comparing them with what she sees as she moves down the room studying each picture. It would be interesting to know what the Northern blonde has jotted down on all this Southern glamour.

Between Gauguin and Cézanne one passes along a gallery overlooking an arcaded hall. The hall is full of fine inlaid furniture, the show cases with jewellery and old china. It is a bit of a surprise that there are many more people looking at these objects than at my French masters. There are no doubt persons for whom Picasso's huge nudes appear somewhat unattractive, but I cannot help laughing to myself as I see a schoolmistress sweeping her class of ten to twelve-year-old girls along as if she had somehow got into some street of ill-fame in Paris. Perhaps it's a good thing on the whole that everybody has different interests and likes. If everyone wanted the same things, marriages would be even more difficult to bring about and second-hand booksshops, with everyone clamouring for the same book, would go smash.

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My son is a student at the Togliatti Institute in Leningrad. The Institute is devoted to problems of automation, with branches in electronics, light industry and so forth, but all in specific relation to automation. If everything goes well he will duly get his degree in engineering-economics. As the function of the Institute is to train specialists in automation that of the faculty of engineering-economics is to train experts

in all aspects of the use of computers in the compilation of information, as well as provide them with an elementary knowledge of engineering principles and practice.

The scientific and technological revolution poses a number of questions for small countries like Hungary. These countries cannot really hope to become self-sufficient in research; and yet if they do not want to find themselves falling increasingly behind they must keep abreast of international scientific developments. The only way to do this is to send students abroad as well as educating them at home.

Nearly 1,500 Hungarian students are following full university courses in the Soviet Union, a figure greater than the number of students at the fair-sized university of Debrecen. The great majority of them are working in fields which cannot be studied in Hungary, either because the demand for them is too small for a faculty to be worth running or because we do not yet have enough teachers for that particular subject, usually a new discipline. One of the reasons why we send so many of our students to the Soviet Union is that in certain subjects, such as the one my son is studying, we are facing both an immediate demand for more experts as well as the more long-term need for teachers.

Of the 1,500 Hungarians in the Soviet Union, 400 study in Leningrad. Hungarian students in Leningrad and Moscow are almost as fanatical on the merits of their respective cities as the Russians of Moscow and Leningrad themselves. None of them would exchange his own city for the other, each is full of praise for his own. One can read about their activities in the Hungarian student paper with the rather romantic title: "Leaves from the Banks of the Neva" they have their own football and basket-ball teams and have won prizes in sports.

Much more impressive, though, are their scholastic achievements. Their average mark is 4.6 out of a possible 5 (92 per cent), which is really something. I think this is due to a combination of factors. Students who tackle five years' absence from home, studying in a foreign language, have to be pretty determined in the first place. Even in Hungary university entrance examinations are pretty difficult: so are the examinations for a scholarship to a Russian university. On top of that the candidate must already know a fair amount of Russian—though if they are accepted they are given a further preliminary and intensive course in the language, in the Soviet Union, before the term starts.

The examination system generally in the Soviet Union is designed to help students obtain better scholastic results, and is therefore easier, for different reasons. It should be remembered that in both Hungary and the Soviet Union, unlike in England and America, the intake of students is geared to the jobs available afterwards. In Hungary the State Statistical and Planning Offices work out the manpower required in the various branches for so many years ahead. The first-year students in the Hungarian universities will exceed this specific requirement by some 20 per cent, but the excess will be weeded out by stiff first end-of-year examinations, leaving the better students to go on and finish the course. In the Soviet Union, on the contrary, the number of experts required in many branches of industry and science and so forth is open-ended, so that it is not a matter of weeding out, but of helping and encouraging every student to reach the required standards.

As a result the examination system is very different to the Hungarian system, and must appear bliss to Western eyes. Although official examinations may be scheduled, say, from January 6 to January 18, the students can take their exams any time before that date, and repeat the same exam, as often as they like, until they have obtained the full mark of 5, which is needed to pass a "pre-official" exam. It is only in the official period, though here

again they can repeat and repeat, that the marks gained at each repetition are added up in the end and divided to make the final average mark received.

Public opinion, moreover, youth organizations and people in general make much of academically "good" students, with the "bad" students remaining in the background. And finally I think what is perhaps the greatest spur for foreign students at Soviet universities is that if these "pre-official" examinations are passed with the valid mark of 5 before the official examination period, it entitles them to a week's extra holiday at home. No wonder that the slightly homesick foreign students sometimes study the clock round to pass as many examinations before the official examination period as possible, and so get themselves extra vacation time at home.

The hostel (obshi, short for Russian obshtshezhitjie) is quite a way out from the centre—over half an hour's ride on the underground and trolley-bus from the Institute. On the wall of the house next to the obshi there is a sign which moves me to memory and reverence: a blue, wooden notice warning pedestrians back in the time of the siege which side of the street was safer from bullets. Reading the tablet I feel sick in the stomach; to our sons, of course, all this is mere history, rather like Lenin's armoured car in front of the museum or the equestrian statue of Peter the Great on the banks of the Neva. To me the faded tablet says more than the most prestigious monument. Except one, perhaps, which gave me the same shock—with its simple spontaneous monumental quality—as the blue tablet: half-way along the road from Moscow to Sheremetyevo Airport—I saw a monument in the form of a tank-trap of three concrete beams, at least five times the size of a real tank-trap, to remind us of how far the German fascists in their arrogance followed in Napoleon's footsteps in the last war.

The obshi is an old-fashioned, barrack-like group of buildings, three to four storeys high. I had better withdraw that "barrack-like" immediately. Not that the building itself is very different from a military institution, but the organization of the obshi, not to speak of the practical realities which spring from it, would be unimaginable in Soviet, Hungarian, English or American barracks. As for instance an elderly lady with a mild face knitting in the porter's lodge. Each group of buildings has its caretaker: the students go to him for new furniture, blankets, sports equipment or clean linen. The students' rooms line long corridors, with lavatories, kitchens and studies on each floor. In each of the rooms, furnished with Spartan simplicity, two or three students live together. They clean their rooms themselves, though as with students everywhere, the cleaning is not very perceptible to the naked eye, and the cleaning staff does the corridors and toilets, with a general spring clean every so often. My son, for instance, shares a room, divided by a curtained opening; three Hungarian students live on one side, two Russian students on the other. The Hungarian boys have stuck a great picture poster-map of Budapest up on the wall, with all the houses drawn in perspective; and the Russian boys point out to you the exact houses where their three friends live.

What they do in their rooms is no one's business. Even the caretaker doesn't care. Boys and girls live in separate rooms along the same corridors. They all laughed at me when—seeing students of both sexes popping in and out of each other's rooms—I asked in my slightly old-fashioned way if this was allowed. "Who on earth wants to forbid it?" they said. It looks as if Leningrad students have little reason for revolt on this score.

How do the five boys get on together? "Fine," said my son. They talked and they gossipped. Again, like students everywhere, they would settle down to work in the afternoon in their room; the hours would

pass in talking and in listening to the pop and beat uninterruptedly blaring from each room, and then suddenly, in panic, they would all settle down to work hard—and they have a stiff syllabus—late into the night. With the inevitable consequence—cutting the eight o'clock lecture in the icy-cold morning. And thereby hangs a tale.

"Well, it was theoretical stuff anyway," said my son defensively "and all of us"—the seventeen Hungarians following the course—"found it easier to read in the Russian textbook than listen to the spoken word. So we cut it. The Professor hauled us up before him, so we thought we'd get round it by dividing ourselves into two groups. Half stayed in bed, half went to the lecture. But he noticed that too, and hauled us up again. So we explained. Oh, our Russian wasn't so good yet, and we worked so late at night trying to keep up, and then there were difficulties, this and that... We laid it on thick—poor little Hungarian boys. And do you know what happened? The Vice-Rector of the whole University, no less, turned up in the obshi, and went from room to room, asking each of us what our difficulties were, and what we needed, what could they do to help?"

I found it almost impossible to spot the various nationalities in the obshi by their clothes or behaviour. If you have a good ear you can spot them by their accent in the first year, after that it gets progressively more difficult. There is no custom by which members of any particular national group all wear long hair or don't. There are long-haired Siberians and crew-cut Bulgarians and *vice versa*. As for mini-skirts, it's the legs and not the nationality which decide.

I spoke of the beat and pop from radios and tape-recorders which flood the rooms of the students. The obshi boasts several beat groups, which can always earn their members something when they are broke. Groups are often invited to play elsewhere, and not for nothing; they get good money for each night's work. There is also a Hungarian choir. Boys and girls attend the regular rehearsal with considerable enthusiasm; they like singing together. Every now and then they give a concert, and none of them mind if no one pays *them*.

Hungarian students in the Soviet Union get a grant of 70 roubles a month, with another 10 for outstanding academic achievement. The room in the obshi costs one and a half roubles a month, heating and electricity included, and a meal rarely comes to more than half a rouble. Living reasonably, therefore, it is possible to save, especially since textbooks—they get a special allowance for some of them—can be borrowed from the university libraries. What do they save for? The usual—radios, tape-recorders, cameras, film cameras, and so on. A good second-hand film camera costs about 80 roubles, and my son and three others are saving up to buy one together. They also save for the extra trips home. Their fares are paid once a year; if they want to come home for the Christmas vacation they have to pay the fare themselves. Some of the foreign students save for travel; trip to the Black Sea in the summer, or a visit to Georgia, Armenia, or Siberia, which even from Moscow beckon as mysterious, far-away countries. (My son has already got notions of taking his Hungarian girl friend to the Black Sea this summer.) Their student cards will give them free accommodation in any obshi in the country. Or they begin to collect a library, technical or literary, though as far as I can see they have little time for pleasure reading. The money for this can easily be found from the grant, since books in the Soviet Union are cheap by Hungarian standards, let alone compared to book prices in the West. Each bed had its shelf of books above it, some smaller, some larger.

What may be of particular interest to the Western reader is that each of these Hungarian boys has a job already lined up for him at home. An elaborate system of

cross-reference and selection—what places in what Institutes the Soviet Union can offer, what experts are needed and what jobs will be waiting to be filled in Hungary, and then consultations and offers to likely candidates through the schools. A foreign friend asked me whether the boys did not feel somewhat bound and circumscribed, having their future so neatly mapped out for them at such an early age. All I can say is that all these boys, including my son, were pleased about it. My son, for instance, chose the job offered in the National Library for Technical Information. He has already been over it and got to know the people there. Each time he comes back to Hungary he will go there, discuss his problems, be put in the picture. As a result there's an immediate significance in the work they are doing now. He's happy with what he has chosen. "It gives one a sense of satisfaction," he said, "and it is going to be useful for society." And this is not propaganda. He really said so.

MIHÁLY SIMAI

THE BRAIN DRAIN AND THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

In recent years the migration of professional and sub-professional personnel in scientific, medical, technical, administrative and managerial fields from developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America to Europe and North America, and even to the relatively richer countries in the developing world, as well as from Western Europe to North America, has taken an increasingly important place in international discussion. The increase in the number of migrants and their growing importance are probably the main reason behind the changes in attitudes towards the problem.

Beyond the basic query—"why do these people leave their home countries and seek employment elsewhere," there is another very important—related—question to be answered: "what economic consequence does this migration have on the developing countries, how is it influencing their economic and social development? Is it really important or is its impact only marginal and not worth discussing?"

The role played by highly qualified manpower as an instrument and component of economic development and social transformation is widely recognized and generally accepted as a matter of course in theoretical discussions. (Not that it is always so in practice.) Yet there are great differences in the attitude adopted by different countries and governments. Some goverments are fully conscious of their gains and losses and the adverse effect of the brain drain. Many developing countries, however, are at best neutral, especially those where economic progress is slow, and where professionals without a proper outlet represent an unwanted economic burden and a political risk.

It is extremely difficult to evaluate the gains and, of course, on the side of the "drained" country, the losses, which must be related to the body of professionals available and to national needs and targets.

A number of methodological and statistical problems have to be solved in order to give a satisfactory answer to all the problems involved. Some of them, such as the provision of exact and complete international and national statistical data on this question; the definition of professionals,

that even of highly qualified cadres varying from country to country; and the provision of accurate and uniform migration statistics, are not as yet fully documented.

One of the questions is how to measure the loss due to the brain drain, and how to give a meaningful economic content to the evaluation. The costs of education are different in each country, so is the "productivity" of the professionals. To use American production data to indicate the gains or African data to illuminate the losses will, of course, be misleading.

To avoid the expression of the gains or losses in dollars, drachmas or rupees, we propose to use the category of "man-years" wherever possible, and assume that the average working contribution of a professional in society is 25 years, since some of the "drained brains" are older than an average post-graduate, and some return to their countries later. The "man-year" as the basis for comparison puts the social importance of professional work on an equal basis in different countries.

The "role" of highly skilled professionals is different according to their profession. It is consequently necessary to compare "brain drain" statistics not only with the total body of professionals available but also by individual groups: engineers, doctors, etc.

Due to the methodological problems involved and the lack of complete data, it is impossible to give a comprehensive picture at this stage. Only further research can reveal the precise proportions and all the implications.

The "Brain Gap" and the "Brain Drain"

Information on the occupational structure of employment in the world economy is very meagre. Most of the figures are based on estimates of partial estimates. To determine the importance of the "brain drain," we first attempted to establish the magnitude of the "brain gap" in the world, calculated according to the ILO definition,

> *"Professional, Technical and Related Workers:* Workers in this major group conduct research and apply, in a professional capacity, scientific knowledge and methods to a variety of technological, economic, social, industrial and governmental problems, carry out technical tasks auxiliary to scientific research, development, and practice, and perform religious, educational, legal, artistic and literary functions. Those classified in this major group perform tasks which usually require training in a specific scientific or other professional field, at a university, technical institute or similar establishment or which require creative ability in literature or art or talent in entertaining."

The international distribution of manpower in professional occupations is as follows:

Table 1

Actual and Projected Distribution of Manpower in Professional Occupations in the World (percentage)

	1960	*1970* projected
Developed Market Economies	43.4	41.3
North America	16.7	15.4
Western Europe	22.1	19.7
Others	4.6	6.2
Developing Market Economies	24.3	26.3
Asia	13.5	14.8
Africa	3.9	3.5
Latin America	6.9	8.0
Centrally Planned Economies (socialist countries)	32.3	32.4
U.S.S.R.	16.2	16.8
Eastern Europe	6.3	6.5
Socialist countries in Asia	9.8	9.1

Source: Calculations based on the data and projections of J. G. Scoville: "The Occupational Structure of Employment, 1960–1980"; paper presented to the Interregional Seminar on Long-Term Economic Projections for the World Economy (Sectoral Aspects), August 1966.

This group—people in professional occupations—is extremely heterogeneous and hardly comparable in the different countries. In most of the developing countries the group includes a great percentage of those without higher education and in some cases without secondary education. There are foreigners in the group. The figures therefore actually represent more "expectations" of professionals than actual highly skilled people. In the developed countries, they are almost exclusively "real" professionals and highly skilled people. This partly explains why the productivity of the professional group is so much lower in the developing countries. Taking the world average G.N.P. per people in professional occupation as 100 in 1960, the level of the different regions was as follows:

Developed Market Economies	116
North America	259
Western Europe	121
Others	109
Developing Market Economies	5.7
Asia	5.0
Africa	5.5
Latin America	6.8

Source: See Table 1, and *U.N. Statistical Yearbook.*

The comparisons of projections for manpower in professional occupations in 1970 and the projected GNP data by FAO and other organizations indicate that these proportions are not likely to change by 1970.

No comparable data are available in the sub-professional group (agricultural assistants, nurses, engineering assistants, technicians, supervisors of skilled workers, etc.). With the use of certain ratios, however, available for individual countries, it can be concluded that the gap in sub-professional groups is even greater.

The "brain gap" of course means not only a gap in the absolute number of professionals, but also a great difference in their proportionate position in terms of total employment. In 1960, the "world average" of manpower in professional occupations was 4.16 per cent of total employment. Taking this figure as 100, the level of the Developed Market Economies was 245, the Developing Market Economies 53 (in Asia 41, in Africa 43 and in Latin America 89); in the Centrally Planned Economies in Europe it was 180 and in Asia 55 (caculations based on the sources cited in Table 1).

These figures, though they fail to give a full picture of the "brain gap," reveal the great differences among the different regions. There are of course great inequalities within each region as well. In the North African countries, for example, the proportion of professionals in relation to total employment in 1960 was almost twice as high as in the East African countries.

Most important, however (especially in comparison with any "brain drain" data),is the professional structure of highly qualified manpower in the developing countries.

In the following table we compare the ratio of manpower in professional occupations to total employment, and the ratio of engineers and scientists to industrial employment in the developed market economies and in the developing countries (the data are partly estimates).

The figures in Table 2 reflect the great difference in the categories, especially from the point of view of modern economic growth.

Statistics among the developing regions

Table 2

Proportion of Professionals to Total Employment and Scientists and Engineers to Total Industrial Employment, in 1960

	Ratio of manpower in professional occupations to total employment (percentage)	Ratio of engioeers and scientists to total industrial employment (percentage)
Developed market economies	10.2	2.74
Developing countries	2.2	0.31
Asia	1.7	0.30
Africa	1.8	0.27
Latin America	3.7	0.45

Source: See Table 1, and U.N. ECOSOC E/3901/Add.1./.

are more detailed for Latin America. Latin America is just as good an example for comparing the "brain drain" figures with the actual body of professionals in existence, since U.S. data on immigration are the most complete and here there is hardly any other direction of emigration than the United States, while in other continents there is a "brain drain" to the European countries as well. According to the statistics of ECLA, from among the total number of professionals, there were about 600,000 "university level" professionals in 1965 in Latin America. This number is much smaller than that given in Table 1, calculated according to the ILO definition. The 600,000 top professionals, however, are the main subjects of the brain drain. (It is of interest that of the group in Latin America included in Table 1, carrying out strictly professional functions, about 23 per cent, in 16 Latin American countries, had no more than primary education and nearly 10 per cent no more than 3 years of formal schooling. The approximately 600,000 professionals at "university level" represented less than 1 per cent of total employment including agriculture) in Latin America. Only 25 per cent of them were employed in production, 75 per cent in services (architects, doctors, lawyers, secondary school teachers, etc.). Agriculture employed less than 3 per cent of this professional group (46 per cent of the total labour force was employed in agriculture). They represented only 0.1 per cent of those in agricultural employment, in absolute figures about 20,000.

The actual figures were similar in the extractive industries, the share of which was much smaller in total employment. 2.4 per cent of the total employment in this sector was composed of professionals. In manufacturing, it was 0.4 per cent, about 8 per cent of the total professionals at university level. In the United States, in 1960, 11 per cent of the employed population belonged to the professional category (about 8,250,000 persons) at university level, who are more or less comparable with the 600,000 in Latin America. In the U.S. manufacturing industries, the proportion of "university level professionals" was about 7 per cent of total employment.

Turning to the emigration figures, there has been a steady increase in the number of emigrating professionals from Latin America to the United States. Between 1956 and 1966, it grew by 4–5 per cent annually. Between 1957 and 1961, about 1,900 doctors, engineers and scientists emigrated to the United States from Latin America (without the Cuban immigration). Between 1962 and 1966, the total number of professionals (according to U.S. official data) who immigrated from Latin America was 9,261. This represented 1.5 per cent of the total body of university level professionals in the sub-continent in 1965. The immigration of Latin American professionals to the United States in the same years annually was in the neighbourhood of 0.3–0.4 per cent of the total number available in 1965.

Additional calculations based on piecemeal data for Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Uruguay and the Central American countries (I.D/U.G.4/D.P.8 1967) indicate that in the sub-continent there were about 180,000 scientists and engineers in 1965; about 170,000 belonged to the medical and allied professions, 90,000 were social scientists, while the remainder belonged to other professional categories such as lawyers, teachers, etc. Comparing these figures with those of the "brain drain" figures, 2,566 persons, corresponding approximately to 0.5 per cent of the total stock of these professional groups in Latin America in 1965, were admitted to the United States.

The proportion was 0.9 per cent of the total stock of doctors, about 0.5 per cent of the engineers and natural scientists, and less than 0.1 per cent of the social scientists. (Sources for the "brain drain" statistics: "The Brain Drain into the U.S. of Scientists, Engineers and Physicians." U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1967, pp. 30–41.) Comparisons are based on far from exact figures; they are only indications, showing the approximate proportions, and indicating future research requirements.

Within the general picture, the position of individual countries was somewhat worse.

The number of engineers who emigrated to the United States from Argentina between 1950 and 1964 was about 1,000, which corresponded to 14.3 per cent of the total engineers working in the industry of the country in 1962. (Enrique Oteizia: "La ingenieria y el desarollo económico en la Argentina." Buenos Aires, 1965, and "Emigration of Engineers from Argentina: a Case of Latin American 'Brain Drain'." *International Labour Review*, December 1965.)

The total number of engineers in Argentina was about 22,000, so the above number represented 4.5 per cent of the engineers of the country, which is still a high proportion. If, for example, 4.5 per cent of the American engineers left the United States, their total number would be around 40,000.

Latin America is far from being the only developing region of the world subject to the brain drain. Some of the countries of Asia and Africa are also losing some of their highly skilled professionals and sub-professionals to the United States, United Kingdom and France.

In 1964 alone 3,300 professors, 1,600 engineers, 1,300 nurses and 800 doctors emigrated from developing countries to the United Kingdom. Today about 35 per cent of the personnel in the medical services of the United Kingdom come from Pakistan, India and from the West Indies. (*Politique Etrangère*, numéro 3, 1967.)

The total number of doctors from India working in the United Kingdom represented about 2 per cent of those in India, and those who were working in the United States of America represented 4.5 per cent of the total (calculated from data published in *Statesman* [New Delhi], on February 26, 1965, and *U.N. Statistical Yearbook*, 1966).

The above figures—far from being complete—indicate however that the existing "brain gap" between the developed and developing countries, the uneven distribu-

tion of professionals and sub-professionals, the great international differences in professional patterns and qualities, were further aggravated by the loss of talent in important professions to the developed market economies. From these figures it is already partly clear which countries are the most important victims of the "brain drain" in the developing world. According to United States and the United Kingdom data, the 15 countries which are the main sources of professional and sub-professional emigration in the developing world are: India, Pakistan, South Korea, South Vietnam, Iran, Turkey, the Republic of China (Taiwan), the Philippines, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Nigeria.

The Impact of the "Brain Drain"

The economic and social structure of the "brain losing" country, the stock and pattern of professionals, the degree of their utilization and the size of the loss are the factors which determinate the immediate consequences of "brain drain."

The requirements of particular economies or industries are very different. In general, countries in which what are called the dynamic industries play an increasing role, like the engineering industry in general and the chemical industry, demand high skills, while more traditional industries like the textile and clothing industries require lower average skills.

The occupational pattern of professionals (or sub-professionals) in a society is of course not determined only by the requirements of industrial development and by its consequences. Colonial and feudal traditions, and the social values rooted in these traditions, have greatly affected the professional structure of a society, long after they have emerged from the stage which set the pattern.

The professional structure of the intellectual community in those developing countries which had any indigenous highly qualified manpower at all, like India or the Latin American countries, reflected the basically backward stages of their social development. The lawyer, the clergy and the doctor represented and still represent the majority of the group. In India, for example, according to the National Sample Survey of 1960–1961, there were 1,192,000 professionals on or above graduate level. 90.0 per cent of them had diplomas in arts, commerce, law, etc., 4.9 per cent in engineering and technology, 3.4 per cent in medicine, 1.2 per cent in agriculture, and the remaining 1.7 per cent in other technical subjects. It is clear that a "brain drained" lawyer is a much less sensitive loss to India than a "brain drained" electrical engineer. (No comparisons are available in the sub-professional group.)

There are some countries, more "development oriented" in higher education, which are ahead in the structure of professional occupations compared to the immediate requirements of their economy, and which find it difficult to provide proper jobs, especially for those who studied abroad in schools which are training people to economies on a higher level of industrial development, and the research which a developing country or even a small developed country cannot afford, not only because of the degree of specialization but because of the high costs, with the result that specialists trained in those areas can use their knowledge only in a few developed countries. The loss of such specialists cannot therefore be considered as a direct blow to the economic and social development of the country.

One of the great paradoxes of the present situation in many developing countries is that a shortage and a surplus of highly qualified people (in every category) are simultaneously present. This is in many cases relative surplus due to the lack of coordination, development and manpower planning, and also to structural problems.

In India, there were 129,968 unemployed professionals, technical and allied workers in 1964 and 137,156 in 1965—and the same forms of unemployment can be seen, for instance, in Ceylon *(ILO Yearbook of Labor Statistics)*. In Delhi alone, the number of engineers registered in the Employment Exchanges increased from 155 in 1962 to 615 in November 1966, while shortages of engineers have been reported by employers both in the private and public sectors. Unattractive terms and conditions, lack of experience required by employers on the part of candidates might have been responsible for the situation, but in any case it is very difficult to determine whether the 1,084 engineers who decided to stay in the United States between 1962 and 1966 would have either increased the number of those who were registered in the Employment Exchanges or reduced the shortages.

The "under-utilization" of professional and sub-professional in many developing countries seems to be a much more sensitive loss than the "brain drain," and, even more, is an important factor in driving the "brains" out of these countries.

(a) *Disinvestments in Human Resources*

Among the losses suffered by the "brain drained" country, there are some which can be quantified. Many others can be expressed only in quality terms.

Nations annually invest great though differing sums of money in the form of health, education, etc., to improve the quality of their human resources. The more educated, the highly qualified, receive proportionately more. The initial training of a graduate scientist or engineer is from 12 to 16 years. The community expects a higher "feed back" from the more educated, promoting the faster growth of material and cultural values. The "brain drain" deprives society of both the original investments and the future contribution.

Many evaluations have been made in different countries and by international organizations to quantify the costs (and losses):

In the United States it was estimated that the training of a highly qualified professional alone, costs about $20,000 ("Brain Drain into the U.S. . . ." p. 105); in Switzerland, around Sw. Frs. 200,000 (*La Suisse*, February 13, 1967). In the developing countries, according to the moderate estimates of the ECOSOC, the costs of training the scientists, engineers and technicians required until 1975 were estimated at around $2,700 per person (including both the direct recurring and capital costs). This $2,700 per person is not directly comparable to the United States and Switzerland, since it includes only the direct expenses and in broader categories.

To put it simply, the amount of disinvestment can be calculated either on the basis of the "gainers" investment costs or by taking into account the "input" on the part of the "drained" country.

In the absence of any other indication or national data, we shall take the $20,000 figure, being aware of the fact that this represents only an order of magnitude above or below the actual costs.

The annual losses of the developing countries to the United States accordingly increased from $35.4 million in 1956 to about $150 million in 1967. Allowing for the "brain drain" from the developing countries by other nations (United Kingdom, France, Canada, etc.), the total loss between 1960 and 1967 was around $1 billion in the form of disinvestment alone, and this tendency is growing on a considerable scale.

(b) *Reduced Professional Capacity Potentials*

Another loss which the brain drain inflicts on the countries is probably more important than the last—the potential work of professionals and sub-professionals who have emigrated.

Some of them, it is true, are only temporary emigrants, but the vast majority of the professionals or sub-professionals leave their native country for good.

According to estimates based on the immigration statistics of the United States and United Kingdom, the developing countries lost about 60,000 to 65,000 professionals and sub-professionals between 1960–1967.

This, expressed in "man-years," can be regarded (taking 25 years as an average working lifetime) as about 1.5 to 1.6 million man-years lost. The estimated cost of one man-year of foreign assistance is about $8,000 in professional and sub-professional categories (UNIDO I.D. (Conf. 1/B.1). We can take this figure to evaluate the future losses due to the lost professional potentialities. The actual annual contribution of the emigrated professional and sub-professionals to GNP might well be lower than this. The actual cost to the developing countries or of those providing assistance to replace them is, however, a better indication. On this basis the total potential loss due to the reduced professional capacity can be estimated at $12–13 billion.

The reduction of potential professional capacities endangers the fulfilment of the targets—where they exist—set in manpower planning. Several world-wide, regional and national projections have been made to determine the future pattern of demand for manpower and within this, in many cases, considerable care was taken to calculate the demand for professionals and sub-professionals.

With two exceptions, the lawyers and accountants, the "brain drain" acts precisely in those fields where the projections wish to increase the proportion of professionals. Two professions, in fact, medicine and engineering, account for more than three-quarters of the total "brain drain." The losses, compared to the projected requirements, are also substantial in the case of university professors, agricultural specialists, and especially scientists. (No comparable data is available for the "sub-professional" categories.)

A very important tentative conclusion can be drawn from these comparisons: *the "brain drain" pattern coincides with the highly qualified manpower requirement pattern for the economic and social development of the country concerned,* indicating that it creates additional obstacles in the fulfilment of the development programmes in the most sensitive areas.

Nor are present trends encouraging. The demand for these two groups, in most of the developed countries, especially in the United States and in Western Europe, is increasing, owing to the scientific and technological revolution and the expansion of social services, with which the output of universities cannot cope. In the United States, for example, where there are more than 800,000 engineers, the demand for some 70,000 engineering graduates each year is running about 25,000 ahead of supply, according to a Department of Labour study. In the next decade, the total supply of graduate engineers may lag behind total demand by as much as 300,000 *(The New York Times,* February 18, 1968).

The situation is aggravated by the existing pattern of higher education in many developing countries, which does nothing to fill the "brain gap."

University education in most of the developing countries (where they had such education at all) was created to provide an administrative class.

This "educated group," as we mentioned before, included the clergy, lawyers, doctors, part of the army officers, and the professionals with a liberal background, mostly from the richer families, and up to the present they still give the vast majority of the university graduates in many developing countries. The report No. WH. 173 of the World Bank on education in Brazil states that in 1965 there were 155,781 students enrolled in graduate courses, 36,314 in

philosophy, 33,608 in law, that is, almost half the total, and only 21,986 in engineering. Another 19,751 were studying economics, statistics and administration. Only 4,397 studied agronomy. And the proportion of those studying philosophy and law in post-graduate studies was still higher. From among the total of 2,355 post-graduates in 1965 in Brazilian universities, 791 studied philosophy and 884 studied law. Only 89 studied engineering and 212 economics.

(c) *The Reduction in the Value of Foreign Assistance*

The developing countries, in the form of technical assistance, voluntary work, together with foreign aid and investment programmes, receive the help of highly qualified professionals and sub-professionals from abroad, and on occasion hire foreign experts, professors, doctors, etc. themselves. According to the realiable estimates of A. Madison of the OECD, in 1962 the developing countries received almost one-quarter of a million man-years in the form of foreign expertise. This includes not only the highly qualified professionals but all kinds of foreign experts. In 1962 the cost of all this foreign expertise was about $4 billion ($8,000 per person), an average of about 1.6 per cent of the gross national product of the developing countries combined. Not all of this money was paid by the developing countries, since a large part was covered by outside assistance, including help given by the socialist countries. In the same year, the two main "brain gainers," the United States and the United Kingdom, together received about 10,000 highly qualified specialists and sub-professionals from developing countries, representing 250,000 potential "man-years" as calculated above.

The users of foreign skills and the "brain drained" countries were sometimes the same. In Pakistan, for example, people with higher education represented only 0.4 per cent of the labour force in 1961, which is less than one half of the level of India; engineers and scientists represented 0.05 per cent, medical personnel 0.03 per cent, and secondary and higher teachers 0.2 per cent. The total number of foreigners working in Pakistan amounted to 3,500, most of them being high level professionals. The number of Pakistani professionals, on the other hand, working abroad, who had emigrated partly to the United Kingdom and partly to the United States, was somewhat higher. Brazil imported about 3,000 foreign professionals and lost about 2,600 between 1954 and 1964. The conclusion: that, allowing for the simultaneous "feed back" effect of the lost professionals to the economy of the "brain gainer" countries, the brain drain substantially reduces the value of assistance received in the form of foreign skills.

It is also possible, especially in the case of those countries which are using foreign skills and at the same time losing professionals, that an important amount of foreign exchange could have been diverted for other purposes if they had been able to employ those professionals who were "brain drained."

(d) *The Brain Drain and the Health Services*

Among those fields of development which most suffer from the losses which influence economic, social and cultural progress and cannot be easily (or at all) qualified, the most important is public health, due to the emigration of doctors.

In countries like Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Dominican Republic, etc., which have relatively very few doctors, the "brain drain" of the medical personnel is a substantial loss. Since there is only one doctor, for instance, in Nigeria to every 32,000 inhabitants, the 10 who stayed in the United States deprived 320,000 Nigerians of medical treatment. But, admittedly, the question of distribution plays a part.

In Argentina, for instance, there is one doctor for every 600 inhabitants, but they are concentrated in the cities.

1. Since the more or less "monopolistic" position of those few doctors that remain does not change, the "brain drain" contributes to the maintenance of high medical costs and consequently puts modern medicine beyond the reach of a great part of the population from the modern health case, and helps to maintain the domination of superstition and witch-doctors over the vast areas of the world.

2. It hinders the development of social care, social insurance, because of the lack of professional or semi-professional staff, especially in the countryside. The cost-benefit analyses of health services of course is extremely difficult, but it is more or less evident that better health services release previously untrapped human resources. The elimination of regional epidemics, diseases like malaria, facilitate the opening of new settlements in given areas and directly increase the possibilities of exploring new material resources. Maintaining the health of economically active age groups is also tremendously important, and where hygienic conditions are bad, relatively simple and low cost health programmes are of enormous help.

In view of these and other factors, the loss of doctors, nurses, etc., by the developing countries, does immense damage.

(e) *An Impediment to Scientific and Cultural Advancement*

Scientific life also suffers—qualitatively—a great deal. If a country is to have an active scientific life it means the continuous reproduction of the traditional sciences and the implantation of what is new which is an extremely important function of the work of its highly trained people. For emerging countries, therefore, every loss can be described as a "national catastrophe," since not only are the specific talents of the individual scientists lost, but the nucleus of those people who alone can build an indigenous basis for science is dissipated. *The regions that fail intellectually will remain poor and dependent upon those that are intellectually advanced.*

The migration of talent, especially in science and technology, also reduces the effectiveness of the talent that remains. A scientist does not only produce scientific discoveries, he is also, as a rule, a teacher and a provider of services of various kinds. Scientists in poor countries have a very responsible task in helping to change outdated cultural values and institutions.

Are there any Benefits?

Is there anything which mitigates these "brain drain" losses? Any advantage or gains? The answer is a few, almost meaningless, benefits.

Materially, a certain number of remittances help the balance of payments. These are in most of the cases insignificant compared to the losses in human values. The professional and sub-professional emigrants, especially those who emigrate for good, take their families with them, and more often than not, look forward to identifying themselves with the receiving developed country.

Some experts claim that the emigration of professionals is beneficial for those who remain, since the demand will be higher and the salaries of the professionals will increase. But the argument is not supported by the facts. In many cases, foreigners are hired, at much higher salaries, to fill the modern positions which could have been occupied by those who emigrated, and there is a gap between the salaries of foreign professionals and sub-professionals, and their indigenous opposite numbers.

In a special number, *The Indian Economic and Political Review* of August 1967, after suggesting that "the high premium, both

in terms of status and income, placed on the university education and degree must be reduced," wrote that "once this policy is accepted at home, it will become inevitable to close the borders in order to prevent an accelerated drain on our personal resources. It is not fair to permit the young men to be lured away and then to expect them to resist the easy temptations. They must be helped by closing the doors. There is nothing to be ashamed of in this. It is not against the individual freedom which a democratic constitution guarantees. The legal opinion that the Fundamental Rights include the right to travel around the world is nonsense... It is the leading democracies which have the most stringent and discriminating immigration laws. There is nothing wrong to counter them by corresponding emigration laws."

If the brain drain is not permanent, which is true in some cases, there can be gains in better expertise, in good scientific relations with the outside world, which can be utilized in their native country, but up to the present, these cases are relatively limited.

ISTVÁN FORGÁCS

TEN YEARS WITH THE SZABÓ FAMILY

A radio serial that just can't stop

The Old Curiosity Shop was published in instalments in America. When little Nell became ill, a crowd used to gather in the harbour, and call out, as the ship bringing the MS of the next instalment tied up: "Is little Nell dead yet?"

There is no literary masterpiece in our time capable of arousing such an interest. In a curious sort of way a type of work which is neither serious, nor popular literature, has come into being, and achieved an almost unprecedented success: the serialized radio-play.

Very nearly ten years ago Hungarian Radio started such a series. The Hungarian title—*The Szabó Family*—(Szabó being the most usual Hungarian family name) tells much about the purpose of the undertaking. The central character, Uncle Szabó, an elderly workman, by accident witnesses an act of pilfering, the thieves knock him down, he is taken to hospital and with the help of his daughter, Icuka, and a nagging but kind-hearted wife he solves the crime and exposes the thieves. The series had such an enormous response that Hungarian Radio decided—following the example of similar series in England and Poland—to go on with the adventures of the Szabó family.

According to a survey *The Szabós* after more than 500 episodes have been broadcast has an audience of some 2 million. One-fifth of Hungary's population of ten million listen to *The Szabó Family* week in week out.

While writing *The Szabó Family* we thought a great deal about the possible reasons for the success of the series. Since the nineteenth century real literature has not had the mass audience it enjoyed in Shakespeare's time. Popular entertainment has not the aims of serious literature and the means used are different too. *The Szabó Family* is no exception.

The character of this serialized radioplay changed in a number of ways over to the years. It has become less of a crime story, moral

problems, everyday cares, conflicts at the factory or office have become more important. Naturally, the lives of the characters themselves have changed over the ten-year period. At the start the Szabós had two sons, an engineer and a driver, and a daughter who was still at school. Since then Laci, the driver, has got married and Bandi, the engineer, has been appointed manager of a large factory. The daughter, following numerous adventures at school and in love, is a surgeon in a country hospital, showing a real sense of vocation. In the meantime, a few more members of the family were born. A number of marriages have succeeded or failed. But the characters of the Szabós have undergone changes too. At first Uncle Szabó had appeared as a man completely absorbed in public affairs, not caring much about what went on in his family. Listeners letters, however, demanded that he should change for the better. Thus his character was transformed, and though the wise old man spends a good deal of time worrying about national issues, he gets involved up to his neck in family affairs once in a while. His wife, Aunt Szabó, is a pious old lady who surreptitiously has her atheist son's baby christened and never fails to pray for God's help when a communist relative starts on a new undertaking. The serious aspects of her character are determined by her motherhood. It is she who keeps the family together. It is she who makes peace between brothers and sisters, and husbands and wives, and it is she who is keenest to assemble all the family at Christmas or New Year. Laci the driver, is a powerful man, with a lot of will-power, while Bandi is an educated, open-minded executive, who travels a great deal. (These trips abroad appear in some of the episodes.) Laci's wife, Angéla, works in a factory, they live with Laci's parents, and there are occasional flare-ups between the warm-hearted Aunt Szabó, and her cold and hard daughter-in-law. The children are usually the cause of their quarrels. Angéla's son by a first marriage runs away from home, Évike, their small daughter, is beaten by another child in the courtyard in the block of flats where they live. This is when Aunt Szabó flies into action, either settling things or getting them into a bigger mess still. The other daughter-in-law, Irén, gets on well with Aunt Szabó. She more often finds herself in opposition to her husband. In their relationship the principal issues concern the basic moral problems of married life. Sometimes the trouble is caused by a flirtatious secretary, on other occasions differences in temperament and habits are enough to trigger off a row over some trifle like Irén's new hat or a play seen the previous night. The whole country welcomed the showing up of the secretary. The young lady has a row with a workman, on a bus. She calls him "an ignorant old man." As it happened, the man was Uncle Szabó, of all people, the father of her boss. Uncle Szabó tells his son everything and Bandi wakes up to the true nature of the girl.

The solution of a dramatic situation was not always as easy as that. One of Icu's boy friends, the kind, warm-hearted Tibor dies, Bandi gets involved in a dangerous situation once while out on a shoot, Icu's husband is involved in a motor accident, etc,

The Szabós get to know some interesting, at times odd, characters like Szilveszter, an old globe-trotter who entertains the family with his fantastic lies, or Mr. Péteri, the gentle grocer. Other such characters are Gizike, an eccentric old maid, Zsiga the hard-drinking plumber, Freddie, the ingenious uncle back from America or Ernő, a smart young relative, out for what he can get.

Icu's husband is a journalist. He is the means through which a large number of general problems are introduced. The Szabós have a relative in a village whom one or another member of the family occasionally visits, there are doctors and musicians in Icu's set of friends, and Tomi and Károly, her two closest friends, are painters. Some-

times the whole country discusses the setting up of a piece of modern sculpture on a square—and these characters are especially useful when it comes to discussing such questions with members of the family.

Over the last quarter of a century great social changes took place in Hungary. Everything is in a flux and it is natural under such circumstances that the driving force of these changes should have an influence on mass media as well as on the public. Serials before *The Szabó Family* all failed, perhaps because the characters were static and passive and the authors were trying to get their effects with the dynamism of conflicting opinions. Our radio-play has a lot of action, it attracts not only because it is interesting, but as far as we can judge by our experience, because it reflects real social situations.

Though movement within the play always satisfied demands made by the laws of probability, the content as such was nevertheless not always what one would call realist. True, we heard Irén make a scene in a dress shop early on, we heard Mrs. Szabó complain about the shortage of this or that item of food, in fact, events of a greater dramatic effect had also happened. Uncle Szabó, for example, began to support an unjustly accused teacher, but the innocence of the teacher soon became apparent. In general, conflicts tended to be smoothed over and to end in a manner favourable to the Szabós. It is this idyllic tone that in the first few years led to so much adverse newspaper comment. This is what prompted us and the officials of the Hungarian Radio to define concretely what the aims, the content and the form of *The Szabó Family* ought to be.

Those of the executives of the Hungarian Radio who are in charge of this particular series tend to emphasize the informative element in the play. "Can listening to *The Szabó Family* make people better?" one of them asked, deliberately simplifying in a humorous way. He answered his own question: "If they become well-informed, the series will have done its job."

The episodes usually show the everyday life of a worker's family with occasional holidays, or more important family events. Thanks to travel, relatives and friends, the world of factories, offices, provincial towns, villages, artists, schools, barracks and hospitals makes its appearance. The family seldom discusses major events in world politics but otherwise issues raised range from the price of meat to existentialism, or from the socialist wage-system to the problems of modern music.

Three of us write *The Szabó Family*. The initiative came from Dénes Liska, the author of several successful radio-plays. Besides contributing to *The Szabó Family* he writes numerous radio-plays, not to speak of the odd film-script, even today. As a young man he worked in a factory and it is he who usually contributes the "decisive turns" in the story. After he "killed off" Tibor, whom everybody liked, listeners literally stormed the radio. Dénes Liska's chief concern are the strictly domestic scenes and the moral implications. Géza Baróti is best known for his reports published in the press but also as the author of a number of plays. Being a journalist he travels a great deal, he supplies the series with fresh material. His main areas are life in factories and offices, problems of industrial production, intrigues at the place of employment and similar issues. He writes with equal vigour about the life of the young—with a great deal of humour, too. He created Ferkó, the popular teenage son of the Szabós, modelling him on his own son.

I have been literary editor of the Budapest National Theatre for the past 18 years. I have approached literature by a detour, via pulp fiction which I wrote in my youth. I come from a family of story-tellers and I got into the Szabó-team after a couple of plays, here at last I can tell stories to my heart's extent. Perhaps I have damaged my career as a playwright but *The Szabó*

Family provides a lot of compensation. It certainly gives me scope for interesting experiments.

One of these has been not to announce the names of the writers, the producers and the actors of an episode, a habit we have kept up. Originally the idea was to leave the listeners in doubt whether they were listening to a scene played by actors, or to a recording of what actually happened. It was a naive attempt and only the naivest listeners took the bait. Curiously enough, there were quite a few of these, they are the sort of people who send presents or even money to some of the characters. Naturally, leading the listeners up the garden path like this is improper and we soon realized this. An experiment far more useful and challenging was to shape the story of the serialized play in such a way that from time to time the wishes of the audience should materialize. Icu's husband was involved in a motor accident at one point, for instance. He was operated on in a provincial hospital with his wife at his side, of course. While writing this particular episode I just could not decide on how to continue. Would it be realistic if another member of the family travelled down to the provinces? After the broadcast many listeners wrote or telephoned urging that as many members of the family as possible should go and see the victim of the accident. "This is a family," they wrote, "which will stick together in need." Their letters made me realize what I should have known in the first place from actual life: factory-workers and ordinary people in general are readier to make sacrifices for their kith and kin than professional people like myself. Following an industrial accident several hundred people volunteer in Hungarian factories to give blood or even skin grafts to save the victims.

We also have to bear in mind that a considerable part of our audience—and most of the letter-writers are amongst them—do not have a higher education and thus, very often, the fulfilment of their requests would spoil the very ingredient in *The Szabó Family* they like it for—the interesting, varied action of the story. Listeners, for example, pleaded in vain for the survival of Tibor, the popular young man of the story, or for the broadcasts not to end on a note of suspense as they very often do—or for the Szabós to have fewer troubles. The team did not fulfil these particular requests.

The main reason for the series is not, after all, to create a continuous literary request show. It wishes to raise moral problems by representing the everyday life of a family realistically, it also wishes to force its listeners to take sides, and shape public opinion. And all this with novel means, or at least with means which have hardly ever been used in combination.

Our team has from the start rejected efforts made by some critics to measure *The Szabó Family* with the yardstick applied to great dramatic works. *The Szabó Family* is an endless party-game, so to speak, rather than a work of literature. *The Szabó Family* embraces many different elements such as dialogue strongly resembling interviews, elements reminding one of documentary plays, discussions over everyday cares or just opinions voiced on a cultural event or the behaviour of some of the characters. All this crystallizes in the principal characters: the Szabós who appear in every episode—complying with the rules of what may be called a classical radio-style.

The preparation of the weekly episodes is very thorough. The writers prepare a joint plan every half-year which is then broken down allowing each writer to take his turn for two consecutive weeks. The connecting link is Anna Major of the Hungarian Radio's Drama Department. Her role is important. She helps us to construct the action. She needs a good memory and she certainly has it. She remembers each twist in the ten-year story and she can always warn us of possible errors. She is the first critic of our manuscripts and she also attends

the recordings. She discusses the aims of the material at hand as well as the characters, their particular state of mind and the mood of the scenes with the producer. She keeps the correspondence and she meets the listeners. Her main job, of course, is to keep an eye on the standard of the stuff which, over the past 10 years, has been rather varied. There have been weak and even boring episodes but the overall standard being good, success has been assured.

The Szabó Family is recorded every week one day before it is broadcast. This makes it possible for us to include news of the day, so to speak. The programme lasts for half an hour once a week and there is a repeat the next day.

Endre László has directed *The Szabó Family* right from the start. He, too, belongs to the Hungarian Radio. He is an artist of great technical expertise and he directs the actors efficiently, who, by the way, have grown used to each other. János Rajz is Uncle Szabó and Hilda Gobbi plays Aunt Szabó. Hilda Gobbi used to be a little worried at the start that though she is a great dramatic actress the whole countr might start to think of her as Aunt Szabó *only*. By now, however, much to the satisfaction of Miss Gobbi, the Hungarian public is able to make a distinction between the popular figure of the radio-play and the actress capable of playing the most diverse roles on the stage.

Actors are glad of roles in the series. *The Szabó Family* supplies not only a steady income for those taking part, but it also presents many challenging problems. Leading actors are employed. Some of them frequently appear in Shakespeare.

Success has been largely due to the standard of production and acting. But our experience is that, if for some reason, we have to replace one actor or another, the character nevertheless does not become any the less popular.

The 500th episode of *The Szabó Family* was broadcast in January 1969. Most papers carried favourable comment to mark the occasion and we got "prizes of good standard" from Hungarian Radio.

Our greatest reward, of course, has been the unchanged interest of the listeners. A letter came from a professor in Debrecen (an enthusiastic listener) asking us to mention how important compulsory X-ray examinations are. A woman listener of *The Szabó Family* disagrees with Icu over her having divorced her first husband. The director of the Budapest National Gallery thanks us for mentioning an exhibition of theirs with the result of doubling the number of visitors to the Gallery.

I buy my paper at the street corner. The newsagent, an old friend, congratulates me because in last week's episode Peti Szabó, a grandson, was taught that he should offer his seat to older people in a bus. I pay for my paper and I go on. We are doing no extraordinary thing but of one thing we can feel certain, we do little things that are none the less useful.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

NEW FICTION

G. GYÖRGY KARDOS: *Avraham Bogatir hét napja* (The Seven Days of Avraham Bogatir). Magvető, Budapest, 1968. 427 pp.

The novel stands out from the accomplished but hardly sensational books which have recently been published. There have been a number of reasons for the attention and the consistently good reviews the novel has received. In the first place it is striking that a forty-year-old writer, completely unknown up to the present (as far as I know he hasn't published anything), should make his debut with such an outstanding book. True, this is not the first time this has happened in the history of literature, but the fact it has happened before does not detract from the general astonishment. A further interesting point of this book, written in 1968, is that it is Israel, the Israel of 1947, which is the subject. And that the seeds of this year of grace 1968 lie fully exposed in the completely objective picture the author paints of this complex, restless world and its frightening implications for the future.

The chief character in the novel, Avraham Bogatir, emigrated to Israel from Russia, to become a farmer in the new country. He is a decent, honourable and prudent man, conciliatory by nature, anxious to avoid all conflict with the English, who enforce the law with arms, with the Arabs, among whom he has several friends, and also with his own kind, for they are all members of the same community, even if individually their customs, principles and characters differ from one another. One night he is awakened by a lad carrying a revolver. He is a member of some terrorist organization, and is on the run. The boy is hysterical and suspicious, and consequently dangerous, but once he has calmed down it is clear he is no more than frightened adolescent of seventeen. Bogatir, though annoyed at being involved, decides to help him, sheltering and hiding him both from the English and his own village council. He is arrested on account of the boy, although in fact he is strongly opposed to the terrorist organization to which the boy belongs. He even goes to Jerusalem in order to obtain papers for him, and there he is confronted with the conflicting forces, as yet remote from his own village life, which are already preparing for the bloody conflicts of the future. These seven days take their toll; Englishmen killed by Jewish terrorists, a Jew executed by the British, and an Arab friend of Bogatir's who is killed for his gun. Avraham Bogatir, with no heart for any part in this savage and chaotic history-making, is forced to realize he cannot stand aside. "These are the times which try men's souls," which face a people with alternatives from which there is no escape, however unattractive they may be. And how unattractive is revealed by the individual,

personal tragedies of the novel, for the victims in each of the political and racial groups include friends of Bogatir, even among the British carrying on their barbarous and repugnant policing activities by force of arms.

The climax of the novel comes with the journey to Jerusalem. This is where Bogatir meets the apparently ridiculous, but in fact formidable and intimidating terrorist chief of staff. Political violence always seems to adopt similar methods and throw up similar types, regardless of aims and principles, both in the Berlin of 1930 and the Jerusalem of 1947. And then the sad touch of poetry; Bogatir, the rugged, unkempt farmer, meets a Russian compatriot, a gentle, cultured woman, to whom he is attached by ties of old friendship, and—who knows—incipient love, and by their common enthusiasm for Russian poetry and music. The woman appears to be upset, and wants to talk to him. They agree to go to a concert together that evening and Bogatir, after some haggling, goes so far as to buy himself a pair of striped trousers in honour of the evening's performance. But that afternoon the British clamp down with a curfew, and Bogatir never sees her again.

The subtle expression of scarcely expressed emotion, the glancing episode, the measured development and transformation of human relations are what give this novel its realism and amplitude; despite house searches, shooting, oppression and murder, daily life goes on—as naturally and inevitably as the grass grows. This "still, sad music of humanity" is echoed again in the last scene of the novel, the harvesting. Although it cannot radiate the peace and tranquillity of the harvest scene, the most famous harvest scene in literature, in *Anna Karenina*, nonethelles it helps to close the book on a note of reconciliation. The profoundly human sense of the reconciliation preserves this excellent novel from the hot prejudices of today, from contemporary emotions and political considerations, from the simplifications of a one-sided search for justice. I will not praise the writer's magnificent, economical use of his own experience, nor the powerful atmosphere conveyed in the novel, for these are only worth recording if they are the mitigating aspects of an otherwise mediocre novel, in good work they are simply means to an end.

MIHÁLY SÜKÖSD: *A kívülálló* (The Outsider). Szépirodalmi, Budapest, 1968. 280 pp.

It gives a reviewer a special joy when, unexpectedly, from a quite unknown writer, a good novel like G. György Kardos's drops into his lap. The same joy, however, is felt if a writer of whose abilities one is convinced, and who has already contributed something important in another genre, finds himself at last as a writer of fiction. This is the case with the volume titled "The Outsider" containing three long short stories by the eminent essayist, Mihály Sükösd. His earlier works of fiction are outstandingly clever, that is their predominant characteristic—but, though no contemptible virtue, that alone will not make a good novelist. But here the treatment of the subject-matter and the deeply-felt experiences underlying it, is neither brilliantly speculative or artificial, but exactly corresponds to the literary intention. Perhaps only the earliest of these long short stories, "The One Who Arrived" *(A megérkezett)*, has preserved something of the faults of the bright student in the easy use of eccentric characters; the dying monster of a father, the scattered friends from 1956, assembled at his deathbed by a strange pledge, the plain-spoken old physician, the chess-player in the park who was once a genius, the provincial teacher. Modern novelists are a little too prone to concentrate on eccentric characters; they give the novel a certain liveliness and colour, and save the author the difficult, arduous, more hazardous task of building and developing

characters from everyday life. Süköd probably needed such types in this tale, for the story with its rather confused moral issue is in any case so forced that more ordinary characters would probably have failed to measure up to its demands.

"On the Way" *(Útközben)* was written considerably later and is much better. It is openly autobiographical and deals with a day in a trip abroad. It is an uneventful, cool and reserved piece of writing, descriptively almost monotonous, but the dialogue flashes and sparkles. It has something of that indefinable poetic quality found in really good essayists.

The documentary short story which gives the volume its title is the best of the three. It is based on the diary of Pál Prónay, the commander of a notorius White detachment in the early 1920s. Lieutenant-Colonel Prónay headed a special detachment of officers, and regarded it as his nationalist duty to persecute, torture and hang both Jews and the leading Communists of the short-lived proletarian dictatorship of 1919. Despite international protests and the objections raised by the Allies, he refused to abandon his "mission"—continuing to pursue it by more secret and Machiavellian means. According to the evidence of his diary he had an informer, one Mihály Vancsura. He is Süköd's "outsider." He was a former Communist, the rebel son of a rich family, who, disillusioned, but principally because he wanted to save his wife, volunteered to act as an informer after the downfall of the Commune and several months of desperate hiding. He is tortured and broken by the detachment until he becomes their submissive tool. One of the young officers of the detachment daily goes to bed with Vancsura's wife. For her husband's sake, the wife yields. One day, the arrangements fail and the informer comes to home too early; his unhappy wife hangs herself. For a moment Vancsura is stirred to revolt, but he is now so apathetic, he carries out his duties as agent provocateur so mechanically, that in fact his wife's death changes nothing; he was no longer attached to her. His last act is to trap an old Communist friend in Austria who once saved his life; a little later he himself is shot by Prónay. He is no longer needed—and his evidence might be incriminating.

I should not like this brief outline to give the impression of a primitive tale of crime and punishment. The message is much less concerned with free will and personal responsibility than would appear, and much more terrifying. Vancsura's progress is as predetermined and calculable as the trajectory of a ballistic missible. Individual decision of course does appear to play some part in his fate at the moment of choice—and exerts a corresponding effect on our moral judgement—but even this individual decision is in fact predetermined by his character. The historical situation is at the same time sharply and visibly drawn, paradoxically, it is just this graphic, clear-cut picture of the historical situation that gives the theme its universal character.

The detachment the author brings to his writing, which contributed to the success of "On the Way," is here even more remote —and effective. The accuracy and apparent indifference with which events are described, one after another, make their own demands on the emotional and intellectual reaction of the reader. Previously I said it was written in a traditional style, but it is only traditional in so far as the original form of the story is modelled on the behaviourist school, not in its nervous force. The author stands at one remove from the subject: he will only report what is tangible, visible or audible. It is an excellent piece of work.

LAJOS MARÓTI: *A kolostor* (The Monastery). Szépirodalmi, Budapest, 1968. 601 pp.

The subject of Lajos Maróti's new novel, is unusual, one might fairly say unique, in contemporary Hungarian literature. The

main characters are young seminarists serving their noviciate. The time is 1949, the year when most of the young people of Hungary turned to socialist ideas, or what they considered socialist ideas, when the Communist Party developed into the biggest, and in a short time, the single leading party in the country, and when even the private practice of religion could well involve a man in considerable unpleasantness, and work to his disadvantage. It was during this period that the monastic orders began to be dissolved in Hungary, but the young men in the novel have already started their noviciate in the monastery. As might be expected, outside pressures and the special glory of resisting them, only confirm the boys more strongly in their choice of a religious career—and it was life inside the monastery and their own personal reactions and development that finally return them to lay life. These young men are swayed by various reasons and emotions: some of them want to escape to some kind of internal spiritual freedom; some go to the monastery in the hope of a clerical career—the traditional outlet for advancement for peasant families; some are motivated by faith, by a sense of vocation. The monastery is, however, unprepared for the new historical situation in which it finds itself, and for the new kind of young people with which it has to deal. Reformers and conservatives scheme and plot against each other, ossified dogma is invoked to block a modern scientific approach, and the inculcation of humility warps the personality, destroys originality, and deliberately deadens intellect. All this, of course, is no prerogative of the monastic life; it will be found in any community insisting on a rigid adherence to dogma on the part of its members. Maróti's theme develops through the character of Beda, a young man with natural scientific proclivities. It is not, however, his intellectual awakening and consequent rebellion that finally drives Beda from the monastery; no, he follows the example set by older, learned members of the teaching order and attempts to suppress his natural interests in order to be a good priest. It is the monastery itself which will not tolerate him and expels him, recognizing the potential rebel in him. The other novices return to secular life for other reasons: love, art, disillusionment or opportunism. But the outside life at that period—although this forms no part of Maróti's novel—was liable to demand the same sort of discipline, the same destruction of the individual personality as life within the monastery. Unfortunately, Maróti's novel entirely fails to deal with this aspect of the subject and events, and therefore lacks the kind of universal validity which would make the work mean more than the mere disillusionment of a few young seminarists. Nonetheless this is an interesting novel; the delicate nuances of the writing, the respect the author gives the subject, the power and vigour of the successive episodes, and the unique historical period and situation in which it is set combine to make it well worth the attention of the reader.

MAGDA SZABÓ: *Katalin utca* (Katalin Street). Szépirodalmi, Budapest, 1969. 249 pp.

I had been looking forward to Magda Szabó's new novel as I do with every successive work she produces. Magda Szabó is such an excellent novelist that I am always expecting her to equal or surpass her best novels, *Fresco* and *The Fawn*, and I am so vexed when I am disappointed that I may easily be unjust. Perhaps I am going to be unfair again, for I expected more, and it has rubbed me the wrong way. To my intense regret I found the adolescent affectations of one Magda Szabó getting the better of the other cruel and clever Magda Szabó I like.

Katalin Street is not just a little street on the Buda side of the Hungarian capital, where three families live side by side in

peace and friendship, it is also the image of irreparably lost childhood and innocence. It is the nostalgic image which haunts the characters in the novel, including even dead Henriette, the *revenant* from the other world, —for the novel shifts in time and place, from Budapest and Greece to the next world —though for most of the time Henriette's spirit hovers around those still on earth. Henriette, the daughter of a Jewish dentist, dies in 1944, as her parents had died before, only she was not killed in the gas chambers of the Nazis, but by a stupid soldier's bullet, and due to an involuntary act of the young people next door. Katalin Street can never come to life again, Henriette and her parents are no longer there and without them there is no innocent childhood. The loves are poisoned, the friendships fade, and the other two families of Katalin Street live next to each other like sleepwalkers, apathetic and disillusioned.

I am apparently too earth-bound, I do not like symbols in novels, because I do not believe in them. Not even in Magda Szabó's symbolic street. I keep on feeling that I should recognize and accept as psychological surprise and depth and as *action gratuite*—or at least as poetic emotion—what is nothing but the damn stupidity of the characters; they are forced, through the framework of the novel, to behave as no normal human being would behave. This is probably why Henriette is needed, and not just to illustrate Magda Szabó's transcendental beliefs; but as far as I am concerned the age of literary ghosts ended with Hamlet's father. I am afraid I don't see what the writer wanted with poor wandering Henriette, or why she wanted her at all. Sometimes it seems as if it is not Henriette, but nineteenth century *mal de siécle* echoes of Werther and young love and melancholy which hover over the characters of this tragic story: I cannot feel that the ghost of Henriette is reconcilable with the truths of Katalin Street, the war, and the horrors of fascism.

But what a good writer Magda Szabó is! The strictly adjusted and complicated form of the novel moves from the innermost heart of a coiled circle, strangely at first, and then with increasing familiarity and inevitability outward with the widening circles, until finally the characters, their backgrounds and the events of their lives are fully revealed. Her power is again evident in a few magnificent scenes as when, for instance, directly after Henriette's death, the young Bálint, the only boy in the three Katalin-Street families, with whom all the girls are in love and to whom Irene is engaged, the gentle Bálint who is their protector and friend, goes to Irene's house in his soldier's uniform and behaves as a strange soldier, an intruder from the occupying army, demanding wine and women. Such brilliantly composed episodes are some compensation; but I was still disappointed at not getting what I feel have the right to expect from such a writer.

ENDRE FEJES: *Jó estét nyár, jó estét szerelem* (Good Evening Summer, Good Evening Love), Magvető, Budapest, 1969. 175 pp.)

Endre Fejes writes little, and what he writes is written slowly and with very great care. Not even the success of "Scrap Iron Yard"* both at home and abroad has made any change in his customary rhythm of writing, and his present novel "Good Evening Summer, Good Evening Love" is the first work of significance he has published in seven years, unless we count the stage adaptations of his novels.

In form the tale is like a film scenario in its present tense and in the swift movements reminiscent of film shots and film cutting. Whether this is because it was, in fact, written as a scenario, or is simply a device to heighten the cool detachment of the pictures, I do not know.

* See No. 12 of The N.H.Q.

The hero of the novel is provincial boy who becomes a factory worker. By a mere hazard, in his dark suit, he finds the opportunity to pass himself off as a foreign diplomat, a Greek attaché. And as a foreign diplomat he has all the girls at his feet who otherwise would not look at him, none of them even imagining that the boy could be a scoundrel or a fraud.

Of course they all hope to marry him, and it is this fact which fills the boy with hatred. For it is not him they want, only the diplomat; craving for power, recognition and genuine love, he launches his campaign of revenge against a society in which women think more of an old man with a car than a poor intelligent boy. For he is intelligent, and he puts a tremendous amount of energy into the part he plays, inspired by such anger that he feels he could pick up a gun and mow them all down indiscriminately, especially the women, the sweet young women who will not love him for himself.

For a few days he goes on the wildest spree around Budapest, in all the restaurants and night clubs, bribing the chauffeur of some embassy to drive him around a few times in a Rolls Royce with a CD plate, and then, all his money gone, he feigns a mission abroad and disappears, to eat nothing but plums and bread for the next month.

Of course, he is found out. Nothing very terrible happens, except a bit of teasing at the factory. He can stand it, and gives up the whole thing. It is all forgotten, until, on holiday at Lake Balaton, lonely and isolated, the whole pattern begins again, but this time with a beautiful, calculating girl who means to marry the "Greek diplomat" to get a passport and follow her emigré fiancé. But this time the girl becomes suspicious, she threatens to denounce him to the police, and the boy ends up cutting her throat with a razor in the hills of Buda.

Nothing is deliberate. Fate played into his hand with a succession of small and apparently insignificant bits of conversation caught here and there. Someone said one could hide a body in the Buda hills for a long time; someone else—a doctor—jokingly mentions that throat-cutting with a razor is a quick death, the blood chokes the victim in seconds.

The whole sequence of the tale thus has its slow inevitability. With deliberate consistency Fejes wrote this novel according to an almost mathematically pre-calculated formula, picking his woman figures as if to provide the other half of the equation. He makes no attempt to develop his characters, though he is too good a writer not to suggest their characteristics. He makes no attempt to analyse the boy's hunger for the experience of success or love, his bitter inferiority complex and his scornful revolt. All he wanted to do was to write the simplified outline of a novel. Unfortunately. Because the whole design is thus too clearly exposed, and it is the pattern, and not the movements of life, that attracts our attention. The sense of inexorable tragedy conquers one's normal dislike of a formula, and some of the more poetic passages manage to give the book a richer feeling of life and emotion than the reader is accustomed to meet in this—rather cheap—kind of novel.

IMRE SZÁSZ

ARTS

PIROSKA SZÁNTÓ, A PAINTER OF METAMORPHOSES

Piroska Szántó is a solitary figure in Hungarian art—on her own despite the fact that she is linked with its most powerful traditions. That sort of special involvement with nature, its absorption into her own system and the transfusion of her own essential being into nature in return is a unique and special talent.

Naturalism has great traditions in Hungarian painting. The Nagybánya School, the "Hungarian Barbizon" of the turn of the century, was not only an innovator, it remained a lasting creative force in Hungarian painting. Hungarian painting keeps returning again and again to "nature as a principle" as established by Nagybánya. It was, however, the surface of nature—and not only as a theme, but also as the fundamental principle of an approach to painting—that was emphasized by Nagybánya. What was seen as the determinant of the colour scheme, the colour and atmosphere of nature as the determination of that on the canvas—this is one of the most prevalent rules and doctrines of Hungarian painting. But it is just this nature-respecting painting that is the first to rise up in arms against Piroska Szántó's "view of nature." Piroska Szántó lives in nature. Nature is not a spectacle for her and in fact, since she is one with the sunflowers, the poppies, the dahlias, the cats and the goats she sees, how could she see its greater unity from the outside? She sees things from close by, she stepped right into the picture herself as Alice did into Wonderland. In her world there is a fluctuation of meanings: a poppy changes into a beautiful girl and a tower also becomes a girl with seeing eyes. Sounds inaudible to the outsider combine into the intelligible talk of fairy-tales. The old wives praying in the Serbian Orthodox church at Szentendre are versed in the great mysteries of life, and the Christs of roadside crucifixes speak eloquently of what they have heard and seen in their difficult lives.

The course of her life inevitably determined Piroska Szántó's art. She was born at Kiskunfélegyháza, a small town in the Great Plain. She was brought up by a grandmother, she had no parents, taking advantage of the greater freedom her grandmother allowed her. Being educated privately she had few friends, she wandered around the countryside, making friends of plants and animals. She discovered drawing as a natural means of communication already at this time. She drew what she saw and what she imagined. The qualities of children's drawings, their fantasy, playfulness, prankishness and sense of magic never disappeared from Piroska Szántó's art. True, under the influence of school art lessons, they temporarily retreated, they were forced into hiding, but soon they appeared again.

Her formal art training began at the College of Arts and Crafts in Budapest. In the early thirties she plunged into the animated in-

tellectual life of a Budapest hit by economic crisis and the resulting poverty. Her new artist friends unsettled her with their talk about the present tasks of art and the burning social issues of the time.

She soon left the College of Arts and Crafts, since they taught mainly applied art there, and began to attend István Szőnyi's private school. Szőnyi[1] was a leading painter belonging to a sort of post-Impressionist school. His passive lyric style did not attract Piroska Szántó, but nonetheless, she learned a great deal from Szőnyi, as a man and teacher, and as a leading exponent of painting techniques.

She next studied at the Academy of Fine Arts where she enrolled in 1932. That same year she joined an illegal communist group most of whose members were soon afterwards arrested. She was acquitted because of "lack of evidence," but nevertheless the "scandal" finished her art school career. She continued her studies in János Vaszary's private school. Once again she was fortunate in her master. Vaszary had been forced to retire from teaching at the official art school. The conservative authorities disapproved of his freethinking teaching methods. Most of the young modern painters who started their career in the thirties, were his pupils.

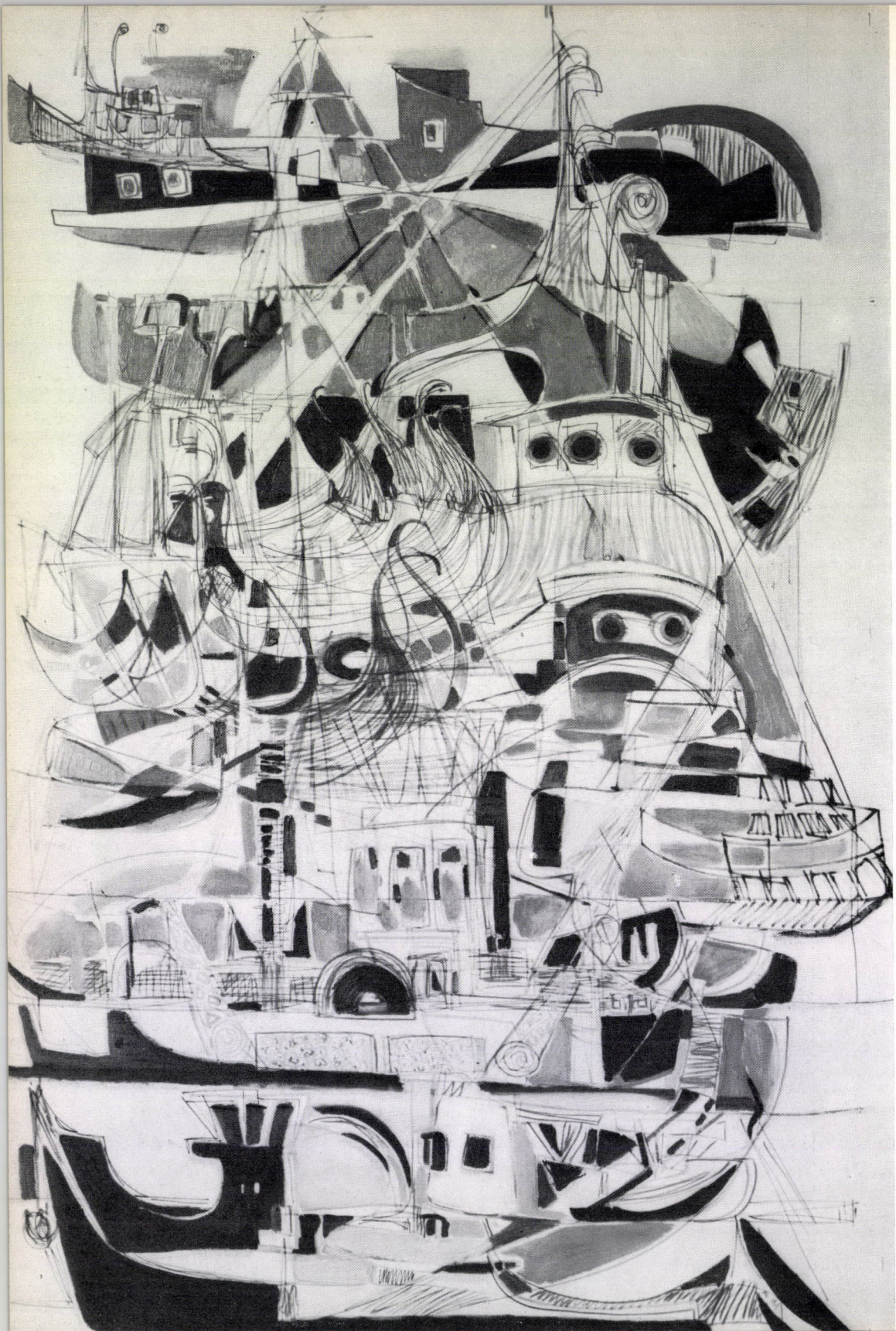
The principles of socialism drew Piroska Szántó close to the Group of Socialist Artists. She took part in the first exhibition of the group in 1934. The fact that her socialist realism was not prompted by principles or a conscious programme, set her apart from the rest of the group. Her instinctive womanly approach did not isolate social phenomena from the main natural processes. Her *Pregnant Proletarian Women*, and the exhausted passengers on her *Ship with Market Women* are creatures belonging to the life cycle, just as the branches and foliage of her *Apple Tree*.

From 1935 on, and chiefly after 1936, Piroska Szántó became a regular visitor to Szentendre. This small town close to Budapest was settled by Serbians who had fled from the Turks, who brought their customs and culture with them. A specifically Hungarian surrealism came into being there. It was there that Piroska Szántó made friends with Lajos Vajda[2] and Dezső Korniss,[3] its two initiators.

This kind of painting began in the mid-thirties, in a Hungary rushing into the final catastrophe of a historical tragedy. It was an art that was not satisfied with superficial interrelations when it wanted to express historical consciousness or presentiments. It wanted to suggest the drama taking place under the surface. The little town of Szentendre ossified in its past, with a world of forms taken from the Middle Ages and the Baroque but fused with the naïvety of folk art and with a culture that had assumed peasant characteristics, provided unique material for this kind of art. The material it offered provided the symbols of life and destruction that appear in the works of Szentendre painters. They lifted out individual themes and fitted them together like a montage, a technique that multiplied many times the force and effect of the original meaning of each. This kind of intensification which condenses and omits a great deal, which forgets about superficial relations, cannot tolerate the presentation of natural three-dimensional space. Background in its old sense disappeared. These pictures take shape on the planes of imagination in a complex associated simultaneity. In front of a neutral background the vulgar sensuousness of matter is dissolved into something intellectual and mobile, and with the apparently arbitrary linking of themes which are in fact connected by an inner logic, the inner truth is brought out.

At first Piroska Szántó did not paint as Vajda did. Still, already at that time, she was attached to him by a number of ties. There at Szentendre her "nature-myth" reached its culmination. She had the feeling that

1 See The N.H.Q. No. 8.
2 See The N.H.Q. Nos. 23, 29.
3 See Nos. 18, 29.



plants had no less a personality than men, and she wanted to paint the kind of living things which were vegetable, animal and human all at once. Her imagination projected attractive, and at the same time frightening, events in front of her metamorphoses, the moon light, when looked at from the window of a little country house changed the laws of daylight and the cornstalks, the sunflowers, and the poppies lived their mysterious and complicated, enchanting and cruel lives, the convulsive clinging of the roots expressed power and desperation. She felt that by painting them she could conquer them.

These experiences began to mature around 1945 in such a way that Piroska Szántó's art found its way into the surrealism that had started with Vajda.

Vajda was no longer alive, tuberculosis had killed him at the age of thirty-three, but even after his death his influence did not diminish, and the attraction of Szentendre also remained the same. Dezső Korniss and Endre Bálint—the latter an old friend of Piroska Szántó—and Piroska Szántó herself have continued to enrich, to colour and vary the Szentendre kind of surrealism. Piroska Szántó still spends every summer at Szentendre with her husband István Vas, the poet, in their own house and garden.

Line drawing is a favourite form of expression for her, but her lines are not sublimely immaterial as those of Vajda, but sensuous. She often uses charcoal or pastel. This sensuousness really revels in colours.

In the last twenty years Piroska Szántó's art has really become varied in theme, forms and techniques. Every year, and particularly every summer, has brought its own special vintage. The Szentendre metamorphoses dating from 1945, on which drawing and black-and-white are dominant, were followed by constructivist, strongly coloured pastel landscapes, and later mysterious, lyrically intoned sunflower-girls, and personified maize in soft pastels and charcoal. In the sixties, the luxuriance of flowers in her own Szentendre garden inspired powerful colour abstractions in various forms, and at the same time the themes presented by the houses and churches of Szentendre, the old women in their head-kerchiefs, the children who blew trumpets bought at fairs, the bodies of Christ on crosses and the various icons led to charcoal montages. In the summer of 1968, following a trip around Lake Balaton, she painted a series of Crucifixes in which—and this is a new feature in Piroska Szántó's art—the expressiveness of colour and form almost deprives the original theme of its independence.

Finally a by-product of her art of unified motivation which is nevertheless forever changing should be mentioned. What I have in mind is her book illustrations. She has illustrated works by Virginia Woolf, Villon, Suetonius, G. B. Shaw, Saint-John Perse, Gyula Krúdy, and István Vas, her husband.

ÉVA KÖRNER

◀ PAINTINGS BY PIROSKA SZÁNTÓ:

CRUCIFIX (OIL, 60 × 100 CMS, 1969)

SINDBAD'S SHIP (MIXED TECHNIQUE ON CANVAS, 150 × 100 CMS, 1965)

HORSE UNDER A CRUCIFIX (OIL, 60 × 100 CMS, 1968)

MYRTLES (GOUACHE AND OIL, 50 × 60 CMS, 1964)

HISTORY OF THE SPANISH COLLECTION IN THE BUDAPEST MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

It is hardly possible to study Spanish painting intensively in any of the great galleries of Europe with the exception of the Prado in Madrid. It is a well-known fact that partly due to the isolation of the peninsula and partly to its late emergence and one-sidedness the Spanish school, so highly esteemed today, was scarcely known in Europe up to the end of the eighteenth century. Although sporadic purchases by diplomats and merchants directed attention to a certain extent to Spanish painting, its popularity among European collectors was minimal up to the turn of the century.[1] When stating in his work on European painting that the composition of Spanish paintings is as contrived and laboured as are Spaniards themselves Papillon de la Ferté gave expression to educated public opinion in 1776.[2] Goethe was the first to call the attention of his friend Wilhelm von Humboldt, to Spanish art, when the latter was preparing to visit Spain with his wife in 1799, be it old or new *"damit wir erfahren, was sich daselbst zusammen befindet und welche Gestalt der spanische Kunstkörper eigentlich habe."*[3] Evidently, it was due to this suggestion that Humboldt, not very much interested in fine arts, reported in an enthusiastic tone on the richness of the Escorial and other Spanish collections,[4] and his wife wrote descriptions of over 25 pictures and sent them to Weimar for publication in the *Propyläen*. Caroline von Humboldt wrote about the Escorial that one began to know and appreciate Spanish painters only there, in Spain.[5]

Evidently, diplomats accredited to Madrid acquired some works of art if they had the inclination and willingness to do so but neither ecclesiastical collections nor the palaces of the grandees were ready to sell. Goethe's interest in Spanish art was unusual at the end of the eighteenth century. However, in the course of the Napoleonic wars persons authorized by the invading forces immediately began collecting and listing works of art. On July 4, 1808 Don Pedro Gil de Barnabé, a French colonel and a Spanish civilian were taking the inventory of the Buen Retiro in Madrid;[6] 1,500 paintings were listed in the Buenavista Palace,[7] and 999 paintings in the state rooms of the Alcazar in Seville in February 1810, a few days after the capture of the city.

This requisitioning did not affect the objets d'art amassed in the houses of the aristocracy. It was only later, chiefly due to financial or personal reasons, along with the increase of general interest, that the treasures preserved there set out on their courses towards the collections of Europe and later America.

The nucleus of the Spanish collection of the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts, more than 30 significant paintings, also left their original places at the time of the Napoleonic wars and found their way to Budapest with the remainder of the Esterházy Collection after a considerable detour via London, Paris and Vienna. When the Collection was bought, by the Hungarian State in 1870, it became public property.[9]

As early as at the end of the eighteenth century the collection of Prince Miklós Esterházy could be considered significant. But the income of the Prince, who spent his time partly in Vienna and partly in Italy, markedly decreased just because of the war, and so it was only after Napoleon's fall that he started again purchasing though only to a lesser degree than before. He was devoted to the Italian and Dutch and Flemish schools but he was also interested in the work of contemporary artists.[10] That is why it was fortunate that the attention of his son, Prince Pál, was attracted by the picture collection of Count Edmund Bourke, the Danish minister in London, a man highly esteemed in

diplomatic circles. It was from his collection that Prince Pál acquired 37 paintings, chiefly the works of Spanish masters.[11] Bourke was a highly cultured and popular diplomat, interested in fine arts.[12] As early as the end of the eighteenth century, during his stay in Naples, he collected works of art, at the time presumably drawings and etchings.[13] He represented Denmark in Madrid from 1801 to 1811 and in London from 1814 to 1819. Then he was transferred to Paris, where he soon died.[14] In 1817 the bulk of his collection must still have been together because Wilhelm von Humboldt wrote to his wife soon after his arrival in London: "*Sagte ich Dir schon, dass der dänische Gesandte hier neben andern schönen Bildern den himmlischen Rafael der Herzogin Alba aus Madrid hat...*"[15]

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It was in 1818 that Pál Esterházy first wrote to his father that there was a possibility of purchasing significant Spanish pictures. In a letter written in Florence and dated December 1818 Prince Miklós instructed his son to buy the Spanish pictures, whose first lot arrived in Vienna on January 7, 1820.[16] After this the excellent director of the princely gallery, Joseph Fischer, wrote the following to the Prince: "*Seine Durchlaucht der Fürst Paul haben mir zwey und zwanzig Gemälde von Spanischen Meistern übergeben, welche vor einigen Tagen angekommen sind, welche Euer Durchl. bey Ihrer Zurückkunft schon in Stande gesetzt finden sollen. Es erwächst daraus Euer Durchlauchts Gallerie eine ganz neue Schule sehr interessanter Meister, die hier gar nicht gekannt sind. Dieser schöne und hier einzige Anfang wäre, glaube ich, mit geringen Kosten zu vermehren. Da der Herr Fürst von Kaunitz durch Artaria eine Versteigerung giebt... worunter viele spanische Meister sich vorfinden, welche bei der geringen Anzahl der echten Liebhaber für leichte Preise zu erstehen sein werden...*"[17]

Indeed, at that time, when Spanish pictures were not highly valued Joseph Fischer's opinion was unique. Vivant Denon, Napoleon's art expert, who selected the works of art to be expropriated all over conquered Europe, declared that although the soft colours of Spanish pictures roused his admiration, as a rule, their subjects were so sad, so repulsive that one did not wish to establish a collection of them.[18] Another French art expert, F. Quillet, who participated in the looting of Spain, indicated in the *Dictionary of Spanish painters* he put together that the lesser interest in Spanish painting was due to the exclusiveness of religious subjects.[19]

The same opinion prevailed in the middle of the century when Mrs. Jameson wrote that too many Spanish pictures together created a depressing impression and then continued: "I never spent two hours together in the Spanish Gallery of the Louvre, or in the Auguado Gallery, or that of Soult, which I remember in its palmy days, without a feeling of dejection and lassitude difficult to describe."[20] Nor did Louis Philippe's collection auctioned in London in 1853 obtain the expected success; most of the pictures were sold at lower prices than they had been valued at. In its report on the auction *The Times* wrote on May 10, 1853: "On the whole, it may be said that the pictures of the Spanish school do not meet with much favour in England." Nevertheless, most of the Spanish paintings found their way to Britain even from France and in 1844 Waagen listed a far greater number of works in British collections than were to be found in other capitals.[21] That is why it is particularly noteworthy that the core of the peerless Spanish collections of the two East European galleries: of the Leningrad Hermitage and of the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts, had been assembled already in the first half of the nineteenth century.[22] It must have been due to the lack of interest that Pál Esterházy paid a mere 33 thousand florins for the first twenty-two pictures.[23] The second lot, a further twenty Spanish paintings, were bought in 1821 and it was in 1822 that the Prince paid five thousand florins to Bourke's widow.[24]

As Fischer had mentioned the Kaunitz Collection also came to be sold by auction in 1820. On that occasion and later the director of the Esterházy Gallery acquired some important works. Outstanding among them are two genre pictures from Goya's mature period, *The Girl with the Pitcher* and *The Knife-Grinder*[25] as well as the study of a horse, attributed to Velazquez at that time, Ribera's *Martyrdom of St. Andrew* and a Murillo, perhaps the most significant of that master's work in the Collection *The Infant Christ Distributing Bread*, a large-scale altar panel painted in 1678 for the refectory of the "Hospital de los venerables" in Seville.

It can be presumed that similarly to the pictures of Bourke's collection those of Kaunitz's were also acquired in the way usual at that time, by foreign diplomats serving in the country.[26] Bourke, who had been in Spain for ten years and spent the Napoleonic times there, being a well-known Jacobin and Napoleon enthusiast, could stay on in Joseph Bonaparte's court too. So he had plenty of occasions to buy pictures. Religious orders marketed their paintings to save themselves and their church; they gave them away or sold them for next to nothing. Nor was it difficult to acquire one or two of the pictures amassed at the order of the French Government. Clever intermediaries were at work, Bourke was practically at home in Madrid so it was quite easy for the art-loving Danish minister to satisfy his interest and desire for acquisition.

Until now nothing has been discovered about the beginnings of Bourke's collection. Nothing is known in Denmark about his activity as a collector. Not a single piece of his collection found its way there with the exception of the Thorwaldsen bust bequeathed by the heir of his widow to the Thorwaldsen Museum not long ago.[27] It was only after my interest that attention was directed to his activity as a collector although possibly he had brought works of art from Italy already at the end of the eighteenth century,[28] and a part of his Italian pictures may have originated in Naples. Evidently, he must have acquired the Spanish paintings in Madrid. His pictures were never put up at public auctions and his collection must have been known, first and foremost, in diplomatic circles. When, in 1817, Wilhelm von Humboldt mentioned in his letter that the famous Alba Madonna, he had admired twenty years before in the Duchess of Alba's palace, was in Bourke's possession[29] he gave an interesting explanation, tallying with facts emerging from other sources too, of how the Bourke collection had come into being. He reported that the Duchess, when making her will after her husband's death (1797), left the Raphael, with a great many other pictures, to her physician.[30] The doctor, fearing that she might change her will, poisoned the charming woman known from Goya's paintings. Although the doctor who imprisoned after the Duchess's death was released thanks to bribery, he had to part with his paintings. That is how Bourke bought in 1802 the Alba Madonna and numerous other pictures too. Thus there is a possibility that the Budapest pictures, which are not mentioned or described in any of the great ecclesiastical or court collections, may have got into Bourke's possession from the Alba Collection.

There were in Bourke's collection in addition to the Budapest pictures, to the Alba Madonna and to two landscapes attributed to Velazquez[31] several Italian, Netherlandish and Spanish paintings. They were sold to the King of the Netherlands by Bourke's widow in Paris in 1823. At that time there was already a list accompanving the pictures, set up allegedly on the basis of Bourke's notes by "ministre Falck," which was transferred to the archives of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam.[32] According to the list some of the pictures originated from Godoy's collection.

Several important Spanish School paintings were among those pictures of the Ester-

házy Collection which were bought from Bourke's collection. Such as the *St. John the Baptist,* signed by Bartolomé Gonzáles and dated 1621. This artist, better known as a portrait painter, can but rarely be studied. Furthermore Alonso Caño's three pictures, among them the signed *Noli me tangere,* Cerezo Flamandos' *Ecce Homo,* Vicento Carducho's *The Vision of St. Francis of Assisi,* Carreño's monumental *St. Dominic,* Escalante's *Immaculate Conception* painted in 1663, Claudio Coello's signed work *The Holy Family* two large-scale canvases attributed to Pereda, three works of Murillo and his school, and an interesting genre painting of his pupil Nuñez de Villavicencio—to mention only a few works contained in the collection.

The circumstance that these paintings do not figure in descriptions, manuals and travelogues of Spain prior to the French invasion shows that they had hung in places to which ordinary travellers did not have access, that is to say in the Alba Palace or possibly later in Godoy's house. Whereas, with respect to paintings that found their way to Budapest only later—and among them some originating from the Esterházy purchases—more than once the provenance can be stated with absolute certainty, nothing is known for sure about the above-mentioned pictures.

The works from the Kaunitz Collection that may have been purchased by the Chancellor's son in Spain or another place abroad while stationed there, fall between the two purchases from Bourke. Although neither the two Goyas, which could not have been painted before 1811, nor the large Murillo, which in 1806 was still in Seville, could have got into the possession of Wenzel Anton Kaunitz in Madrid, who returned from there in 1806, it was, in all probability, from Madrid that the paintings found their way to the Kaunitz Collection. At the 1820 sale of the Collection five Goyas were also put up for auction. Nor is it clear how Zurbaran's late masterpiece, *The Immaculate Conception* and Juan Carreño's large-scale *St. Dominic* got into the Esterházy Collection. However, as both were taken into the inventory in 1820, it is not impossible that they were among items of the Kaunitz Collection sold separately.

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According to records preserved at the Esterházy archives Spanish pictures were offered for sale to the Collection even in 1823, however, we do not know about any being acquired later.[33] In 1831 the Esterházy Collection was enriched by the portrait of a woman attributed to Murillo and in 1845 by a still-life with fruit, allegedly the work of Alonzo Vazquez. After that we only know of restorations having taken place. The acquisition of Spanish paintings was not continued, although Prince Pál was interested in them even in 1852.[33]

But there is no doubt that the Spanish material in the Esterházy Collection laid the foundations of the Spanish Collection of the Museum. Thanks to further purchases and felicitous bequests the Collection was increased nearly twofold. In 1865 Prince Pál had the Collection transported to the premises built for this purpose in the building of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and in 1870 the Hungarian State bought it from the family along with a rich collection of graphic works. After systematization and completion with the material of other collections, purchases were continued even before the present building of the Museum of Fine Arts was erected.[35]

*

At a Hamburg auction held in 1900 the extraordinarily painterly *Robbery with Violence* was bought as Goya's work. Later it turned out to have been painted by Eugenio Lucas y Padilla, the master's faithful imitator. The original of the picture is in the Buenos Aires Museum. The second signed Zurbaran, the somewhat mawkish *Holy Family,* perhaps found its way from the religious house Las Cuevas in

Seville in 1904 to the Paris art trade and from there to the Museum. It is also from Seville, from Don Manuel Lopez Cepero's collection, that Pedro Sanchez's signed *Entombment* originates. The first picture of El Greco, who was hardly known in the first decade of the century, that found its way to Budapest, the wonderful *Annunciation* was also purchased from the Paris art trade and Velázquez's early masterpiece, his brilliant "bodegón," *The Breakfast* from England. The latter is presumably identical with the painting sold in 1875 at the auction of the Salamanca Collection and there called *Interieur de Poseda avec trois figures*, whose counterpart, the *Aveugles jouant de violon et de guitare* (today in Berlin-Dahlem) is also an interesting genre painting.

Evidently, parallel with the change in taste, it was portraits and genre scenes that were collected first and foremost, instead of the great religious compositions. That is how a characteristic portrait of Goya's, representing the Marqués Caballero, the reactionary, wicked and revengeful minister of Charles IV, got to Budapest from the Spanish art trade. An early masterpiece of Goya's painted about 1785 and showing Señora Bermudez, wife of the well-known Spanish art writer and originating from the Madrid collection of the Marqués de Casa Torrés, was bought from a Vienna art dealer in 1908. The Hungarian painter Ede Balló, through whose mediation the Caballero portrait was bought, acquired in Spain from among early Spanish paintings the panel of a fifteenth-century master of Castile, *The Presentation of Mary in the Temple*. This picture has recently been mentioned—wrongly—as a work of the "Master of Budapest" named after the five panels Marcell Nemes, the Hungarian collector, who started the El Greco cult, had presented to the Museum in 1912. The master of the panels, showing strong Netherlandish effects, was identified through the Budapest pictures.

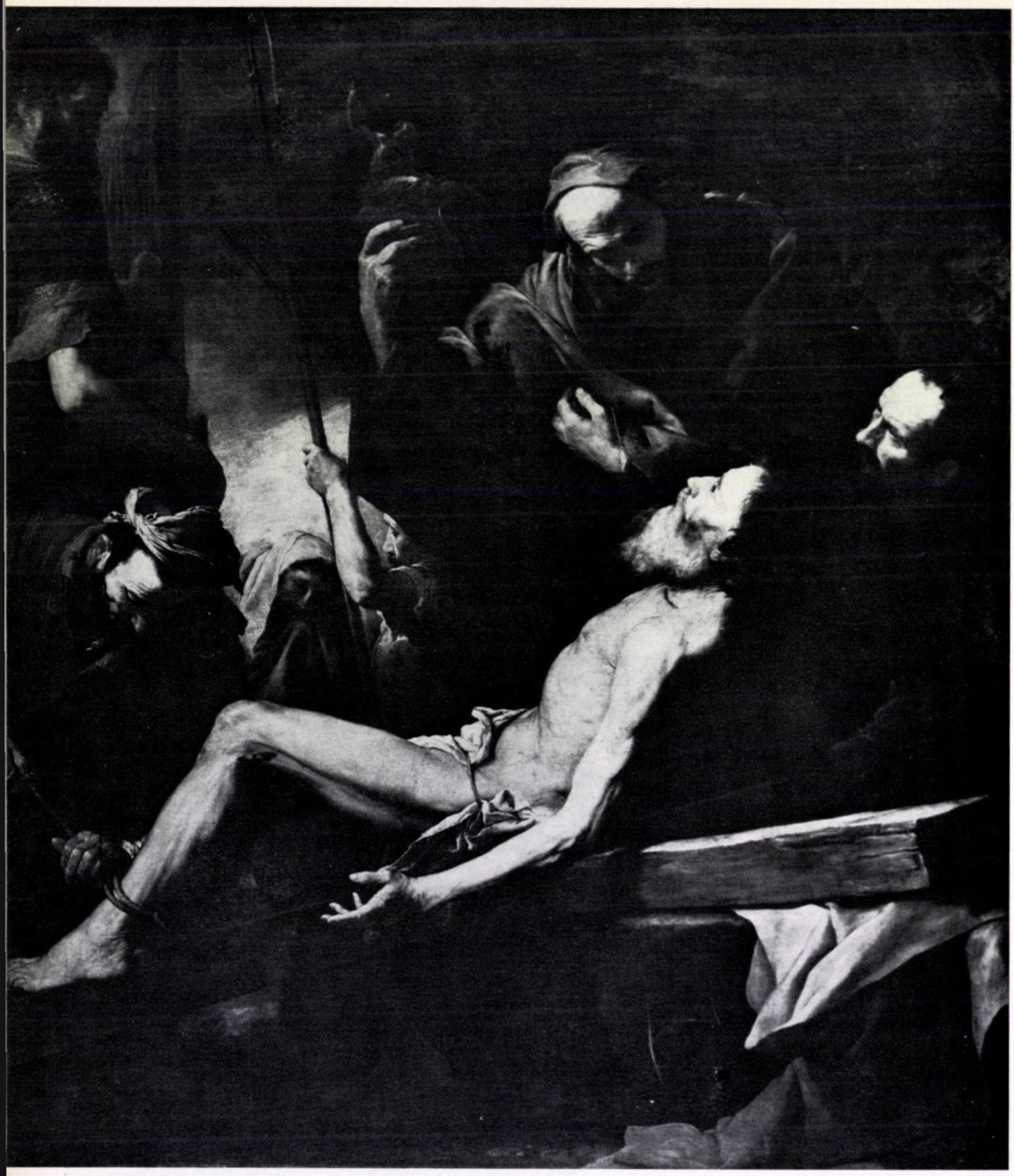
El Greco's second masterpiece, *The Magdalene*, which reveals Titian's influence, was also donated to the Museum by Marcell Nemes, whereas the further three El Grecos got to the Herzog Collection after the dissolution of Nemes's collection and, in 1950–51, into the possession of the Museum. Two of them originated from the collection of Abilio Manuel Guerra Junqueiro, the well-known Portuguese aesthete. A characteristic picture of each of his so-called pupils, of Luis Tristan and of Pedro Orrente, is shown in the El Greco room of the Museum side by side with the master's paintings.

The large-scale *Adoration of the Magi* by Luis Tristan was donated to the Museum by Jenő Boross, an American gentleman of Hungarian origin, along with another altarpiece, Juan Carreño de Miranda's *St. James the Great Vanquishing the Moors*. This latter had come from Louis Philippe's Galerie Espagnole. Owing to the translucent, magic colours and to its visionary atmosphere combined with the cruel realism of the details, this work is a characteristic representative of late Baroque Spanish art.

A portrait transferred in 1932 from the Vienna Court Collection to Budapest following what was called the Venice agreement radiates the atmosphere of Philip IV's Spanish Royal Court, heavy with the rigid rules of etiquette. It is the likeness of the Infanta Margarita Teresia, made in Velázquez's workshop, certainly with the master's collaboration, and is a variant of the little girl's Vienna portrait in blue. In this picture the royal baby of *Las Meninas* is a girl of eight or nine years. Her characteristic, Hapsburg lips are still concealed by the roundness of childhood, her wistful glance looks into space. In 1666, at the age of 15, this charming royal child became the wife of Leopold I, Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary, but by then there was no Velázquez to paint the Empress' portrait.

Further additions to the Spanish collection of the Museum date back to the years after the Second World War. It was then that the portrait of the Infanta's brother, Don Baltasar Carlos, in hunting dress, the

School of Nicolás Francés:
Saint Sebastian, wood, 105 × 35.5 cms



JUSEPE DE RIBERA: THE MARTYRDOM OF ST. ANDREW, CANVAS, 209 × 183 CMS

EL GRECO: MARY MAGDALEN, CANVAS, 156.5 × 121 CMS

Juan Bautista Martinez del Mazo:
The infant Don Baltasar Carlos, canvas, 144 × 109.5 cms

work of Juan Battista Martinez del Mazo, was transferred from the Herzog Collection to the Museum. The picture has been known from 1810 on, but then it was considered to be Velázquez's work.

Francisco Zurbaran's *The Apostle St. Andrew*, painted in 1631, was entered into the inventory of the Museum in 1950. This powerful work, created in the master's best period, left its original place, in all likelihood the Church of St. Adalbert in Seville, due to the French invasion. In 1810 it was listed among the collected pictures in the Alcazar in Seville. It was probably a complete altarpiece together with the Archangel Gabriel, which was mentioned in the Seville inventory right in front of the Budapest picture. Later it was in the Sutherland Collection, then it appeared at London auctions and, after being passed from one hand to the other, it finally found its way to the Budapest Museum.

Nor was the purchase of Spanish pictures finished with these outstanding masterpieces, by means of which the best periods of Spanish art could be presented in Budapest in great variety. Not long ago a most remarkable panel, also representing St. Andrew, made by the Catalonian-Aragonian Francisco Solibes around 1490, was purchased at a Budapest auction. It was in 1939 that the picture first appeared in the Hungarian art trade. It had most probably come from the Magyardiószeg Kuffler Collection, where several Spanish paintings were known to have been prior to the First World War. A panel of St. Peter, which used to be in a private collection of Budapest and a part of the predella, which had been in a Bohemian private collection, had a similar origin. A panel of St. Sebastian, recently acquired, is also the work of a fifteenth-century master of León. It can be grouped with the creations of the artist known as "Pupil of Nicolás Francés."[36]

These latter, most welcome additions to the material evince the living character of the Spanish Collection and bear witness to the intentions of the board of the Museum further to extend the Collection, which was established between 1820 and 1825. Though Théophile Gautier was right when he wrote that to admire Spanish art properly one must visit the churches, monasteries and palaces of Spain,[37] it can also be said that visitors to the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts are also able to get some idea of what Spanish art has produced.

MARIANNE TAKÁCS

1 *Cf.* J. F. Sánchez Cantón: "La venta de los cuadros en 1801." *Archivo Español de Arte*, XIII. 1937, 165–166. Although at the beginning of the nineteenth century Lucien Bonaparte's agents, the dealer Aguirre and the painter Lethiere took 70 pictures out of the country in spite of the prohibition issued by Charles III in 1779, there must have been but few Spanish works among them since in the catalogue of the 1816 auction of Lucien Bonaparte's paintings there figured only five Spanish pictures.

2 "Extrait des différents ouvrages publiés sur la vie des paintres." . . . Paris, MDCCLXXVI. 443.

3 *Goethe's Briefwechsel mit den Gebrüdern von Humboldt* (1795–1832). Leipzig, 1876, 75–76.

4 *"Der wichtigste Gegenstand bei einer Reise in Spanien ist der erstaunliche grosse Schatz prächtiger Gemälde, die hier überall zerstreut sind. Der Reichtum des Escorials allein übertrifft bei weitem, was man gewöhnlich davon erwartet. . ." ibid.* 147.

5 *"Die spanischen Maler lernt man erst hier im Lande kennen und schätzen."* Gabriele von Bülow: *Ein Lebensbild.* Aus den Familienpapieren Wilhelm von Humboldts und seiner Kindern. Berlin, 1911 (14th edition). 8–9.

6 L. J. Lopez-Rey: "Velázquez's Calabazas." . . . *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 1967. 224.

7 P. Guinard: *Zurbaran et les peintres espagnols de la vie monastique*. Paris, 1960. 2.

8 M. Gomez Imaz: *Inventario de los cuadros sustraidos por el gobierno intruso en Sevilla* (Año 1810). (2nd edition). Seville, 1917, 88–96.

9 *Cf.* Marianne Takács: *Spanish Masters*. Budapest, 1965. 6–7.

10 He bought in Rome, among others, pictures by A. R. Mengs, Angelica Kaufmann and commissioned sculptures by Canova and Thorwaldsen.

11 Count E. Bourke, a diplomat of Irish extraction, was born in St. Croix in the West Indies in 1761 and died in Vichy in 1821. He entered the Danish diplomatic service in 1789 and died as the minister of Denmark in Paris. His detailed biography: L. Bobé: *Efterladte papirer fra den Reventlowske Familiekreds.* Copenhagen, MXMXXXII. Vol. VIII. 400.

12 In 1803 Lady Holland mentioned that it was Bourke, whom they had known since Naples, who introduced them to Madrid society. *The Spanish Journal of Elisabeth Lady Holland* (1793–1811) London. In his memoirs Johann George Rist several times mentioned Bourke, whom he had known for long: *"Bourke war unstreitig der bedeutendste, wenigstens der liebenswürdigste unter den Gesandten am Madrider Hofe, sein Haus das angenehmste und besuchteste..." Lebenserinnerungen,* I–II. Gotha, 1884–86. 288 ff. pp.

13 *"Nôtre ami Bourke passe maint moment avec nous, il est plus interessant que jamais. C'est lui qui a bien vu l'Italie et il en a rapporté des trésors. J'ai dans ma chambre des portefeuilles immenses bien fournis".* Charlotte Schimmelmann's letter to Louise von Stolberg from Copenhagen in 1797. L. Bobé: *Op. cit.* IV. November 28, 1797.

14 Bourke died in Vichy but he was buried in the Père Lachaise in Paris. His widow died in 1845 and is also buried there, along with several relatives who died later. L. Bobé: *Op. cit.* VIII. 401.

15 Anna von Sydow: *Wilhelm und Caroline Humboldt in ihren Briefen.* I–VII. Berlin, 1900–1916, VI. 20.

16 Meller, S.: *Az Esterházy Képtár története* (History of the Esterházy Gallery). Budapest, 1915, LXIV–LXV.

17 *Ibid.* 120.

18 Quoted in the catalogue (p. 19) of the exhibition "Trésors de la peinture espagnole" staged in Paris in 1963.

19 *Dictionnaire des peintres espagnols.* Paris, 1816. XXXI.

20 *Companion to the most Celebrated Private Galleries in London.* London, 1844, 178.

21 In the list of Spanish paintings in Britain enumerated in the supplementary volume, which was published in 1857, it turned out that at that time there were 44 paintings attributed to Murillo, 23 to Velazquez and 12 to Zurbaran in Britain. Alonso Caño was included with seven works but Goya only with one painting. *Treasures of Art in Great Britain.* London, 1857. 520.

22 The Leningrad material was purchased in two lots. At the 1814 auction of the pictures of G. W. Coesevelt, the Danish banker, collector and diplomat, Tsar Alexander I bought paintings. From the 67 pictures offered for sale 53 were Spanish ones. Catherine the Great also purchased paintings from Coesevelt.

23 Meller, S.: *Az Esterházy Képtár ... op. cit.* LXV.

24 *id. ibid.* Not all of the pictures bought from the Bourke Collection were transferred to the possession of the Museum.

25 *id. ibid.*

26 If the provenance of old paintings is known it was in most cases envoys and consuls who bought them. That is how the British consul in Venice purchased great numbers of Guardis, and Lord Hamilton the famous Greek vases in Italy, where he belonged to the circle of Bourke's friends. In all probability the Spanish pictures got into the Kaunitz Collection in the same way. In the catalogue of the Kaunitz Collection the compiler of the catalogue remarked with respect to Goya, who at that time was still alive but unknown in Europe: "Goya de Madrid."

27 Else Kai Sass: *Thorwaldsens Portaetbuster.* I–III. Copenhagen, 1965. III. 64.

28 *Q.v.* note 13.

29 In the diary of his trip to Madrid in 1799 Humboldt mentioned his visit to the Alba Palace and the Raphael painting. W. v. Humboldt: *Gesammelte Schriften.* Berlin, 1918, Vol. 15. 205. *"Haus der Herzogin Alba... Sie hat im Hause das sie bewohnt, eine schöne Gemäldesammlung, unter der ein Raphael ist."*

30 E. du Gué Trapier: *Goya and his Sitters.* New York, 1964. 13. "The duchess went to her estates near Sanlúcar de Barrameda in Andalucia. After her husband's death in 1796, she made her will there on February 16th, 1797." Humboldt described the case as follows: *"Die Alba hat es ihrem Arzt mit vielen andern Bildern vermacht, der Arzt hat sie eine Änderung des Testaments fürchtend, vergiftet, er ist eingezogen worden und hat sich durch Bestechung losgekauft. Dabei hat er die Bilder verhandeln müssen. So ist Bourke dazu gekommen."* Anna von Sydow: *op. cit.* VI. 20.

31 Both are in the Landsdowne Collection in London. Mrs. Jameson wrote the following about them: "These two landscapes were brought out of Spain by Mr. Bourke, the Danish minister at Madrid, at the time of the French invasion. They were in the royal palace, where Lord Stuart de Rothsay saw them in 18 (further dates are missing from the text). *Op. cit.* 312.

32 *Cf.* P. van Vliet: "Spaanse schilderijen in het Rijksmuseum, afkomstig van schenkingen van Koning Willem I." *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum.* XIV. 1966. 4.

33 In April 1823 one Wilhelm Falck *"traget einige spanische Oelgemälde, welche er aus Spanien bezog, und von berühmten Meistern sind, zum Verkaufe an."* He offered them to the Esterházy Collection. Meller, S.: *op. cit.* 147. The paintings were not bought. Were these not the pictures later sold to the king of Holland? There too a Falck acted as an intermediary in the deal in 1823.

34 In his correspondence with the well-known Polish collector Athanas Raczynski, Prince Pál mentioned that he had inquired after a Murillo (in the convolute preserved at the Library of the Museum of Poznan, among the papers of Raczynski dealing with Louis Philippe's collection).

35 Literature dealing with the Spanish pictures up to the 1963 purchases can be found in A. Pigler's work: *Katalog der Galerie Alter Meister*. Budapest, 1967; in the catalogue of the exhibition "Spanyol mesterek" ("Spanish Masters") published in 1965 in English too.

36 *Cf.* the author's article now in the press "Archivo Español de Arte," which discusses both of the newly acquired paintings.

37 "L'ancienne école espagnole, quoique moins répandue dans les galeries que les écoles italienne et flamande, a brillé d'une incontestable splendeur. La chaîne des Pyrénées s'opposait jalousement à la sortie des chef-d'œuvres nationaux; mais qui-conque avait pu visiter les églises, les cloitres, les résidences royales et les palais où Velasquez, Murillo, Ribera, Zurbaran, Alonso Cano ont laissé tant de témoignages de leur génie, revenait pénétré d'admiration et racontait des merveilles". Th. Gautier: *Les beaux-arts en Europe*. Paris, 1855–56. I–II. I. 229.

FROM OUR NEXT NUMBERS

IMPLEMENTATION OF ECONOMIC PLANS IN AFRICA

E. K.

A NEW STAGE IN AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN ECONOMIC RELATIONS

Gerd Biró

THEATRE CHRONICLE

József Czimer

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MUSICAL LIFE

NEW RECORDS

The Hungarian record industry has three main functions. In the first place, to fulfil the demand for light and classical music, and to provide a wider platform for young artists and conductors. Secondly, a rather more specialized task in the recording of the complete works of Bartók and Kodály, as well as the work of present-day Hungarian composers. The third, and latest, is to record old music which has never yet been put on records, or at least which is not easily accessible. The records produced by the Qualiton Company of Hungary today are of excellent technical standard; the sound is good and they are available all over the world in the catalogues and on the shelves of all large record dealers. Musically, of course, the quality of the recordings vary.

In this review I propose to deal with some of the recent recordings of earlier composers.

PALESTRINA: Liber secundus motectorum ad quatuor voces aequales; Missa sine nomine (Missa Mantovana). Miklós Szabó conducting the Girls' Choir of the Music Secondary School, Győr. Qualiton, mono and stereo. LPX 11328.

Hungarian choral singing has a well-deserved reputation. But perhaps not everyone knows that when Zoltán Kodály laid its foundations a few decades ago he took British choral singing as his model. Just forty years ago Zoltán Kodály was invited to Sopron, a town on the Western border of the country, for a choral concert. "Gloucester is a small town in England," he wrote sometime later. "It has fifty thousand inhabitants, it is hardly larger than Sopron, and smaller than Pozsony. Yet practically every British musician has been there. Because this town and its two neighbours, combining their musical and material resources, hold a seven-day music festival every year... The Gloucester festivals have been regularly held since 1715. At that period, and since then, we were otherwise engaged. But why should not Sopron some day become a Hungarian Gloucester? The foundation—its century-old music society—is already there. And, as partners, Győr and Szombathely are not far away..."

His words are worth recalling, for this Palestrina record was made by the choir of the Music Secondary School now in existence in the town of Győr.

The programmes chosen by this choir, conducted by Miklós Szabó, are admirable. Two years ago the Győr choir performed these eleven choral works, the *Liber secundus*, composed by Palestrina in 1581, at a concert in Budapest, and earned well-merited applause for the undertaking.

The fundamental paradox of Palestrina is that we talk of him as the greatest master of the sixteenth century—but in actual fact we know him hardly at all. The classical purity of his style—which made it possible for Knud Jeppesen to deduce from his works

the laws of vocal polyphony for his basic book on the subject—offers very little in the way of guide-posts for the performer. Not even the conventional programme music of the motet tradition, nor its technique of sound painting can compare with the infinitely polished perfection of Palestrina. One is almost led to believe on occasion that the work of Palestrina is a distillation of music purged of every human emotion.

But this is a fundamental mistake. What is true, however, is that the character of Palestrina's movements reveals their individual essence less readily than the works of any other composer. It is easier to comprehend and reproduce the more sacred compositions of Roland de Lassus, not to speak of those of Palestrina and de Lassus's French, Spanish and German followers. The "deep penetration," the careful examination that must precede the performance of such a Palestrina cycle was carried out with great thoroughness by the conductor of the choir, Miklós Szabó, even though he perhaps failed to achieve the result he desired at every point.

The voices on this record are crystal clear. Perhaps the motet starting with the words *Ave regina coelorum* provides a greater opportunity for jubilation than the record in fact expresses, but even as it is the eloquence and rich, intertwining movement of the voices are well displayed.

Of the jubilant motets perhaps the *Surrexit pastor bonus* and the *Pueri hebraeorum* and of the supplicatory the *Ave Maria* come off best.

The *Missa sine nomine*, otherwise known as the "Missa Mantovana," can also be heard on the same record in a performance that is a model of perfection.

Lovers of ancient music might wish to know of a Qualiton recording of works by French and German baroque masters.

BAROQUE CHAMBER MUSIC: Froberger, Hotteterre, Muffat. Played by Péter Pongrácz (oboe), Zoltán Jeney, Attila Lajos (flute), János Sebestyén (harpsichord), Gábor Lehotka (organ). Qualiton mono and stereo. LPX 11325.

The organ works of Froberger were recorded in the local St. George Church of Sopron, played by Gábor Lehotka Hungary's most eminent organist. The organ at the St. George Church is one of the most ancient in the country, almost 350 years old, with an exceptionally fine tone. It is of course a manual-pumped instrument, which precisely because it is "primitive" allows the trained player to make most of its touch. Gábor Lehotka's earliest organ lessons were on just such an old instrument, and it gave him—for ever—his remarkable virtuosity in handling such an instrument, which has a much harder touch than the modern instrument. Froberger's *Ricercare*, and his *Twelfth Toccata*, with its hard finish, are especially worth hearing on this organ and in this interpretation, since Lehotka moves with particular ease and freedom in the realm of baroque music. János Sebestyén plays one of Froberger's *Capriccioes*, and *Die Mayerin*, the variations described as a suite, on the harpsichord: in the first he slightly overemphasizes his chords, but in the second he gives clear and brilliant performance.

Péter Pongrácz, oboist of the Hungarian Wind Ensemble, plays Jacques Martin Hotteterre's *Sonata* with unusually beautiful tone and with exceptional intelligence. The only flaw in the record is that in the accompaniment—that is, the continuo—the bass is played on the harpsichord unsupported by 'cello or bassoon, hece the oboe sounds somewhat isolated against the inherently dry chords of the harpsichord.

There is in addition a particularly beautiful *B Minor Suite* from one of the older members of the Hotteterre family in a performance by Zoltán Jeney and Attila Lajos. The two flutes—without continuo—blend together in silken notes of astonishing purity. And finally there is a brilliant *Chaconne in G Major*, also played by János Sebestyén, from Gottlieb Muffat's collection entitled *Componimenti musicali per il cembalo*, which records the year of its composition, 1738, in its 38 variations.

BUXTEHUDE: Chamber Music and Cantatas. Chamber Orchestra of the Budapest Academy of Music and M. László (soprano), G. Lehotka (organ), J. Sebestyén (harpsichord), P. Komlós (violin), G. Németh (viola), conducted by Frigyes Sándor. Qualiton mono and stereo. LPX 11325.

Bach's great biographer, Philipp Spitta, published all the organ works of Buxtehude between 1870 and 1880, thus opening, to audiences which had only recently come to appreciate Bach, the dark, dramatic and moving world of the North German *Hochbarock* in the musical language of one of the most gifted followers of Heinrich Schütz, halfway between the functional language of Bach and the modal language of his predecessors. Nevertheless in the art of Buxtehude there is a singularly classic completeness. One of the best-known episodes in Bach's life was when he was given leave of absence by the Arnstadt Council in 1705 to go to Lübeck to study with Buxtehude, and was so possessed by Buxtehude's playing of the organ and the concerts of the *Collegium Musicum* that he stayed away for three months. One of the cantatas on this record, the one beginning with the word *O Gottes Stadt*, recalls this journey: it was from the soprano solo following the orchestral introduction that Bach took the characteristic basic melody of his *geistliches Lied* — "*Komm süsser Tod.*"

One side of the record contains three solo cantates, "*O Gottes Stadt, o güldnes Licht*", "*Ich sprach in meinem Herzen*" and "*O clemens, o mitis, o coelestis pater.*" Only the first of these, and even that only in its text, can be considered a choral cantata: it was composed to the verses of Johann Rist, with no reference to the melody composed by J. Schop to this text in 1642.

It would be an exaggeration to claim that each and every moment of all three cantatas are equal in value and of the highest standard. Margit László, however, sings them vigorously, rhythmically and with a great understanding of style, in a clear voice and without any operatic mannerisms. It is true that the recordings have one or two ultra-pious moments for which there is no real justification even in sacred music. But Buxtehude's imposing sense of drama, so typical of the end of the seventeenth century, and his wide artistic range come over well in this performance.

One the other side of the record Gábor Lehotka plays Buxtehude's *Organ Prelude and Fugue in F Major* in a fascinating—and compelling—rhythm. There is no trace of the discordant resonance so frequently experienced in organ recitals or recordings. He is most admirable in the plastic block orchestral effect he produces in the chordal sections, and the clarity of the polyphonic voice in the fugue.

The five-movement piece marked No. 4 in the series of Trio Sonatas is open to the same objection as in the playing of Jacques Martin Hotteterre's oboe sonata: there is only a harpsichord accompaniment to the violin and the viola, with no 'cello to reinforce the bass. There is some convincing and appropriate playing by Péter Komlós and Géza Németh, the first violinist and viola player of the Bartók String Quartet, and by János Sebestyén, harpsichord.

The record also includes János Sebestyén playing Buxtehude's *La Capricciosa*, a series of variations, with a great deal of variety and skill. The choice of registers to give the different variations new atmosphere and colour is nothing less than admirable.

ARIE ANTICHE. Alexander Svéd (baritone) and the "Musica Antiqua" ensemble of Vienna under René Clemencic. Qualiton mono and stereo. LPX 1289.

Unfortunately this record is nothing like as good. Svéd, who used to sing at the Metropolitan, here elects to sing Caldara, Durante and Gluck, as well as songs by numerous other early musicians, in a romantic manner, and on the whole this is not successful. Perhaps the aria *Danza, danza* by Durante is the most satisfactory. The record however includes a couple of attractive

items: two purely instrumental performances by the "Musica Antiqua," a suite by Paul Peuerl, and a *Sinfonia* by Salomone Rosse. These works by the two masters who lived at the turn of the seventeenth century sound so fresh and lively in the performance of René Clemencic and the ensemble that the listener feels well compensated for much else that is missing.

VIVALDI: Five Concerti for Bassoon, Strings and Harpsichord. Gábor Janota (bassoon) and the Chamber Orchestra of the Budapest Academy of Music, conducted by Frigyes Sándor. Qualiton mono and stereo. LPX 11346.

This record is devoted to a particular, not very well-known aspect of Vivaldi's work. The great Italian master left nearly 450 concertos behind him, 37 of which were composed for the bassoon, which thus came second to the violin—for which he wrote 220 concertos—as Vivaldi's favourite instrument. This is somewhat surprising, since nowadays the bassoon remains in use as an exclusively orchestral instrument. Composers in the first half of the nineteenth century made use of it to indicate humour, and for the most part it has retained this character today—it is consequently difficult to picture any composer entrusting the essence of his music to the bassoon.

Nevertheless this is just what Vivaldi did in his bassoon concertos. Moreover, it is no exaggeration to say that in one or another of these works Vivaldi shows a prescient spirit. Listening to the first item on the record, the Concerto in G Major—No. 276 in G. G. Malipiero's complete edition—one may be forgiven for thinking in the first few moments that one is listening to one of Mozart's or Haydn's youthful works. A few minutes later characteristics of Vivaldi's style appear, and the whole falls unequivocally into place as true Vivaldi, particularly when we come to the Largo with its elaborate ornamentation. It is nonetheless not an aspect of Vivaldi with which we are familiar.

The playing of these five bassoon concertos is almost perfect. Gábor Janota, the bassoon player, was one of the winners of the 1958 woodwind competitions in Munich. He is 33 years old and first bassoon player of the Hungarian Radio and Television Symphony Orchestra. His tone is light and delicate, his intonation unerringly accurate, his skill is revealed without ostentation, the rapid passages flow with ease, and his cantabile playing—particularly in the slower and more melancholy movements—can challenge comparison with any of the usual instruments chosen to carry the melody.

JOSEPH BODIN DE BOISMORTIER: Sonatas and Concerti. Chamber Orchestra of the Budapest Philharmonic Society, conducted by Miklós Erdélyi. Qualiton mono. LPX 11321.

This French contemporary of Bach is not very well known, even perhaps to those who are quite at home in baroque music. Boismortier is in truth one of the minor masters, and part of his charm resides in the fact that he attemptes no more than he achieves; in the final analysis he has left us deliciously light and elegant music for playing at home, several of the pieces in unusual instrumental combinations.

Boismortier's *6 Concerts pour 5 Flûtes traversières sans basse* appeared in Paris in 1727, marked Op. 15. One of the most curious items on this record, the *Concerto in D Major*, is one of them. The five flutes, completely unaccompanied, have a quite unusual, soft velvety quality of sound, from which an occasional voice emerges in concerto form.

Boismortier was indeed partial to ensembles of several identical instruments without other accompaniment. This is also true of the *Sonata in D Minor*, which is the first on the record, and which is for three unaccompanied oboes, and equally so for the *Sonata in G Minor* for two unaccompanied flutes. The record also contains two other sonatas by Boismortier, for three violins and continuo, and a concerto for two oboes with orchestral accompaniment. The orchestra is

splendidly conducted by Miklós Erdélyi. The solos are played by the best of the Hungarian wind players, who are now increasing in number as fresh young talent comes forward.

GEORG MUFFAT: Suites and Concerti. Chamber Orchestra of the Budapest Philharmonic Society, conducted by Tamás Sulyok. Qualiton mono and stereo. LPX 11324.

Muffat (1653–1704) earned a place among the minor masters of the *Hochbarock* by introducing the Italian concerto form, together with a number of other forms of orchestral music, to South Germany and Austria. The suites are taken from his *Svavioris harmoniae instrumentalis hypochrematicae florilegium* (Augsburg, 1695), and the two *Concerti Grossi* from the *Außerlesener... Instrumental-Music Erste Versammlung* (Passau, 1701).

The forms of these suites quite clearly reflect the influence of French orchestral music, yet in the final resort they do not vastly differ from the *Concerto Grosso*. Georg Muffat's approach to music, fundamentally based on the melody, brings these two forms into one organic unity, the broadly-fashioned Corelli type of Largo introduction produces an Italian impression, even though framed in the typically dotted rhythm of the French overture.

The sound which the orchestra produces is lovely, solid and pure. This is especially true in the playing of the overtures. The Italian-style Largos are also splendid, but the traditional dance movements (*Bourrée, Gigue, Menuet*, etc.) are somewhat boisterous, and as a result the whole is undeniably very effective but slightly less majestic than it might be. The *Concerti Grossi* are for the most played by the same excellent wind instrumentalists.

ALADÁR RÁCZ: Cymbalo Recital. Archive recordings. Qualiton mono. LPX 11351.

Aladár Rácz was well-known as an accomplished cymbalo player. He was a Gypsy and began his musical career in a Gypsy orchestra. From 1910 onwards he lived abroad, and settled down in Hungary again in 1935. After the Second World War he retired and died in Budapest in 1958 at the age of 72.

Ernest Ansermet and Igor Stravinsky discovered Aladár Rácz when he was playing in Switzerland at the Maxim Bar in Geneva, at the beginning of the First World War. His fame as a cymbalo player spread rapidly and more and more people crowded to the Maxim Bar to hear him play. Naturally enough, his main repertoire there was light and popular music and improvisations on various melodies, mainly of Balkan origin—but he was already interested in Bach, Couperin, Scarlatti and other baroque masters.

Then he made his final choice, he undertook what seemed at that time an impossible task, a cymbalo recital. From then on to 1926 he worked unbelievably hard, inspired by the example of Wanda Landowska, the Polish harpsichord player, and the Spanish guitarist, Segovia, who also achieved recognition for their instruments through intensive work and effort.

That first cymbalo recital in modern times took place in Lausanne on May 26, 1926. Most of Aladár Rácz's programme still consisted of improvisations, but among the encores he included one or two movements of Bach's solo Partitas and a selection from Couperin. The recital was immensely successful, and was followed by a string of further successes, Rácz suddenly found himself world famous.

It was in Lausanne that he met Yvonne Barblan, his magnificent partner in the recitals, who later became his wife. For in the course of time he perfected a certain style of performance; he enriched his series of solo selections by adding a piano accompaniment to the cymbalo. The two hammer-like batons of the cymbalo are incapable of producing real chord effects, but Yvonne Barblan's soft, sensitive and accommodating piano playing provided an accompaniment and background which cre-

ated the impression that far from being an intrusion, it was an extension of the possibilities of the cymbalo.

On this record the listener can hear an excellent selection from Aladár Rácz's enormous repertoire. The first side of the record is made up of Bach's *Partita in E Major, BWV 1006*, which is of course played on the solo cymbalo, and is unaccompanied.

It would be wrong to approach this recording with prejudices or academic concepts of style that ignore the flow of the music as a whole. Aladár Rácz changes the tempo of the *Preludio*, which is generally given a *perpetuum mobile* interpretation, and indeed where he feels the musical sense requires it he even alters it in places. As a result a somewhat unexpected—but also unexpectedly intelligent—piece of music emerges. Rácz has no desire to play the *Preludio* as a *perpetuum mobile*—which in any case is unprofitable—but proceeds from the premise that the Bach who wrote this fast movement also wrote the Passions and the cantatas, and that it is senseless to deny the *Preludio* emotional content simply on account of the quick tempo.

The dance movements *(Gavotte, Menuet, Bourée, Gigue)* are treated in the same manner. Here again he takes as his starting-point the purpose of the music, steering the finished musical product back, as it were, to the original rhythm of the dance, in which, for a second it even appears to bring to life an occasional gesture of the dancers. This sort of liberty, and this imaginative power of recreation, is only possible to a musician who grew up on free and unrestrained folk music and improvisation. Perhaps the *Gavotte en Rondeau* was never so light and graceful, so reserved and majestic, as played here by Aladár Rácz.

The fourth movement of Couperin's *Le Grand 13. Ordre*, the *Les Folies françaises*, falls into twelve lesser movements. These—*La Virginité, La Pudeur, L'Ardeur, La Fidélité* and so on—are each miniature character sketches whose mystery is increased by their different coloured dominoes: *La Fidélité sous le Domino bleu*, for instance. Couperin has certainly left us, posterity, recondite riddles with his doubly cryptic titles—and it is the most freely soaring musical imagination that can surmount these difficulties.

Rácz magically brings these ingenious miniatures as vividly to life as if he had been given the opportunity to peer behind the dominoes and the allegories, to the sentimental charm of the ladies and courtiers of Louis XIV, yet leaving at the same time a kind of misty veil between them and us, as though they moved in a set figure behind a curtain in a dream.

Fotunately another form of magic is also preserved on this record; Aladár Rácz's powers of improvisation. Precisely which Hungarian folk song served as a basis for his improvisation is not clear, particularly as he also makes use of material from the music of neighbouring peoples as well. The elaborate ornamentation, the motifs which resound like a solemn dirge, slowly acquire a personality of their own, until basic melody and variations are lost in a theme and variations which spring spontaneously into life together.

A musician and player such as Aladár Rácz is bound, in the swiftly changing circumstances of the world, to become increasingly rare. It is good to have such work recorded, and available for the real pleasure of contemporary listeners.

ANDRÁS PERNYE

BARTÓK AND RUMANIAN FOLK MUSIC

BÉLA BARTÓK: RUMANIAN FOLK MUSIC. VOLS. I—III. Edited by Benjamin Suchoff. With a foreword by Victor Bator. Text translations by E. C. Teodorescu. The Hague, 1967, Nijhoff.

These three impressive volumes of more than 2,300 pages are one of the great sensations of Bartók research in recent years. No lesser event is involved than the publication, at last, although posthumously, of Bartók's most significant scientific work in musical folklore. The features now brought to light will have to be fitted into the Bartók image that we already have.

Let us take a striking example. In preparing a complete edition of the recordings of Bartók's works—now under preparation by the Qualiton Recording Company, we had arrived at the record that contains the two violin rhapsodies composed in 1928. Bartók only noted at the bottom of the score: "Folk dances," indicating that its themes were originally peasant dances. But aside from a vague reference to them in his correspondence Bartók never explained their national origin, or what kind of instrument and performance he heard them in. Now, the volumes of the *Rumanian Folk Music* give an almost precise answer. We identified 13 of the 15 themes in the two rhapsodies in this collection. It turned out that all were violin dances originally as well, and that Bartók knowingly incorporated in his compositions not only the thematic material, but also the Rumanian, or Rumanian Gypsy manner of fiddling. We found, for example, that he deliberately based the "Friss" movement of the Second Rhapsody on themes that the Rumanian Gypsies performed, and on types of dances which—as he called them in his book—were "melodies with motif structure." From a further acquaintance with these volumes we may expect the revelation of a host of new features that will be similarly decisive in analyses of Bartók.

For years we have been aware of the existence of a large Rumanian collection. Especially since Bartók completed the preparatory work in Budapest, before his emigration to the United States, of a major work containing 2,555 songs. The Budapest Bartók Archives is the custodian of the manuscript documents of the four phases of the preparations: (1) Bartók's small-size notebooks for on-the-spot notations; (2) the large-size music sheets on which he wrote down the phonograph-recorded tunes exactly; (3) the so-called "proof sheets" for each clarified melody (these were copied partly by the late Márta Ziegler, Bartók's first wife who died in 1967); (4) the documents of revision and general systematization of the 1930s. (Professor Denijs Dille, research scholar of the Budapest Bartók Archives, is preparing a detailed comparison of these documents with the posthumous publication edited by B. Suchoff for the *Studia Musicologica*.) And lastly it was here in Budapest that Bartók, and under his supervision, his pupil Jenő Deutsch, prepared the lithographed manuscript fair copies of the melodies that he took with him, and which now appear as facsimiles.

The enormous significance of *Rumanian Folk Music* lies primarily in its scope. The publishing of Bartók's collection of Rumanian folk music has been completed with these volumes. As Dr. Suchoff points out in the Editor's Preface to Vol. I, Bartók's complete collection contained 3,404 original Rumanian folk songs. During his lifetime he published 1,220 of these melodies: in 1913 in the "Bihor" volume (371), in 1923 in the "Maramures" volume (365) and in 1935 in the "Colinde" volume (484). Moreover, he later did not consider the mode of presentation of one of them, the "Bihor" volume, satisfactory, and he incorporated

this material in *Rumanian Folk Music* after revision. (Hungarian Bartók research, and Professor Dille of Belgium, who lives in Hungary, personally, deserve credit for the publication of the long sold out "Maramureş" volume in 1966, of the "Bihor" volume (a facsimile of his own copy crammed with Bartók's autograph corrections, and a German commentary), and also the "Colinde". *Béla Bartók, Ethnomusikologische Schriften, II–III–IV.*, Editio Musica, Budapest–Schott's Söhne, Mainz.

The ethnomusicological methodology of the three-volume *Rumanian Folk Music* far surpasses all of Bartók's earlier books in standard. This concerns above all the introductory studies at the beginning of each volume. It is most impressive how beyond the musical classification, notation and illumination of the material, this time Bartók, very much the "natural scientist," sets the folk music into folklore, into the whole of folk life, how he characterizes the background of this music socially as well. Particularly when we remember that with the First World War Bartók's Rumanian collecting ceased for all practical purposes, and that he had to reconstruct the background, the sociological phenomena of Transylvanian Rumanian folk music of around 1908 to 1914 by relying on memories a quarter of a century old, and on his phonograph cylinders. Regarding the notations themselves: Bartók achieved a standard of perfection in accurately committing to paper the ornamentations and uncertain notes that was unequalled either before or since. Without a doubt, hearing back the melody from these notations requires an excellent musician and some practice. (Until such time as we make available a richer selection of the original phonograph cylinders on records—such Budapest plans, in collaboration with UNESCO, already exist—these most mature Bartók notations can only be read with real effectiveness by an expert.)

The publication of *Rumanian Folk Music* was no minor task. As the late Victor Bator (the head of the New York Bartók Archives), who died in the autumn of 1967, wrote in the Foreword to Vol. I, in early Spring 1945, Bartók completed the manuscript of the great work and deposited it in Columbia University's Special Library, but it was far from ready for the printers. For a time it seemed that Constantin Brailoiu, Bartók's Rumanian folklorist friend whom he thought very much of, would be able to finish editing it, but the great Rumanian scholar died. Therefore Bator entrusted Dr. Benjamin Suchoff, an associate of the New York Bartók Archives, the present curator, with the task of editing. He had to do more than arrange the translation of the texts of the songs. Anyone who is the least bit familiar with the Bartók philology problems is aware how many small details remain even after the work of this great man. Did Bartók compare the divergent corrections of the various copies he used in the course of his work? Or take such details as the accurate number of the melodies used in the volumes—Bartók made frequent errors in such matters. In his editing activities Dr. Suchoff followed the only proper method in principle. He left Bartók's completed work untouched, what he could he reproduced as a facsimile of the original—and he published his own no small number of observations, corrections and completions in a separate form, even typographically. There exists no more honest and authentic posthumous publishing method. For let us assume that it would have been possible for Dr. Suchoff to compare the final Bartók notations with all the earlier sources in Hungary (which by the way, was not possible for him) and he discovered divergencies and places he suspected to be erroneous. How could he know that Bartók himself had not listened to the cylinders again and had not deliberately made the changes?

The printing of the three volumes is examplary, and befitting the reputation of the Nijhoff firm.

LÁSZLÓ SOMFAI

THEATRE AND FILM

THEATRE OF AUTHORS

During the last twenty years Hungarian theatres have been under constant pressure to show modern Hungarian plays. Up to a few years ago this pressure was not only moral, but in fact official, and the theatres were obliged willy-nilly to include new Hungarian plays in their annual repertory. This policy—like any other such attitude in the arts—was of course harmful in its effect. The theatres were in fact fully conscious of the importance of putting on Hungarian plays. "Without a national drama there is no national theatre," was a saying first heard almost a hundred and fifty years ago. None the less, once the production of the works of Hungarian writers had assumed the odium of an official duty, something that had to be done year after year if the theatre management did not want to call official wrath down on its head. The process lost spontaneity, natural selection was practically reversed, competition ceased, and the production of a Hungarian play became a chore the carrying out of which might at its best produce a cramped effort, but never enthusiasm. At a time when creative writing was in any event inhibited by narrow aesthetic limitation, theatres found it difficult to lay their hands on the sort of plays they wanted, but whatever the standard of the work, the plan had to be fulfilled—as by any factory.

Bugle-Calls for Hungarian Plays

"Shakespeare must be played well or not at all," said a Hungarian director once to his company. The theatres were finding themselves in a very similar situation. "Good Hungarian plays or none, but Hungarian plays must go on!" And there were very few good plays, on the bad had to go.

In the last few years the pressure—the hysteria it might be called—over Hungarian plays began to subside, and some kind of a balance—still not entirely satisfactory—began to come into being. As they became franker, more honest, the public became interested, hoping to hear something that was apposite, that mattered. And, indeed, even the standards seemed to improve.

Some of those responsible for cultural policy feared that the new economic mechanism introduced in Hungary at the beginning of 1968 might have an unhealthy effect particularly on cultural institutions and on the drama. Box-office returns might become the only criterion and plays would be chosen for commercial rather than cultural reasons. As a result something like a protective tariff was introduced to give Hungarian works the edge on foreign plays, and at the present time special subsidies—that is, sums not included in the budgets of the individual theatres—are paid for the production of

Hungarian plays regarded as especially desirable. The increased independence and authority of Hungarian films has in fact increased the demand for not only more but better Hungarian plays. As it might be expected, those aspects of the new economic mechanism which made foreign plays more expensive increased the number of Hungarian plays which have been put on.

What is Soporific in Opium (or the Drama)?

What will probably decide the fate of Hungarian plays in the next few years is whether, given suitable conditions, it will be possible to express a theme answering the demands of the times in a form adequate to present needs. I know perfectly well that phrases like "a theme that suits the demands of the times," or "a form that is adequate to present needs" sound vacuous like the false doctor's reply in Molière to the question what makes one sleep in opium. "*Vis dormitiva,*" the "soporific force," he replied. The theme that suits the demands of the times seems as empty a tautology. But if we apply them to particular plays it will soon appear that formulae such as these, after all, have a real meaning.

Take Imre Dobozy's "Spring Has Come" *(Eljött a tavasz)*, which was put on at the National Theatre. Imre Dobozy is, at the age of 52, the General Secretary of the *Association of Hungarian Writers* and one of the leading personalities of Hungarian literary life. He is strongly interested in public issues and his mode of expression is often openly journalistic. He has written several novels and films and this is his third play.

Who Is Responsible for the Dead?

"Spring Has Come" is in fact a remembering of the war years. Twenty years after, the survivors from a certain Company get together in a frontier village where memorial tablets are about to be unveiled in honour of two of their comrades who died there as martyrs, following their opposition to the Germans. To their greatest astonishment a comrade, Platoon Commander Bodaki whom they believed dead, in fact had seen dead, turns up. He had been shot at the very last moment, right in front of their eyes, by an enraged German soldier. Now it turns out that the platoon commander had not died, he had only been seriously wounded and maimed for life and the once attractive young man has since lived in seclusion from the world right there. His appearence, like some sort of live accusation, upsets the tranquillity of his comrades who until then had passed the time in pleasant conversation. The soothing bandage of time is torn from their memories, and it becomes obvious that the wounds then received have not healed yet and are still bloody. In the heat of revived excitement, one of the men calls their former company commander, now there at the reunion, a murderer, holding him responsible not only for the fate of the platoon commander but also for the dead, because in a situation which was already hopeless he had refused to surrender to the Soviet army.

This opens the play proper. For, in order to wash himself clear, or rather to settle the problem of responsibility, the company commander asks the comrades present to reconstruct, to act out, the story of that certain last day. In the course of this flash-back it becomes plain that at the time practically everyone in the company wanted to be rid of the Germans. Nevertheless, when the time of decision came, for various reasons, no one was capable of clear, unambiguous action, and in this way, more or less everyone is to blame for what happened. Finally the unexpectedly found platoon commander commits suicide.

Thunder in the Index

The sonorous, in fact rather bombastic title "Spring Has Come" suggests that Dobozy's drama is a return to his own

earlier works and countless similar stage and other literary pieces, in other words that it tells how history caused the end of nazi rule, and how the struggle brought the fresh spring of freedom and triumphant socialism to the Hungarian people. But the resounding title is false: Dobozy's play is closer to our times than its title. Dobozy's former writing on similar subjects approached history simply and almost exclusively from the point of view of social justice: who was right? the fascists or those who overcame them; the rebels of 1956 or those who overcame them; and they documented that the victors were right. In this play Dobozy strives to look at this frequently described situation from a different angle, from that of the people who were active participants in the situation. Here his primary interest is not which was the good and which the bad side and who stood on each, but how it could have happened that men who were basically not bad came to serve evil, or at any rate were unable to rise to a deed which would have proved their good intentions, as judged by the moral principles of the writer.

The secret of Dobozy's success—for the play *is* successful—is that he frankly analyses the thinking of people at the times in question. He reveals prejudices, the chauvinism, racism, ignorance, fears and conditioned attitudes which fought against humanity, true patriotism and the desire for peace for the minds and souls of Hungarian soldiers, both officers and men, towards the end of the lost war. The old literary formula was quite clear: there was the simple soldier whom some representative of the Horthy regime, usually of course, an officer, a member of the ruling classes, compelled to serve the fascists against his own convictions and interests. Now Dobozy discarded this formula. In "Spring Has Come" the members of the Hungarian company are under no constraint —except that of the situation— they themselves have to decide how to act. And—as subsequent analysis reveals in the play—they are instrumental in their own failure.

The Infidelity of Fidelity

Thus, Dobozy's thinking has visibly got closer to a more modern dramatic approach. The portrayal of his characters, the style of his analysis and confrontation of attitudes, are of almost documentary reality, and this gives a certain journalistic tone to his authenticity. This courageous argument carried on in a language of everyday authenticity is, as I have said, just what ensures the success of the play, for the audience often recognizes its own words, or those of its friends spoken at the time, and this was rare until now when describing the closing days of the war. Making use of his own experience, Dobozy brings to live the figures of the era cleverly, in their full historic and everyday concreteness, and this makes it easy for audiences to recognize them. Of course, it should be added that it is just this insistence on the concrete that stops Dobozy's picture from getting still closer to the present, from not merely revealing the thinking of his figures in their own times, but pointing out universal forms of conduct which suggest wider human perspectives and the deeper truths of the times. Miklós Jancsó in his new film *The Confrontation* for instance, works—as he also did in his earlier films—with much more universal structures, and this is what the times demand. In this film Jancsó shows how revolution starts to serve only its own ends, revolution for revolution's sake. Just as Dobozy takes it for granted that the Germans and the nazis are wrong, and spends no time in the play proving this, Jancsó also takes the need for revolution for granted and does not discuss it. On the other hand, he does not look with indifference on the attitudes assumed by individuals in their relation to the revolution in the course of carrying it out. And for this, for the sake of generalization, he, like Dürrenmatt and so many others, does not insist on historical concreteness and naturalistic authenticity. This method of depiction—although of course it can get much closer to the core of things—still has not

found a real home in Hungary, only a few writers use it, and usually it provokes a discussion. Dobozy's method is traditional, everyone understands it, and much wider audiences can enjoy it.

The Artificial Corn on Your Toes

A few more words on the problem of form. If only in passing, Platoon Commander Bodaki's suicide should be mentioned as both critics and audiences unanimously object to this ending of the play. If Dobozy regarded this as necessary (even following criticism, he insisted that he did) he should have justified this suicide better, prepared the ground for it, made it more credible. But what the writer clearly felt was that this was not the theme of his play, and that it would be superfluous to burden it with unnecessary explanations. According to such reasoning it would have been better to omit the entire suicide. Frigyes Karinthy, the famous Hungarian humorist of the early part of the century, once wrote a piece about pseudo-inventions including an artificial corn on the toe, which though not real hurts just as much as the genuine article. Since then the artificial corn has become a catchword in Hungary. Platoon Commander Bodaki's suicide is a typical example.

The action takes place in a series of flashbacks. The members of the party reminisce over the past, and play the episode that is recalled. In a TV interview the writer told that in his first version after the introductory discussion the surviving members of the company changed back into the participants of the event they argued about and then again later into present-day people. This somewhat Brechtian solution was also favoured by the theatre. It was a good idea, because in this form the story is much more interesting for both actors and the public. The production is a distinct success except for the sets. They are intended to be abstract, but all they manage to show is lack of imagination. They wish to be simple, but they are only bleak. Tamás Major, the director, however, got good teamwork from the actors, each of whom performs his own part well.

Who Deserves a Testimonial?

István Eörsi's "Barrels" *(Hordók)* also looks back to the concluding days of the war. I wrote about István Eörsi's first play "Tombstone and Cocoa" in *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, No. 31. Eörsi's career has in many ways been practically the opposite of Dobozy's. First of all he belongs to a younger generation. Dobozy started under the old regime, and became a Communist only after the war. Eörsi was born in 1931, and started as a poet after the war, a Communist right from the start. He studied under György Lukács, and became his collaborator and translator. When he was only twenty, his poetry was already awarded important prizes. In the critical year of 1956 he took an active part on the side of the rebels, and at a time when Dobozy celebrated the suppression of the revolt in his work (1957), Eörsi was being sentenced to a prison term. He was amnestied and now he is again active in literary life. He has preserved his militant, in fact his fighting spirit.* His literary works always reflect a kind of non-conformism, and week after week he attacks whatever he considers wrong or corrupt writing in *Élet és Irodalom*, a literary weekly. It is certainly not surprising then if Eörsi, who did not see active service, views the closing days of the war from an angle that considerably differs from Dobozy's.

The play was put on by the Vígszínház ensemble at its Little Theatre, the Pesti Színház. The time and place are Budapest 1944. Gordon, a well-known critic and art historian, has to go into hiding because of his Jewish parentage. A friend and admirer, a teacher named Barla, shelters him in his

* See an essay by Eörsi on p. 142 of this issue.

flat, more precisely not in his flat but in the section of the cellar which belongs to his flat, where Gordon has to get used to living in a barrel. They care for him, they take him his food in such secrecy that Mr. and Mrs. Barla don't even tell their own scatter-brained teen-age daughter. Only Gordon's former wife is in the know. She still adores her divorced husband and regularly visits him in his barrel. Outside and above the atmosphere of fear becomes more and more oppressive. Mrs. Barla gets more and more worried, her fears have a real basis but they are inflated by her lack of courage. She is beginning to make her husband nervous too. Their daughter finally finds out what's going on. She, however, is made angry by her parents' cowardice, she tells Gordon everything suggesting that he should trust her alone, she will take care of him. This prompts Gordon to give up his hiding place. His ex-wife then takes him home with her, but Gordon discovers that all she has to offer is another barrel, perhaps it is a little larger, that's all, and he runs away. When the Arrowcross men (Hungarian fascists) come for him, they can only drag away his former wife instead. Gordon goes out into the streets, but he feels that there is no way out from the barrel, because when one thinks one is free, one only finds oneself in another barrel—at best a larger one. He makes up his mind not to hide any longer, but to meet his fate. In the streets he begins to speak loudly about the fact that he is Jewish, he provokes an armed Arrowcross man, and so on. But curiously he always gets away. Although many people die because of him, he remains unharmed. After the Liberation, his friend Barla shamefacedly begs him to give him a testimonial that he had harboured him during those difficult days. Gordon who by then knows what to think about the conduct of both of them, in fact of everyone else's too, readily gives him the testimonial he asked for. "It is if I were clearing myself," he adds in conclusion.

Above a Wobbly Barrel

The difference between Dobozy's and Eörsi's intentions are quite obvious. Dobozy deals with guilty men, and he wants us to understand them, to help them get rid of the fixed prejudices which froze up their good intentions at the time. Eörsi describes good men, men who were not only opposed to fascism, but acted according to their feelings. Then he shows the selfishness, the cowardice and stupidity behind all their goodness.

It is, of course, to the point that Eörsi's play was not as successful as Dobozy's. And this was not only because Eörsi certainly does not fawn on his audience. His way of thinking is philosophical, almost every one of his sentences suggests this. Hence his abstract notions, his irony, and his preference for the grotesquely absurd. This kind of artistic thinking is less easy and less popular. Moreover, the chain of thought in "Barrels" is somewhat confused. When I told the story, I tried to pare it down to its essentials, but even so the plot is not completely straightforward. The play itself takes several philosophical and structural detours. Although the theatre helped the author a great deal to make his play more effective, in the meantime the consistency of its thoughts continued to fall apart. I had a chance to read the original version of the play in which Barla's young daughter Anna was one of the criticized "good people." After the Liberation she grows up to become one of the impatient overzealous revolutionaries. The final stage version leaves nothing of this Anna, of this aspect of Anna. The main fault lies in a lack of economy. Every episode of his play is so rich in ideas that Eörsi constantly loses the main thread. The production was as it should have been, but in this case the exaggerated ingenuity of the sets spoilt the enjoyment of the performance. The stage was mounted over a vast barrel, indicating that the teetering world is wobbling over a barrel, and only the cellar scenes took place below. Apart from the fact that this is not

the real meaning of the play, this was not very successful even to look at. The public was forced to look at the stage from below and the greater distance from the play alienated them even more from the plot which was not very easy to follow anyway.

The Theatre and the Screen

This season's (November 1968 to March 1969) repertory taking Budapest theatres as a whole, included twelve first performances and four revivals of Hungarian plays. Of the twelve first performances eight were entirely new plays, and four were older ones, which were now put on for the first time. (Rediscovery of old plays has become fashionable in Budapest.) Moreover, the provincial theatres also show Hungarian plays. Eleven provincial towns have their own independent theatres with permanent companies, most of them have a little theatre also, and almost every one of them occasionally gives first performances, often of plays by well-known writers. In the previous season 24 first performances took place in the provinces as compared with 21 in Budapest. And, let me also say, that this has not at all been to the detriment of the theatres. As a result of the rapid spread of TV, cinemas have lost a great deal of audience support, but at the same time the appeal of theatres has increased. It seems that it is reasonable to suppose that once people are tired of gazing at the TV screen in the darkness of their flats and go out, they do not feel like looking at another screen in another dark hall, but prefer the brighter lights and more alive atmosphere of the legitimate theatre. And as I said, this is not only the case in the capital. This year, for instance, the Miskolc Theatre attracted attention by their performance of József Darvas's play "Not on the Map" *(A térképen nem található)*.

József Darvas is the President of the Association of Hungarian Writers. He was a schoolmaster, the child of poor peasant parents, a member of the East Hungarian peasant movements, a populist "village explorer," a sociological writer and politician. He was on the left wing of the Peasant Party. He also wrote novels, short stories and a play before the war. After the Liberation, public and political life took up almost all his time, and up to 1956 he was a cabinet minister on several occasions. Since then he has gone back to writing.

To Expose or to Cover Up?

"Not on the Map" is Darvas's fifth play. It is a stage report on a news report. The editor-in-chief of a literary periodical, an older writer of high reputation—in the play he is always called "The Old Man"—published a report on a village named Ormos by one of his young associates. The report brought to light astonishing evidence of backwardness in the village, and therefore it started a wave of protests not only in the village concerned, but in the whole country. The statements of the reporter were declared to be nothing but a collection of lies, and the country newspaper carried a counter-report which informed the public about the "real" situation, the sound socialist development of the village. The head of the County Council —as it happens an old friend of "The Old Man"—asks the editor-in-chief why he published the "harmful" article by the young writer. The editor looks on the writer, who was born at Ormos, as a decent young fellow, so he makes up his mind to check the report himself, on the spot, in the village of Ormos, together with the young writer and the head of the County Council. There, however, in order to protect their "honour," the village leaders and the peasants who as a matter of fact live a backward life have terrorized the informants of the young writer, and by the time the editor-in-chief and his party arrive at the scene those intimidated either deny or retract the information they had given earlier. The "Old Man," however, is not

easily taken in, and soon he discovers that as a matter of fact everything that the young writer said was completely true, and in some cases reality is even worse.

At this point the head of the County Council turns against his former friend the editor-in-chief, and attacks him and the young writer even more sharply. He says that writing and publishing such a report is a betrayal even if what it says is true. First of all it was wrong to write only about the bad things, without mentioning the useful measures the leaders had taken in the interest of the village. And secondly, and this is actually the crux of the matter, the real point of the conflict, experiences of this kind should not be published because they are not typical of socialism, they only compromise the socialist system and benefit the enemy. The editor-in-chief rejects the accusation and the entire argument. Perhaps the positive aspects should have been included in the report, but the core of the article, the shameful standards of the village, far below anything that can be experienced in the average community of its kind, is true, and anyone who denies this does a disservice to socialism, while the person who focusses attention to it and insists on a quick remedy is doing the right thing. And, of course, steps are taken to improve things at Ormos.

Not on the Map?

The significance of the play is not in the first place dramatic, and not even literary. As the story makes this evident, the play has main characters and episodes, but the story is not about them. No turn of the plot decides the fate of any of these characters. The young writer, who according to the play has risked the most, is told right at the beginning that whatever the outcome, he won't be hurt, not even if the County starts a libel case as it threatens to. In Hungary today nobody is called to account before the law for literary activity, in this respect things have completely changed from what they were fifteen years ago. The respected old writer and the county functionary have even less to fear and so, in the dramatic sense there is nothing at stake in the play—really not even the literary authority and credibility of anyone. For this reason the playwright has no chance and perhaps makes no special effort to characterize his figures in any depth. Since the author wishes to illustrate in how many different ways this problem can be ill-treated (in the manner of a cosmopolitan writer, in the manner of a provincial writer) —he puts in these types as spokesmen. Condensation is at any rate not Darvas's strong point, and so these spokesmen accompany the entire play and give a running commentary throughout, often repeating themselves. In this way, from the literary point of view, the play loses a great deal. Darvas is in his element when the villagers give vent to their suppressed bitterness and erupt in complaints and mutual accusation. These episodes allow him to write two fine dramatic scenes. The play in other words reflects a kind of literary attitude which looks like being important in the future. Foreigners who know Hungarian conditions from reports, both objective and less objective, probably think that a struggle is beginning for the right to expose mistakes, and to end attempts to whitewash and gloss over what is bad. As a matter of fact this is not the core of the matter. In truth this fight was decided several years ago not only in literature, even in public life, even if in practice there are still some second thoughts and reservations in the exposure of faults and errors. But Darvas's play is not about this. The plot of the play, the entire report and all the fuss about it are almost the exact truth. The incriminated article was written by a young writer called Antal Végh, about a village in Northeast Hungary. In the wake of the scandal, which the play portrays quite accurately, József Darvas as President of the Association of Writers and former local member of parliament, himself as "The Old Man" accompanied Antal Végh, to investi-

gate the truth, together with the local authorities. And there everything took place more or less as in the play. At that time Darvas wrote a report on this in *Kortárs*, a Hungarian literary magazine.

Too Enduring a Consolidation?

What stimulated Darvas was not the problem of whether to write or not to write about the incident. The play shows clearly that this is no longer the major issue, according to the play no consequences are attached to writing about anything. In fact at the time when the fight was still going on, it led to good writing—and good films—for instance, *Twenty Hours*. Darvas, however, was worried in this affair about something else, something that is giving ever more cause for concern to Hungarian intellectuals, in the first place to those interested in economics, but also to men of letters. Darvas's "Old Man" says at the end of the play "this atmosphere of consolidation—good as a whole—is it not too tranquil right now? Doesn't it preserve too much of the *status quo?* Doesn't it stabilize the existing inequalities between regions, districts, views and ideologies?. . ."

"Our policy does not change," this is a sentence often heard from our political leaders, and the "Old Man's" antagonist in the play is proud of this. "The Old Man"—Darvas himself—is worried about this. And Darvas does not stand alone. Recently in an impassioned article a literary critic raised the question whether this lukewarm consolidation was not to blame for a certain loss of momentum by certain talented prose writers.

First economists sounded the alarm. They fought successfully for the changes summarized under the heading of the new economic system of management, and hardly have the fruits of this ripened, and they are already straining against the too rigid framework of economic foreign relations: they have started a fight for the convertable forint and for placing the Council of Mutual Economic Aid on a new basis. But, of course, the need for similar changes is beginning to activate people who work in other areas of public and intellectual life, too. The consolidation which followed so fast after 1956, the atmosphere of calm and satisfaction, is beginning to become a barrier in the way of progress. It seems to be impossible to stay in the same place for so long. Darvas is afraid that the long period of consolidation has stopped up the flow of the river and so it is beginning to grow stagnant. And unless its flow is started again, it may overflow its bed somewhere. This is the essence of the problem. The soundly developing villages are developing more and more soundly, the backward ones are becoming more and more backward. Something should be changed about this!—this is the message of Darvas's play.

JÓZSEF CZÍMER

JANCSÓ'S CONFRONTATION

JANCSÓ IN COLOUR

Miklós Jancsó's latest film, *The Confrontation*, appears as astonishingly original even to those who thought they were familiar with Jancsó's symbolism and the allegorical meaning of his language. An exuberance of colours has taken the place of coldly contrasting black and white, a geometrically shaped order has given way to an incessant turmoil, and instead of Jancsó's usual taciturnity his latest film is bursting with song.

When I first heard that Jancsó was about to make a film in colour featuring players

incessantly talking and singing I could hardly imagine how all this would fit in with the subject chosen and his hard, spare style. A musical about revolution?—rather a weird match, that. Having overcome their greater or lesser resisitance most spectators have accepted the role of having to participate in a strange, magical ballet when witnessing a film by Jancsó. As if the infinite stretch of the *puszta*, the deserted farmhouses, woods and the riverbanks did not mean real space but the oppressive content of nightmares where man is at odds with his own fate.

In *The Confrontation* all this is transformed. The scene is more realistic, and closer to everyday life, the facts of the fable are taken directly from actual events, after all the film centres on the youth of those now in their forties and all the post-war turmoil, and yet the transformation touched not so much the essentials, as formal, stylistic elements. What happens is still ambiguous, the turn of events embodies general truths, an historical period as a whole is articulated.

It is 1947. A group of enthusiastic singing and dancing youngsters, * flood down a winding highway towards a small town. They are joking and playing, getting ready for a "landtaking." They are preparing an attack on a religious college, they want to occupy it end change it in their own image. They spontaneously arrange a sort of theological dispute, but their challenge to the young men in the monastery leads nowhere, no one accepts it. They are met by suspicion. So they resort to violence, they want to force those in the monastery to follow not their conservative teachers, but their own fancy and the new truths of the revolution. But may one use force to impose the good life, even if it is preached in good faith? The youngsters admit defeat and the unity of the group dissolves. Several attitudes emerge: extremists, "leftists," anarchists, more sober ones, and those ready to compromise. Finally the official leadership intervenes, they expel the irresponsible student leaders from the college and they disband the organization of the young, putting an end not only to the extravagances of the movement but also to the youngsters' dream of changing the whole world.

I am not speaking metaphorically when I say "changing the whole world." The phrase is quoted from a socialist youth movement song popular at the time: "By tomorrow we shall change the whole world" and it recalls much of the first real, spontaneous impetus of this revolutionary movement. This post-war generation wanted to change everything, to create movement and something new, they wanted to dismantle the old and raise something else in its place. That is why the verse from which the Hungarian title is taken proclaims: "Our banner is blown by shiny winds. And what it says is: freedom."—This is what all those sang at the time who were willing to fight for the new order—whether trying to storm a religious college or merely trying to get a university or school place. The story is based on fact. Not one but many similar "landtakings" happened in those times.

"Whoever wants to be a piper must be ready to go through hell"—arm in arm the youths recite Attila József's lines and they race on irresistibly, like the French students in the spring of 1968. This is only the beginning, we are going to carry on with the fight... *Why* were they fighting? or rather, what against? who against? What was typical of the recklessness of the first attempts was precisely the fact that their faith was fed principally by its heat, and only to a lesser extent by well-founded truths. This is what explains their fervour and their lack of restraint. All the heroes of this film seem to know is that they have to rush, and to fight with enthusiasm, admitting no contradiction, against everything that is obsolete and old,

* Members of NÉKOSZ (National Federation of People's Colleges), an organization which included all those who lived in 160 student hostels throughout Hungary, thanks to which young workers and peasants were able to attend university in the new order that followed the war and liberation.

and that hobbles progress. And what a bitter lesson it is when they are all of a sudden made to realize that it is not they alone who make history. It is not only that they cannot clearly determine when, where and whom they must strike, it becomes apparent that they themselves hold many different opinions on the same issue, but what is even more painful, is that they turn out to be pawns in a much bigger game, themselves at the mercy of much more powerful forces. As long as the fight still concerns the getting of power the camp is united—they are guided by a common faith and common feelings. Signs of a split emerge later when the use to be made of that power is the issue, when student irresponsibility is replaced by political violence, and freedom, brought as a gift, changes to compulsion "the known infantile disorders of the left."

The fluctuations in the movement of the young show the story of the birth of revolutionary power and then the way it was distorted and went off the rails. These changes and conflicts betray that they happen according to certain laws. What happens though is not a mere description of certain episodes in the student life of the forties, listening to the opposed views we can recognize much that is happening today. The double inspiration enriches the texture of the film, one can feel that world-wide student unrest, and the lessons of the "red and black" flags of the Paris May have left a marked imprint on the shaping of the theme.

The Confrontation, then, is not an historical film, rather like the historical plays of Bertolt Brecht, to cite an example which is only apparently remote—it shows how a man today thinks about past events and the conclusions that can be drawn from them. The central idea is as simple as only essential truths can be, what Jancsó is talking about is the real nature of revolution and the laws according to which it works. The makers of the film pose a number of questions and they try to find the answers in the story. At what stage do honest intentions and the results which follow from action part company? To what extent is demolition justified, and when does the damage become too great, destroying not only institutions but also minds, and shackling freedom? What is fascinating about the young heroes of *The Confrontation* is that they are filled with rebellious passion and unconditionally and naively committed to their cause. "We tried to recall some of the wonderful experiences of our youth which was characterized by a tremendous impetus and honest convictions, when we felt that singing 'By tomorrow we shall change the whole world' we were dealing with tangible reality," Jancsó said, who like the heroes of his films had in his youth himself been a member of NÉKOSZ. "But though this age was our own youth we do not treat it with longing, let alone with scepticism. When one is past forty one is apt to look on one's own youth—and on today's youth much too coolly, and with too much scepticism. What we have tried to do is to show it as it was."

But how can one preserve the rhythm of an age without idealizing it, or *vice versa* how can one keep the appropriate distance without denying that which was beautiful and done in good faith? The peculiar style of the film, the use of song and of dancing tried to deal with the impossible, or rather what had seemed impossible. If the events themselves had many layers, both "red" and "black", great ideas and destructive anarchy, then why should not the idiom of the film be rough and poetical, simplified like a diagram and complex in style, at the same time? The music itself has a double meaning. At first it expresses the impetus of the young, and their exploding energy. The warmth of community singing moves the spectator too, youth appears as enthusiastic and beautiful. Then the key shifts almost imperceptibly. The rhythm becomes firmer. We begin to feel a threat, and disturbing effects in the movement, and a rigid formalism in the singing, joy and happiness gradually die out,

and the whole unrestrained dance becomes more and more serious, sober analysis gains the upper hand over emotional involvement, and our attention turns wide-awake and suspicious. What happens in front of our eyes is the pathography of a process ending with the annihilation of an illusion.

To that extent *The Confrontation* is like earlier Jancsó films, and like them it has become the subject of a lively press controversy. *The Confrontation* too destroys false legends and faces up to bitter truths. Does it mean that Jancsó is disillusioned? I do not think so. He speaks the truth, that is all. For no matter how attractive the slogan may sound—to quote another one of the recent anonymous classic Paris graffiti. "I take my desires for reality because I believe in the reality of my desires"—reality has never given in to temptations of this kind.

YVETTE BÍRÓ

THE CRITICS' CONFRONTATION

The reception of works of art provides a useful criterion for judging the culture and intellectual level of a society. Posterity, estimating the worth of a work according to aesthetic principles, may also find it interesting to uncover the circumstances under which a film was made and shown. A sociological analysis of a work's reception tells a lot not only about the work, but also about the environment from which it sprang. The ridicule that greeted Bartók and the hostility shown Ady were typical of Budapest society just before the first World War. The films Miklós Jancsó has directed since *Oldás és kötés* (Cantata) can be compared to Ady's and Bartók's work not only because of their quality and their commitment, but because of the way they raise issues, and their provocative and disquietening idiom. His last four films have provided an acid test for both critics upholding traditional attitudes and those who count themselves among the avant garde. More serious interpretations of the films led to discussions which at their extremes dealt with questions involving basic attitudes to life.

The discussion provoked by *Confrontation* which occupied quite some space in the columns of Hungarian papers last winter, differed to a certain extent from earlier discussions of films. Jancsó's earlier films had also dealt with moral aspects of history, they had explored possible ways of behaviour in the rarified atmosphere of violence and power. Each had taken as its field a borderland situation at a time when one historic era changed into another. *The Round-Up* dealt with the vacuum that followed the defeat of the 1849 Hungarian war of independence, *The Red and the White* with the civil was that followed the 1917 Russian revolution, and *Silence and Cry* with the times of the White Terror that drowned the Hungarian 1919 Council Republic in blood. He created models which moved in fictional surroundings built from the elements that make up reality. His films should not be considered historical films. The atmosphere of a situation directed in an authentic way indicates the analogous situation in history, that is all. All the same these three films cut slices out of history that were fifty or a hundred years old. A closed unit of time taken from a no longer living environment seemed more suitable for the making of a model than our own times. *Confrontation* got closest to current history. The action of the film is set at the beginning of today's society. Twenty years ago the establishment of communist power on a firm basis brought new aspects to bear on the democratic opposition to power and the clash of views held about the way power ought to be directed and controlled. This historical situation created vibrations which remained submerged, and can still be felt today. The differences of opinion between the various ideological camps were brought to the surface by the discussion which centred on the film. The unusually sharp tone of the discussion also derived from the fact that the

older communist theoreticians who took part in the struggle for power by the party, do not see the issues connected with power in the same way as the younger generation of Marxist writers and scholars who take this power for granted.

Should one recognize the rebellious youngsters in the film as an historically accurate portrait of the 1946–47–48 Hungarian NÉKOSZ movement (students who lived in one of the People's Colleges) or do they show the basic structure of every instinctive anarchic revolution, independent of any particular time and place? An added peculiarity of the situation is that Gyula Hernádi who wrote the script, Miklós Jancsó who directed the film, as well as some of those who criticized it, had been members of the NÉKOSZ movement.

Prior to the first performance of *Confrontation* Jancsó said in an interview: "The film reflects a period, what is usually called the NÉKOSZ period. But *Confrontation* has nothing concrete to say about this movement. It does not pretend to show concrete historical truth. After all the actors wear the clothes of today, jeans and mini-skirts." Inspite of this declaration of intent, most of those who criticized the film demanded a proper historical account of the NÉKOSZ movement, as seen with present day eyes. The discussion in the press was started off by the notices in the daily papers. Instead of customary film criticism or a telling of the story, they served their readers an ideological specimen and a philosophical dissection. *Népszabadság* agreed to publish contributions to the discussion, but other Budapest and provincial papers also gave space to the subject. In addition to theoretical articles published in specialist magazines—*Filmvilág* and *Filmkultúra*—polemical articles also appeared in *Valóság*, a journal devoted to the social sciences.

"If those who made the film wanted to express something altogether different and not what NÉKOSZ was, then they should have chosen an altogether different student movement," Gyula Fekete, a novelist, who had also been a member of the movement wrote in *Népszabadság*. A number of variations of this argument were used by those who condemned the film as an artistic failure. Such as the sentence that neatly summed up the opinion of one of the contributors to *Népszava:* "The NÉKOSZ action in *Confrontation* cannot be accepted as true from an historic point of view, and therefore cannot be authentic art either."

Gyula Fekete was the most heated of all those who participated in the discussion. He attacked with passionate pathos the attitude to history of the film, which he considered an expression of a desire to disillusion: "I am not the only one who feels that the film did dirt to his first, true and greatest love: his pure and honest faith in the possibility of freedom"—he wrote in *Népszabadság*. According to Fekete, Jancsó did not approach his subject from the point of view of Hungarian progressive opinion, but basing himself on superficial and external similarities, he forced a moving and exciting period in Hungarian history onto the current west European anarchist movements. Those who approached the film attempting an aesthetic analyses, in the first place philosophers and sociologists who are György Lukács's former pupils, agreed that *Confrontation* turned around the process of the birth of revolution, and at the same time its alienation. They observed the philosophical category of alienation in the film. They discerned a meeting of the artist's empathy and abstract scholarship in the film. They consider the relationship of revolution and alienation the key question in East European historiography. This common attitude was expressed by Ferenc Fehér, a literary historian, in an article in *Népszabadság:* "The film is also a NÉKOSZ film, but instead of showing us one of the one hundred and sixty People's Colleges, Jancsó shows us a hundred and sixty first. And this is not only the permanent technique of every true non-naturalist art, but also, in a special sense, the widening and renewing, but permanent structure of every Jancsó film." László

Gyurkó, an essayist and dramatist, argued in a similar way in support of the film in *Valóság:* "Noone should expect Jancsó to give an historically accurate picture of the NÉKOSZ movement. We should not require him to do that. That is the task of historians. Jancsó is not true to the period, but to the truth, which as we know is not the heap of added facts, but their essence."

Ervin Gyertyán, the film-critic stated the position wittily in his article in *Filmvilág:* "It must be established with emphasis: *Confrontation* is not about NÉKOSZ, and though its heroes happen to be NÉKOSZ members, it would be as mistaken and absurd to demand an authentic evaluation of this movement from them, as to demand that Hamlet provide an historical criticism of the institution of monarchy in his time, though Hamlet was in fact a prince." Mihály Sükösd, a writer, provided a sociologico-political analysis in depth in the columns of *Valóság*. He wrote that there are three historical layers, which are superimposed on each other, which should be analysed together. "The first is the original pattern, the basic contours: the story of the events connected with NÉKOSZ in the late '40s. The second is to be found in the symbolic bends and intensities of the subject, in some generalized phenomena shown in the film, which later distorted the barely born Hungarian—and around it the Eastern European—revolution. And finally, the third, an even more stylized generalization, that extra in experience and mood with which the virtues and the seamy side of the newest international student movement widened the historical knowledge of the writer and director."

The second main point around which the discussion turned was Jancsó's attitude to revolution. The film condenses the birth of the revolution, and the two-fold danger it soon faces, into a single process. That is the way it falls apart bureaucratically and the way it ossifies in dogma. Péter Rényi, the critic, writing in *Népszabadság* considers that the two groups which face each other in the film do not authentically represent the two sides of the barricades in a real revolution. "It is not a clear situation" he writes, and therefore it is not suitable documentation of ideological distortions. Furthermore Rényi thought it necessary to ask whether what the film was about were really left-wing attitudes. "A closer look at these youngsters shows them first romping wildly on their own. Then watch them as they face the opposition, the way they creep into the boarders' lines in the monastery's yard, how they scream at them from behind. Observe that psychological cruelty which we witness right from the first moment. Don't they in a most eery way remind one of the gendarmes in *The Round-Up* who are carrying out their search amongst the outlaws in the prison? The same rigid organization and drilled brutality. There they kill, here they only humiliate, but the inner meaning, the inhumanity, is just about the same."

Ferenc Fehér, writing in *Filmkultúra* considers that it is precisely the complex and only apparently contradictory structure of the film, which makes it suitable to show the birth of alienation in the revolution. "*Confrontation* is a substantial and novel contribution by an artist to the discussion about alienation, since it objectively analyses the process itself in all the three layers of its structure, in the police apparatus, in the framework of the directing political apparatus, and in the world of the democratic small communities."

The sociologist, Iván Vitányi writing in *Valóság* attempted another possible explanation. "The film is not about the communist movement," he emphasized, "but about the trends in the growth of spontaneous movements which appear in every period of genuine revolutionary upheaval." He sees the film's topicality in the fact that Jancsó indicates the two most important directions: "on the one hand the basic line of democratic socialism, on the other hand the extremist movement of Maoism and Cohn-Benditism."

In order to support their arguments,

those who participated in the discussion affirmed the hierarchical relationship and pecking order of the roles. Every contribution was determined by the structure of roles affirmed by its author. (Independently of the discussion it can be said that Jancsó managed, in a manner which is without parallel in the history of the film, to bring the sociological category of the role close to that of the dramatic role.)

The *Confrontation* discussion was largely a clash of ideological views. So far there has been no strictly speaking artistic evaluation of the film, placing it in Jancsó's work as such. Arguments that went beyond aesthetics took a work of art and included it in a narrower or wider system of sociological, philosophical and ideological points of view. But Jancsó's artistic achievement and his possible place in contemporary film-art was left an open question, at the same time it was thanks to this discussion that more people saw *Confrontation* than any other Jancsó film.

György Hámos, a film critic argued in *Magyar Hírlap:* "The unusually passionate discussion provoked by *Confrontation* reveals a great deal about the state of our artistic life, our film-art and our criticism. A great deal more than about the film itself."

JÁNOS KENEDI

COMPARATIVE DRAMA. A special fall issue of Comparative Drama Review will appear on the Theatre of the Absurd: Slavic and Western, with Professor E. J. Czerwinski, of the department of Slavic languages and literature at the University of Kansas, as guest editor. The special number will serve as the basis for a panel discussion of a meeting at Kansas University. "*Theatre of the Absurd: Slavic and Western*" will include essays and commentary by Ruby Cohn, Martin Esslin, Zbigniew Folejewski, Jovan Hristic, Simon Karlinsky, R. J. Kaufmann, Jan Kott, Jerzy Krzyzanowski, Milan Lasica, Aleksandar Popovic, Leonard Pronko, Adam Tarn, Andrzej Wirth, George Woodyard, E. J. Czerwinski, and others.

IDYLL

Short Story

by

TAMÁS BÁRÁNY

"Did you hear it?" the woman whispered and searched for her husband's arm in the darkness. "She is here again!" She squeezed his hand. "Just listen!"

They listened with bated breath, the deaf silence of the room throbs again and again in their ear-drums. Now and then a car rushed past under the window, at such times the silence shattered. Then again it became a heavy, bulky mass. When a bus passed even the furniture shook, the many-pieces of china at the bottom of the old sideboard clattered. And then once more a stubborn soundlessness.

The man leant over towards the woman.

"I don't hear a thing."

"She is here though! Just listen!"

He sat up.

"It's no use."

"Ah!" the woman hissed impatiently. "You are totally deaf already! I can clearly make out her voice! Pst!

The man cupped his hand on his ear but it was no use, he didn't hear a thing even so. The woman burst out into a contented laugh.

"Of course, it was dark... The young fellow thought we weren't at home! Sometimes there's some sense in going to bed early!" Suddenly she squeezed his wrist hard. "Now! Didn't you hear it even now?"

The man shrugged his shoulders uncertainly. As if he had really heard the girl's voice this time. But he wouldn't dare swear to it.

Then suddenly there was the bubbling laughter of a woman. It was one single trill or rather only the half of it, one could practically see how it broke off: with a hand pressed to the mouth with alarm.

"Well!" snorted the woman, "now we have got him! She stuck out her feet from under the blanket and looked for her slippers."

"Come on, old boy! We'll get dressed."

"Right now?" he asked alarmed.

"Well, yes, what's more in the dark." Cautiously they clambered down from the bed and started to dress in silence. The man —though he was the clumsier—got on better, slipping out of his nighshirt he pulled on his shirt and his shorts with an accustomed movement—they were on the chair at his elbow. He also pulled on his socks without looking; he stepped into his shoes, tied the bootlaces—during six long decades this sort of movement becomes perfect.

The woman hadn't such an easy job. She had a lot of trouble with her suspenderbelt and she couldn't manage to fasten her brassiere at the back. She felt her way to the man and stood in front of him.

"Fasten it, Ernő," and she turned her back to him.

At this stage he became clumsy. He wasn't used to this sort of hook, they were wearing them with buttons in his time. To fasten this you really needed seeing eyes! He dawdled and pottered about and did not get

anywhere fast. Finally he leant over to the woman's ear.

"Lift your breasts" he whispered panting. "Perhaps it will work then."

The two heavy cups went up and then he succeeded in fitting the small hook into its eye. The man heaved a deep sigh and got a whiff of the woman's body. He turned his head away and took a step backwards.

"You are ready?" the woman asked.

"Yes, ready."

"Then look for my shoes."

"Where are they?"

"Somewhere here in the room."

A search, the low noise of groping about, now and then a thump as he knocked against a chair.

In the meantime the woman too put on her clothes and even the shoes turned up.

"Shall we go?"

"Yes, let's go."

They held back their breath and the woman softly pressed the door-handle.

They sneaked along the pitch-dark corridor carefully so as not to make any noise. The woman stopped in front of the door of the back-room facing the courtyard.

The man stopped too. The floor creaked.

"Look out!" the woman whispered and she leant closer to the door. "Ah! There's no light at the bottom... Well, why isn't there though?!" She leant still closer, all her organs of sense now became concentrated in her ear.

Inside pieces of furniture made a creaking sound.

"You sweetie!" she heard, her heart pounding in her throat. "My darling!"

"I worship you!"

Phooey! the disgusting ones! Phooey!— she reached out for her husband and pulled him closer too. "Just listen! The shameless."

But now one could no longer hear anything from inside, only the slight noise of subdued whispering reached their ear-drums and jarred their nerves. He again pressed his hand to his ear so as to make it a giant horn and leant cautiously as far as the door. The cursed ones are whimpering inside. There should be a law against that! This in the very heart of a civilized great city! What a world this is!

Now a great silence reigned within and after a while a lamp was lit.

"Let's go!" the woman whispered and made for the kitchen. She also dragged the man along with her. "We have heard enough!"

They sneaked out on tiptoe into the kitchen. He stopped at the door of the hall, opened it carefully, then slammed it with a determined movement as if they had just arrived home.

She switched on the light in the kitchen, then she plugged in the iron. As if she were just ironing... As if just accidentally they had something to do right here in the kitchen.

They left the door open: now let's see the boy sneak out with his sweetheart! now let's see them slip out stealthily as they used to at other times too! The shameless ones! Now let's see them scamper away if they can!

Haha, we've got brains! One does not let others make a fool of oneself even if one is old!

The woman was ironing, ironing industriously but for a long time nothing happened. She already folded up the fifth shirt when of a sudden fatigue overcame her. Why, of course, that's why she had gone to bed earlier today she had felt worn out already in the afternoon. She was feeling the weather or she overworked again. The old man had three more shirts, she will iron them but then she'll finish. The bedding and her own things, she will iron tomorrow...

She stepped to the door and kept eavesdropping. Well, how long will she have to wait? Did the young fellow realize something was up? She glanced at her watch, it's a quarter to nine. Good God, has she been ironing for an hour already?

She motioned impatiently.

"Do something, Ernő! Do you want to watch them till midnight?"

The man yawned.

"That would put the lid on it!"

"Come, come..."

"But what can I do, girl?"

"You're the man. I'd knock on the door and tell him what I think of him!"

The man's face—he had been working at the court for forty years in the administration—brightened all at once.

"Catching them in the act!" he said beaming with delight. "A stronger case!"

"There you are!"

The man moved next to the ironing-board, the prospect of a great adventure rejuvenated him. His recent drowsiness had gone.

"Well, then?" she asked, ready for action.

"You go there and knock on the door."

"And what next?"

"He comes out, you tell him off and tell the woman to go."

"Me?" the man asked.

"You," the woman looked at him. "You're the man, aren't you?"

"Of course," he said and made an irresolute movement. He did not budge.

"Well, get going!" she nodded. "Let's have it over and done with!"

He walked with loud steps to the door of the small room, enjoying that at least he didn't have to be careful any more. Once more he looked at the woman, as if asking for help, then he knocked at the door with sudden resolution.

Silence.

"Just knock again!" the woman said in a loud voice. "Just now the light was on in his room. He is at home!

Another energetic knock. Now a noise is heard from within the room, soft fumbling, shuffling of shoes.

"Who is it?" someone asked from inside in a sleepy voice.

Again they glanced at each other, the woman nodded mockingly. He's trying to be smart! He pretends to be sleepy.

The man took a deep breath.

"Will you please come out, Mr. Csorna!"

"What for? I have gone to bed."

"I believe you there," she hissed with loathing.

"Will you come out, please!"

"But what for?"

The landlord's voice snapped:

"There's somebody in there with you!"

Again there's silence, this time longer than before.

"Well, will you come out please?!"

"There's nobody with me. Will you kindly leave me alone. I am telling you that I have gone to bed already!"

The old man knocked again, resistance has put fire into him.

"Will you open the door? Or I will break it open!"

The lodger was already there at the door, his voice could be heard from quite close.

"I do not advise you to do that! That has consequences."

For a moment the old man wavered. "Violation of the privacy of somebody's home"—the thought flashed through his mind so definitely as if he saw it in the brief of a case underlined in red. This somewhat took the edge off his aggressiveness.

"I am telling you for the last time to come out!" This was already more of an appeal than a command.

This fact was felt on the other side of the door; the key creaked in the lock, then the young man stepped out and quickly closed the door behind him.

"I am here."

The old man again raised his voice, rage was towering in him. This scoundrel came out in a dressing gown—the nerve of him. In pyjamas and a dressing gown—in which they were romping about!

"Will you send away that lady at once!"

The young man thrust his hand in his pocket.

"What lady?"

"Don't let's play hide-and-seek Mr. Csorna! You are having a female visitor in our home!"

The young man smiled and said softly.

"There's nobody with me. But even if there were she would be in my room. This room is my home, Mr. Hajpál, and has been since I rented it from you."

The calm voice made the old man lose his temper.

"But only as a subtenant!" he shouted, his face reddening. So you may have a room to live in, not to indulge in fornication! You cannot commit indecent acts in our house."

The tenant broke into a broad grin.

"May I use the toilet?"

The old man scarcely got enough breath he was so angry.

"Don't let's get profane, please! You have disgraced the sanctity of the home! That's not what we agreed on when you moved in!"

"You bet we didn't!" the woman shouted from the kitchen, her voice made thin by stifled excitement. "At the time you had promised everything, never to bring any woman here!"

"It is since then that I became engaged. My fiancée is not a woman to you but a lady!"

"Well, well!" the woman laughed in a sharp falsetto. "In our time they called such persons by a different name, they did!"

The young man wanted to say something but he restrained himself after all. He wanted to force himself to be calm.

"If I told you that I had such intentions you wouldn't have given me the room!"

"There!" the man pounced on him. "Well, then you admit that that's not the way we had agreed?!"

The lodger looks at him.

"Let's put an end to the argument, please. Ever since I moved in, this room is my home! Is this clear? And there I do whatever I want to. Or rather what isn't against the law!"

The old man hardly got any air, this impertient insolence revolted him to the very bottom of his soul.

"There won't be no idyll here after all, note that please! If you want a rendezvous, there's the hotel for you!"

"The hotel!" the young man waved his hand. "You can't do it there."

"I see, I see," the old man exclaimed with a happy snigger. "Well, then even the state doesn't allow it!" He almost revoled in the delight of his triumph. "Not even the state tolerates swinish behaviour, does it?! That's quite right too!"

The young man looked him up and down.

"At last there's something in which you agree with state policy, isn't that so?"

The old man was shrieking already.

"I'll ask you not to use this tone! I am a member of the tenants' committee!"

"Then you have to know the rights of lodgers and what you are entitled to forbid them!

"This is no legal dispute!" the old man bellowed. "I do not argue! It's me who gives orders in my house! Did you get me? And I will have none of this sort of thing! There's the Gellért Hill for that! The Mauthner as your lot calls it."

Memories of long walks flashed through the young man's mind, those of unhappy, dreamy wanderings, looking for an inch of sheltered spot. But excursionists here, excursionists there... kids playing ball... And in the evening fear and trembling at the thought of hooligans, of policemen's flashlights shining into your face... of the rustling of brush-wood... By the fast tumble from heaven into hell... Is it a wonder then, that one is nervous?

He glanced at the landlord and of a sudden such hate filled him that he felt able to hit him.

"Isn't that going too far, Pa? For five hundred on Gellért Hill? Considering that out of my five hundred you only pay a hundred for the whole flat?!"

The old man stared at him paralysed, with a gaping mouth, he couldn't even speak for indignation. But now the woman too was there by their side with the hot iron. Its cord was winding lonely after it on the floor, she had pulled it out in the great rush.

"Why are you making a fuss, Ernő!?"

she screamed infuriated, beside herself. "Go in and throw that person out!"

The young man's face turned pale.

"Don't you dare go in!"

The old man boiled over with rage.

"But I will go in though!"

"Look out! I won't answer for myself!"

The man reached for the handle, the young man pushed him aside.

"Get away from here!"

"Go in and send her packing!" the woman shrieked.

"I'll smash your head in if you dare go in!"

Blood was seething in the old man's brain, now, he jumped to the door.

"Get out of the way!" the boy howled and struck his face.

The old man suddenly brought his hand to his eye and cried out as if they were killing him:

"Iron him out! He hit me!"

One movement: and the red-hot iron was already on the young man's face. Such a terrible pain shot through him that he almost went out of his mind. He fell wildly upon the woman, wrenched the hot iron from her and now it's he who pressed it to her face. A wailing scream was heard which was afterwards stifled into sobs.

The man dashed to the door and burst it open.

"Help! Murder! Call the police!" his voice chocked into a rattle in his throat: now the terrible flaming wound was burning also on his face.

Then they tore and scratched at each other.

Doors were slammed with a bang, excited shouts resounded outside, of a sudden they forced open the door, neighbours rushed in, and they held the three wretches down.

"It's awful!" the concierge looked at the iron spotted with pieces of skin. "It's awful! A thing like this nowadays!" he took the hot iron from the lodger's hand and put it on its stand. "The police are coming already! Doctor Márk has phoned!"

The married couple sank down beside the table, the lodger was held down in the hall, by two men at that. The old man pressed his palm on his burning face, the woman greased her skin. And she was shaken by sobs.

"God, my lord!" she beckoned towards the hallway. "It's because of him! How often we begged him, but how many times..."

"Why do they need this, the man whinnied with a faltering voice. Can't they restrain themselves."

The lodger's face hurt so much that he could scream. But all the same he had to clench his teeth, hard, to stop the fusion of pity and disgust releasing an explosion of laughter.

For many years now he had studied aesthetics, but he caught himself only understanding right then what tragi-comedy meant.

JÓZSEF FÖLDESI and L. TAMÁS PUSKÁS

HOW CHECKERS LIVES

Crude brown lavatory doors line the further end of the concrete courtyard of the four-storey tenement building in the factory district. A row of flats run along each side. The doors of the one to which we happen to be going are wide open. In the kitchen stands an iron bedstead covered with a grey blanket. We sit down, waiting for someone to come home. A steaming pot is on the range, and against the opposite wall are ranged an old wireless set, a kitchen cupboard with peeling white paint, and next to it a kitchen stool piled high with unwashed dishes. A stale, sour smell pervades the room. A roughly carved bookshelf above the tap holds cheap pre-war novels, with works by the Soviet writers of the fifties, several Jókai's, a volume by Rózsa Ignácz, and *The Leopard* by Lampedusa in a paperback edition. One gets a glimpse into the sitting-room; the window is dim and dirty, the light apparently filtering through a curtain of soot.

The parents arrive first. Kálmán R., a stevedore, and his wife. Their son follows shortly afterwards, accompanied by a few lads from the neighbourhood. While we get the tape-recorder going, they set a bottle on the table. All of us drink. We have hardly downed the first glassful when R. sends his son off to the shop for another bottle of wine.

We hand the mike to a lad of twenty or twenty-two, his eyes velvety in a narrow gipsy-brown face. He draws his chair closer to the recorder, the muscles rippling on his bare arms. His movements are utterly devoid of nervousness.

The Past

"I am Lajos D.," he begins, "but the kids call me Checkers. I might as well start off with experiences as a child some years ago. One day they announced a 'Collect iron and scrap, you can win a peace medal' competition. We stole two boilers, smashed them up and then sold the pieces for scrap. We got something like 900 to 1,000 forints for the lot, to divide up among the four of us. There was always some contribution or other to pay at school, we did that to teach them as a lesson and make them leave us alone. Most of the money we gambled away, pitching pennies and playing cards, whatever we felt like. The one who won treated the others... There were afternoons when we saw as many as four or five films at a go, paying about six forints a seat.

"Of course, they discovered what we had done, and I spent two weeks at the Aszód Reformatory. They took me to a separate little room, and made me learn. I did lessons all the livelong day. We had some grub at noon, in the morning we had to get up with the sun, and in the evening we hit the sack early, so life was horribly monotonous at that place. I was sick and tired of it. Especially the slaps on the face. Finally we decided to beat it through the window. They looked for us for about three weeks, but they never found us. So they never got us back there. It was summer, so we hid out in the Buda hills, living on cherries and wild strawberries. There was a dairy shop fairly close by. The

milk was dropped outside every morning. We just slipped along, took a few bottles, and drank the lot. Then, during the day, we took the bottles back, so we even made some money on the job. When I showed up at home, my parents wanted to send me back, but I talked them out of it. I promptly vanished again for a week or two. The next time they gave me a better reception."

"And what did you do? Did you stop this lark?"

"No, sir, sorry to say, not then. Even bigger rows followed. Before I was called up I went with my own small gang, the Zebras. One weekday afternoon we went to Zugló to dance. They were having a mild little party at one of the local workers' hostels, and one of our chaps—he goes among us by the name of Brazil—that's what we call him—danced in a way that was strictly taboo in those days. There were a few members of the Young Communist Guard at the party, and one of them tapped him on the shoulder saying something like, 'Hey, boy, cool it, will you?' But Brazil was not exactly the sort of fellow to fight shy of a row, and he told the chap: 'If you've got any problems, come on out and I'll fix them for you...' In the end Brazil got worked up and hit the bloke right in the kisser. Then there was a bit of a to-do, right on the spot. It wasn't too good for us because there were only a few of us and about two hundred of them. And what made the joke worse was that the party was being held in a hall on the first floor with all the doors locked, so there was no way to get out. But Cricket spotted that one could open the window and do a bunk that way. We threw the chicks out first, and we spilled out after them. Outside we waited for developments... It took them less than five to six minutes, and here were these peasant-looking kids coming after us, and I tell you, they were coming after us with sticks and with kitchen-knives six inches long... Then Cricket had the brilliant idea of producing his revolver-shaped lighter, with the idea that, who knows, it might have a salubrious effect. And so it did; they stopped dead. But Cricket spoiled it all by lighting it. So then we took a powder—but fast... We had practically forgotten the whole affair, but then we got some kind of a paper, a warrant. We tried to fake up a plausible story, we laid it on really thick, but in the end three of the boys were hauled off to Tököl Reformatory. We were under preliminary again for one and a half months."

"Well, you can't be very proud of those years, now, can you...?"

"All right, but I've paid for it, haven't I? In there they blew you up for everything: disturbing the peace, and so on and so forth. Even now they take things like that pretty seriously, but in those days it was really quite different—infinitely worse. No, I wouldn't like to go through that again...

Women

"Earlier we did things, we went out a lot, having some kind of fun every day. And there was no shortage of girls either, because, of course, without girls the whole thing isn't worth much. If you go somewhere solo, you are bound to find yourself in a bit of a fix, because if you walk up to a table, say, and ask a girl to dance, she looks at you kind of peculiar, and the poor chap she's with finds the whole thing a bit queer, too...

"With a woman I first try to make out the way she thinks, what kind of a guy she takes me for, and does she want to be friendly with me. I don't as a rule start out right away with: darling, or sweetheart, I'm serious, I want to go steady with you... I just try to get out of her if she's ready for fun and so on. It also depends, of course, on my mood. If I am just a little high, then I go straight for it: look, ducks, that's the way things are. But when I haven't had a drop, when I'm stone sober, I go at it round about and try to adapt to her. And then, after you've wondered a bit what the girl is

like, you make up your mind whether she is worth going with or not. I've noticed, for instance, that the girls from secondary schools are unbelievably high and mighty. I wouldn't dream of going with one of them. They show up and boast that they go to secondary school and what not. Some of the girls who work in a factory go to secondary night school; they're all right, they don't act superior... And then there are the kind who work the eight-hour shift just like me, and once they get out, they want to have some fun. If I get to know a girl and she isn't going with anyone in particular, well, I ask her: hi, sweethart, d'you want to go with me? If she tells me not to be pushing and not to behave like a hooligan, all right, I accept it's no go, thanks, sorry, and hop it. But if she says, O. K., let's give it a try, then I do my best to give her a good time."

"How do you start with a girl?"

"You know fellows don't show themselves as they really are to women. When I first get to know one, I don't demand anything at first, I play up to something I don't really believe I am. For instance, I am very careful not to let my tongue run away with me. When I get together with the chaps on the corner, you should hear the four-letter words fly and your mother's this and your mother's that, but once if I let something like that slip when I'm with a girl, she's certainly not going to have a good impression of me. In the first week or so, the honeymoon weeks like, one goes on speaking all nice and polite, it's only a bit later one starts being natural, acting like one is. By that time, after a week or so, the girl no longer minds; she's got used to the whole business, and realizes that's the way it is.

"What I really don't like though is when I have to introduce the girl to my parents. I don't know how it is with other fellows, but generally when I've gone with a girl three or four weeks she wants to meet my parents, make their acquaintance, know what they are like. It would make for too much traffic at home..."

"Only a girl who really likes you asks that. Doesn't that mean anything to you?"

"Well, yes, of course. And, of course, there are exceptions. I went with a girl from Pesterzsébet, her name was Pearl. I got to know her at the factory, and we really hit it off something. We went together for eighteen months, she was a pharmacist at the clinic. I was often at her house, and she often came to ours. But then I had to go into the army, and we had to break it up. Once the time comes, you've got to go, it's better to finish with everything... I've never seen her again, and now I don't even want to. I heard that she got married and everything, and I wouldn't want to start it all over again...

The Army

"The most important thing that happened to me in the army was the first day after I was called up. They made us change our clothes, and afterwards we hardly recognized each other. They issued us uniform and boots that were something fantastic. My feet are size 40, and they gave me size 44 boots. We went up to the depot, and we were checked in by a corporal, an old-timer. I know him by sight, he lives somewhere in the neighbourhood. Maybe he didn't recognize me. Well, I walked up with a fag hanging from my mouth, because I had no idea what one did and didn't do in the army... He spoke to me on the spot, saying, 'Hey, Joe, you'd better throw away that cigarette.' And what d'you think, the little innocent who had just got away from his mother's apron that I was, I told him to play it cool, brother, unless he wanted a real good piece of my mind. *I* didn't know what those two stars on his collar meant... He looked at me. O. K., he said, don't worry, we shall meet again. But he emphasized that very hard: we shall meet again. 'Okay, pal beat it,' I said. We went in then, and

something like three weeks passed. After the third week, the guy met me again, and did he give me the works, from cleaning the loo to scrubbing the floor in a gas mask. And there was no sense in trying to say anything, I'd only get it worse. In the army everything is taken very differently... He kept up his special interest in me for something like three months. He even saw to it that I had extra-curricular classes. When the others had free time, he went down to the dining-room to read, and sent me to the football field to do track running and so on...

"I've got plenty of plans, now I'm out, so many that I don't know what to do. For one thing, the army set me back on clothes. First thing I'm going to do is as much overtime as possible, to get some decent clobber. So, that's Number 1: some decent clothes, and then the other things will come, meet some serious girl, or something. That should get things rolling in work, and in other things, too...

At Work

"I'm going to stay in the trade, only I think I'll leave this particular factory in January or February. I don't like the company at our shop. For one thing, there are a terrible number of girls, an awful lot of female employees. It makes for quarrels all the time. The other thing is that I am the only fellow in the middle of this crowd of women who keep on teasing me all the time. Well, I try my level best not to be rude, I don't want them to go about saying I am a gangster or hooligan, so I'm on my best behaviour and try to act polite. But, if I stay I know damn well they'll go on ribbing me until I let myself go, and I don't want a row. I don't yet know where I shall transfer to, but I'd like to find a place where you work—all right, you work your head off—but at least you know why. I'm a fitter, by the way; I finished my apprenticeship over three years ago."

"Isn't there anything at all to make you want to stay? Haven't you made friends with any of the young people there, or joined in any activity there?"

"No, I haven't, not the Young Communist League, nor anything like it. I prefer to be done with my eight hours of work, and then feel free. The way things are at our factory, they don't go out of their way to make up to a chap like me, they reckon that they can't count much on a fellow like me. They think 'Oh he's the sort who'll have all kinds of problems.' As a matter of fact, I was a member of the Young Pioneers for eight years. First I was active for two years in the ranks, then I was a patrol leader, later a deputy troop leader and troop leader... I am not especially interested in politics. I read the news on foreign affairs, but only sketchily, just to have a vague idea what is happening here and there, but I only pay real attention to the sports page.

Leisure

"I'm not very stuck on the theatre, but I go once or twice a year. I went to see *Caviare and Lentils*, I remember, and before that, *Twenty-Year-Olds*. I often go to the cinema, twice a week or something like that... One can really enjoy things like *The Adventurers* and *Corsican Brothers*. I am very fond of good French films. Russian films? Well, *The Man with Two Lives*, and *Resurrection*, its Russian version, and *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, and *Ballad about the Soldier*, they were very good."

"What do you usually read?"

"I like historical books, and then I like thrillers. They're really exciting, they get hold of you. For instance, I've just read *The Bone Brigade* by P. Howard. And the *Bloodless Corpse*, I was in the middle of it last night. We have a few volumes of Jókai's collected works. I often have a go at those. And I am really very fond of Petőfi's poems. My father has a small library of sorts. The old man is

a gas repair man, but he has a really good head on his shoulders, he reads everything: literature, history, travel books, "World of Culture"... He has one hundred and fifty to two hundred books, everything from Marx and Lenin down to thrillers... No, he isn't a Communist, but he likes to know what is going on and keep up with things.

An Average Day

"How do I spend an average day? Well, I start at the factory at 7.30 a.m., and generally get up at quarter past seven. I work quite close to where I live. I get dressed, wash, gulp down my breakfast and everything in five minutes, then I run over to the factory, change, and begin the day's work. At noon I usually come home for lunch. My mother is always at home, she doesn't work. So the family can get together for a few minutes, my Dad, too, and even my sister. She also works in the neighbourhood, she's a turner. In the afternoon I go back, but we knock off at about four, clean up the shop, get washed and so on. I come out a few minutes after five, then I go home, have a meal, look through the papers, find out what's the score in the National League, First Division, and that sort of thing. That's what really matters to me, then come all the other bits that might be of interest... We have half an hour's natter with Mum and Dad, what happened at the factory, the news, and so on... Then I go out to the corner in our street. It's my second home, I've grown so used to the place. And not only I. On some nights some twenty or twenty-five of us get together there. We talk about everything, about all sorts of crazy things, sometimes reminiscing over things then happened ten years ago, where we went on a Saturday, and such special events of note as when we got really drunk, when we had great fun, and so on and so forth. All sorts of problems come up. What kind of a dame you are going with? And how are things with you? We kid each other and have a good time. There are times when we wander off home only about 11 or 12... There is a pub near-by where occasionally we have a few drinks with my Old Man... We wash off the dust of the day that has settled in our throats. Sometimes we set out from home and stop first at the Fisherman's, then at the Club, and wherever we pass by. Dad says to do my drinking now rather than when I get old, because now it won't hurt me, but when I get old it'll get me down. That's what happens to him after two or three quarts. Though they say he used to drink as much as five quarts without batting an eyelash. That's where age starts to show...

"Of course, there are times when I don't go out. The Old Man just comes home and sends me or my sister out to buy two or three quarts of wine, we drink it and talk, and before we know it's time for bed."

In the street we spoke about Lajos D. There were a few things we had known about him earlier. That he visits his old teacher on pension regularly every week, always taking him a pack of cigarettes or a bottle of wine; that he is one of the most skilful fitters at his place of work; that he helped a number of neglected kids to become apprentices in the factory, and that he has looked after them and really taken trouble over their progress ever since.

But then we have known for some time that among young men on the fringes of working-class life conversations run differently. They prefer to show themselves in a bad, dashing light than put their good points forward. Talking about the good things you do—that just isn't done.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

BÁRÁNY, Tamás (b. 1922). Novelist. Started his career as a poet, later worked as publisher's reader. Has published three volumes of poems and more than a dozen novels as well as three collections of short stories. Two of his novels were filmed; has also written plays for the stage, TV and radio. His humorous pieces and satirical sketches are very popular.

BIRÓ, Yvette, our regular film reviewer.

CZÍMER, József (b. 1913). Theatre critic, translator, our regular theatre reviewer.

EÖRSI, István (b. 1931). Poet, playwright and critic. Studied Hungarian and aesthetics at Eötvös University, where he was a pupil of György Lukács. Spent three years in prison for his activities in 1956. Has published three volumes of poetry. Two of his plays have so far been produced in Budapest: *Sírkő és kakaó* ("Tombstone and Cocoa") and *Hordók* ("Barrels"), both in 1968. (The latter is reviewed in this number on page 200) Another was published in Yugoslavia. Has translated extensively from German, English, American, Russian and other poets. Writes a regular column in *Élet és Irodalom*, a Budapest literary weekly.

FORGÁCS, István (b. 1915). Author. Works as playreader at the National Theatre in Budapest. Is co-author of the radio serial, "The Szabó Family." Has also written a number of plays for the theatre.

FÖLDESI, József (b. 1932). Journalist, on the staff of *Csepel*, a factory newspaper. Studied literature and philosophy at Eötvös University. Was on the staff of a number of dailies and university papers. Has published a volume of his reports: *Vaskerület* ("Iron district").

GALGÓCZI, Erzsébet (b. 1930). Writer. Her numerous short stories and reports, based on fact and personal experience, deal with contemporary peasant life, the vicissitudes of the peasantry in the painful and slow process of transformation that is changing not only the face of the rural countryside but the people themselves. Has published several volumes of short stories as well as collections of articles and reports. See also "Below Zero" in No. 12, "Alien in the Village" in No. 25, and "Outdated Image of the Village" in the No. 30 of The N.H.Q.

GASTER, Bertha. Journalist. For many years Middle East correspondent of *The News Chronicle*. See also her "A Hunting Party at Eisenstadt" in No. 29, and "A Little World Made Cunningly" in No. 30 of The N.H.Q.

ILLYÉS, Gyula (b. 1902). Poet, dramatist, essayist and translator, vice president of Pen International, a leading author and intellectual who was closely connected with the Communist movement in 1919, with the French literary avant-garde in Paris in the twenties, and later with the writers' sociological movement in the Hungarian countryside and left-wing politics and literature generally in the thirties and forties. He has also written autobiographical fiction and accounts of social conditions, and has won many literary awards at home and abroad. His *People of the Puszta* (*Puszták népe*, written in 1936) is a classic on the life of the agricultural labourer of the period (also available in English). A volume of his poems was published in France. Among his recent contributions to The N.H.Q. see "Orator in the Night" in No. 28, and "The Maker," a poem, in No. 33.

JÁNOSSY, Lajos (b. 1912). Professor of Theoretical Physics at Eötvös University

in Budapest, Member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Director of the Central Physical Research Institute of the Academy. He is a member of the Editorial Board of this review. Before 1950 was Professor of Physics at Dublin. His research centers on cosmic radiation (*Cosmic Ray*, published in 1948). Has also published several works on the quantum and relativity theories; his experiment in photon-interference (1957) made him widely known.

KENEDI, János (b. 1947). Journalist, on the staff of *Budapester Rundschau*, a German language weekly published in Budapest. Has written reviews and articles on film and literature.

KERESZTURY, Dezső (b. 1904). Poet, literary historian, essayist, former Minister of Culture, at present head of a department at the National Széchényi Library in Budapest, member of our Editorial Board. Among his more recent contributions see his "Kodály—the Man and the Achievement" in No. 26, "Bibliotheca Corviniana" in No. 33 of The N.H.Q.

KÖPECZI, Béla (b. 1921) Ph. D. Historian and literary historian. Was director of the General Publishing Board of the Ministry of Culture, later head of the Cultural Department of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. At present Professor of French literature at Eötvös Loránd University and also Deputy Rector of the University. As a historian his main interest lies in the period of the Hungarian War of Independence in the eighteenth century (the Rákóczi uprising). He is a member of the Editorial Board of and a frequent contributor to The N.H.Q. See his contributions in Nos. 3, 16, 17, 22, and "Socialist Realism—The Continuing Debate", in No. 24 of The N.H.Q.

KÖRNER, Éva. Art historian. Graduated from Eötvös University, Budapest. Has written a book on Picasso (1960) another one on Gyula Derkovits, the painter, and a number of essays on Hungarian art of the inter-war period. See her "Jenő Gadányi" in No. 9, "Painter on the Defensive: Lajos Vajda" in No. 16, "Studio 66" in No. 24, "In Search of a Synthesis" in No. 25 and "Kassák the Painter" in No. 28 of The N.H.Q.

LUKÁCS, György (b. 1885). The famous Hungarian philosopher was among the first to recognize Ady's genius in an essay published in 1910. He and the poet, as well as the young Béla Bartók and all the famous "first generation" of writers who gathered around the periodical *Nyugat* ("West") were united in their fight against the gentry establishment and their hope for social revolution. Professor Lukács wrote this statement on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of Ady's death.

NEMES NAGY, Ágnes. Poet, translator. Graduated in Hungarian and French at Pázmány (now Eötvös) University in Budapest. 1953–57 taught Hungarian in schools. Her first volume of poems appeared in 1946. Has since published three other volumes of poetry and a collection of her translations from French, German and English poetry. See her article on Lajos Kassák in No. 28, and the poem "Storm" in No. 23 of The N.H.Q.

ÖRKÉNY, István (b. 1912). Novelist, short story writer. His sharp wit and dry intellectual approach, his shrewd and subtle powers of observation and a tense, often ironic style, have earned his stories an extensive readership in Hungary. His "one minute stories" are a series he invented a few years ago and still continues to turn out. His stage adaptation of his grotesque short novel *Tóték* ("The Tót Family") was the hit of the 1966/67 Budapest season and was also shown in dozens of theatres outside the country. (See part of the play in No. 28.) His recent

collections of short stories, *Jeruzsálem hercegnője* ("The Princess of Jerusalem" 1966, reviewed in No. 26) and *Nászutasok a légypapíron* ("Newlyweds in the Fly-trap", 1967, reviewed in No. 30) were bestsellers. See also his stories "No Pardon" in No. 17, "The 137th Psalm" in No. 26, and some of the "One-Minute Stories" in No. 29 of The N.H.Q.

PERNYE, András (b. 1928). Musicologist, our regular music reviewer.

PUSKÁS, Tamás (b. 1942). Journalist. Studied economics at Marx Károly University in Budapest. His reports and articles have appeared in economic journals and other papers since 1966. At present a member of the staff of *Világgazdaság* ("World Economy"), the magazine of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce.

SIMAI, Mihály (b. 1930). Economist. Worked for the U. N. in New York 1964–1968. At present lecturer at Marx Károly University of Economics. Main publications: *Tőkekivitel a mai kapitalizmusban* ("Export of Capital in Present-day Capitalism," 1962); *A gazdasági integráció problémái Nyugat-Európában* ("The Problems of Economic Integration in Western Europe; 1963); *Az Amerikai Egyesült Államok a világgazdaságban* ("The United States of America in the World Economy," 1965).

SOMFAI, László (b. 1934). Musicologist. Studied at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music in Budapest. At present a research worker at the Bartók Archives. His publications include numerous studies and articles on Haydn, "The Problems of the Erkel Manuscripts" (1961), and "Albrechtsberger's Manuscripts at the National Széchényi Library, Budapest" (1961). See his "Metamorphoses of Liszt's *Faust Symphony*" in No. 3 of The N.H.Q.

SŐTÉR, István (b. 1913). Novelist, literary historian, head of the Institute of Literary History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, President of the Hungarian P.E.N. Center, professor of Hungarian Literature at Eötvös University. Studied in Budapest and in Paris at the Ecole Normale Supérieure. Was Deputy Minister of Culture in 1956. Began his literary career with novels and short stories in the thirties, wrote monographs on Franco-Hungarian cultural relations, a number of essays on French and Hungarian authors, books on the various theoretical problems of romanticism and realism, a monograph on Hungarian literature in the late 19th century. Translated works by Emily Brontë, Dickens and Hemingway. Edited the six volume standard "History of Hungarian Literature". See also his essays on Imre Madách and Miklós Radnóti in Nos. 16 and 18 of The N.H.Q.

STRAUB, Brúnó (b. 1914). Professor of Biochemistry at Eötvös University in Budapest, Member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Director of the Research Institute of Biochemistry of the Academy. Member of the Editorial Board of this review. His research work is connected with the functioning of muscles, cell-breathing and protein synthesis. Published works on general, inorganic and analytical chemistry, organic chemistry and biochemistry.

SZABÓ, István (b. 1931). Novelist and short story-writer. For a time worked as a tractor driver in his native village. Has published several volumes of short stories. See his "The Glory of Pál Fekete" in No. 18 of The N.H.Q.

SZÁSZ, Imre (b. 1927). Novelist and translator, our regular book reviewer.

VARGA, Károly (b. 1930). Sociologist. Graduated in German and French at Eötvös University, worked for two years in the Central Bureau of Statistics, joined the Sociological Research Group of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1963. Spent

a year doing research at the University of Cologne. Now lectures on the methodology of sociology to the Research Group. Has published critical appreciations of the works of Talcott Parsons and Ralf Dahrendrof, West German sociology and various theories of roles as well as studies in literary sociology and the problem of values. His article is based on his recent book on the world view of Hungarian university students (*Magyar egyetemi hallgatók életfelfogása*, Budapest, 1968).

TAKÁCS, Marianne. Art historian, head of the Collection of Old Masters at the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest. Specializes in 16th and 17th century Spanish, Italian and French painting. Main works: *Spanyol festészet* ("Spanish Painting"); "Tiziano;" "The Treasures of the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts"; "Toulouse-Lautrec"; *Spanyol mesterek* ("Spanish Masters"); *Manierista festészet* ("Manierist Painting"); "Museo de Bellas Artes, Aguilar, Madrid" (in collaboration with Klára Garas, 1967.)

VÁLYI, Gábor (b. 1922). Art historian. For a time worked as literary manager of Corvina Press in Budapest. At present heads a department of the Institute of Cultural Relations. See also his "A Bookshelf Gallery of Modern Hungarian Painting", and "Ferenc Medgyessy the Sculptor" in Nos. 1 and 2 of The N.H.Q.

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